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CONFERENCE WORKSHOPS DESCRIBED

Buddhism and Gender: Lessons from Dogen's Point of View

Aoyama Shundo Roshi

1. Shakyamuni Buddha's teachings essentially promote equality among mankind. According to Dhammapada:

- When four rivers run into the ocean, they lose their individual names. When people from different castes are ordained, they all take the name Shakya.
- Human worth is not defined by one's birth. It is judged by one's deeds.

2. The eight rules of Garudharma outlined by the Buddha contained obvious gender discrimination. However, we would like to accept it as expedient means adopted in the context of ancient India, which had a stratified society and rigid gender order.

3. Zen Master Dogen clearly stated in his book *Shobogenzo* (The Eye and Treasury of the True Law):

- Monks should prostrate and be willing to learn from qualified nuns.
- We all should respect and value one's achievement of dharma. Don't argue about someone's gender.

We would like to learn from the attitude of Zen Master Dogen.

Buddhist Chanting To Western Sacred Music

Koun Ando and Koun Astor

Shasta Abbey, a Buddhist monastic community of the Soto Zen (Serene Reflection Meditation) tradition, was founded by Rev. Jiyu Kennett, a monastic disciple of Keido Chisan Koho Zenji, who was a former chief abbot of Sojiji Temple in Japan. Following his direction to make the Buddha's teachings accessible to Westerners, she ordained and trained both male and female monks, establishing monasteries and temples in North America and Europe, from the mid-60s until her death in 1996. As a result of her kind and wise guidance, men and women in our religious order train as spiritual equals in the Dharma. She translated the *sutras*, *dharanis*, and primary teachings of our tradition into English. Her university training in England had been in sacred music of the West, from earliest chants to its modern hymns. She was a composer and accomplished organist prior to becoming a monk. Making good use of her musical expertise, she set our daily scriptures, now in English, to Western sacred chant.

In this workshop we will talk briefly about Rev. Master Jiyu and show some slides of her and our monastery. We will introduce the liturgical legacy she offered and present some of our daily chanting. We will chant some pieces alone, offer some instruction in our chanting, and invite the workshop participants to join us in some of the chants. We are grateful to share this wonderful aspect of our Buddhist practice. Religious chant opens the heart, body and mind to the Dharma

and transcends cultural, geographical and language boundaries.

Some of the scriptures we will chant are: *The Scripture of Avalokiteswara Bodhisattva*, from the Lotus Sutra; *The Scripture of Great Wisdom or Heart Sutra*; and *Adoration of the Buddha's Relics*, from the Soto Zen morning service for the temple's founder. If time allows, we will also invite participants to chant one or two of our processions and festival invocations.

Offerings Of Buddhist Chanting

Ando Mueller and Astor Douglas

Shasta Abbey, our monastery in California, belongs to the Order of Buddhist Contemplatives, founded by Master Jiyu Kennett. We practice a balance of silent sitting meditation (Serene Reflection or Soto Zen), ceremonies with chanting, and working meditation. In this workshop, we will focus on the chanting practiced at Shasta Abbey. We celebrate daily services as well as festivals throughout the year on days of special religious significance, such as key events in the life of the Buddha, national observances of remembrance, memorials for prominent masters of our lineage, and ceremonies honoring *bodhisattvas* central to our tradition. We will introduce a sampling of these chants, including processional *mantras*, *dharanis*, scriptures, and invocations. Copies of the music and chants will be made available and workshop participants will be warmly invited to chant along with us.

Ceremonial chanting is a vehicle for expressing gratitude, for hearing and offering teaching on the Buddha's Path, and for transferring merit. The practice of religious chanting opens the heart, body and mind to Universal Buddha Nature. It transcends cultural and language boundaries and is helpful in inspiring harmony among beings.

Being A Peace Leader And Healing Conflicts Using Social Intelligence

Susmita Barua

This workshop is inspired by my own journey to inner peace, peace activism work, and transforming conflicts within family, workplace and Buddhist community. Peace is not passiveness or absence of conflicts. Peace leadership requires a high level of awareness of the sources of conflict within self and society, cultural norms, and expectations. Emotional intelligence, clear and empathetic communication skills, vision and imagination, and a personal resolve to maintain harmony and inner peace are also need to help alleviate pain and suffering in the world. We need new ways of seeing things and new skills for addressing conflicts.

In this workshop, we will share our experience and reflections in the circle with open questions, followed by a guided meditation. Who is a leader? How did the Buddha lead? As women, how does our gender and culture play out in the ways we avoid or approach conflicts? What are the major sources of inner and outer conflict? What are the consequences of avoiding conflict? We will do some creative small group or partner exercises using social wisdom, compassion, and tools like empathetic listening, heart-centered speaking, non-violent communication, non-verbal body sensations and symbols, silent eye gazing, talking gibberish, holding a swinging mirror, laughter, and more. We will conclude by collecting feedback from the group and reading it aloud.

Listening, Listening, Listening

Bhiksuni Cheen

“Nobody listens to me” This line has led to many broken relationships, suicide bombings, and all-out wars. Today, Guanyin’s method of listening is a forgotten sacred art. We have forgotten to listen to ourselves, to others, and to that which informs us and our relationships with the world.

In this experiential workshop, we will follow and emulate the journey of the Bodhisattva Who Contemplates the Sounds of the World by employing her listening methodology, a highly recommended method of meditation taught in the *Surangama Sutra*. We will learn to practice this sacred art of listening, as described in the Universal Door Chapter of the *Lotus Sutra*, and observe how the wise and compassionate Guanyin teaches in the *Avatamsaka Sutra*. Her very human journey of solid inner practice that manifests in helping whenever and wherever suffering occurs has made her a model and a legend since ancient times.

In this workshop, we will evoke the Buddhist archetype of compassionate listening (Sanskrit: Avalokitesvara; Japanese: Kannon; Chinese: Guanyin). We will listen in new ways, so we may be at peace within ourselves and in the world. The workshop will include a powerpoint presentation introducing the archetype and methodologies of Guanyin. We will also experience listening to ourselves and to others in pairs and small groups, discussion, and Q&A.

Engaging in Compassionate Activities

Adrienne Cochran

Buddhism teaches that we can practice compassion at all times in all situations. However, often we miss opportunities in the hustle and bustle of our everyday lives. The purpose of this workshop is threefold. First, it acknowledges that recurring activities, such as parenting, can be considered within the framework of compassionate work, so that our approach towards these activities can become more mindful and joyous. Second, it examines categories of compassionate engagement to help participants recognize a variety of opportunities that may arise. Third, it discusses the challenges and varieties compassionate activities, so that participants may give each other support.

The workshop begins by discussing examples of activities in five categories: daily compassionate practices, giving gifts, giving time, giving talents, and compassionate shopping. Examples of daily compassionate practices are parenting, taking care of aging relatives, smiling, and remaining calm when criticized. Examples of giving gifts include giving to one’s Buddhist community, charity to the less fortunate, and giving to the homeless. Examples of giving one’s time include listening to friends, family, and co-workers, and volunteering at Buddhist and community events. Examples of giving one’s talents include donating free or discounted services such as medical care, legal advice, or tutoring. Examples of compassionate shopping include buying free trade items.

Next, participants will list two or three activities in each category that they engage in and share them with the group. Then they will reflect on gratitude and a remembrance of no-self, or the emptiness of the self that is engaged in the activities, and rest in equipoise as a group. Finally, participants will expand the discussion by considering other compassionate activities that they might engage in.

Empowering Buddhist Women Through Grant-Making

Elise DeVido and Susanne Mrozik

In recent years, religious NGOs, including Buddhist ones, have taken more visible and active roles in

secular international organizations such as the United Nations. Recently, we have been involved in the application process for Sakyadhita International (SI) to obtain non-governmental organization (NGO) status at the United Nations through the UN Economic and Social Council. Gaining such status at the UN will allow SI to attend ECOSOC and UN meetings at the United Nations Headquarters and around the world; to apply for a variety of funds; and to network with other secular and religious (including Buddhist) NGOs.

Drawing on our experiences applying for ECOSOC NGO status and also from the grant-writing we have done in our academic careers, this interactive workshop will empower Buddhist women, *especially nuns*, to plan out projects and apply for funds. Buddhist nuns, often disadvantaged and marginalized, need to be empowered to seek and apply for funds above and beyond lay donations.

How does one find funding opportunities to match one's proposed project? During the workshop, we will go online and introduce participants to various types of possible funding, both in their home countries and abroad (international agencies, etc). We will also introduce and practice grant-writing skills, i.e., the type of vocabulary, argument, and organization needed for a "strong" grant application. We will walk attendees through the process of applying for a grant to fund a Buddhist project, be it for education, social welfare, the environment, community development, etc. We hope that this workshop will not only benefit the attendees, but also Sakyadhita International in our future work with ECOSOC by identifying and furthering the multitude of Buddhist projects that Sakyadhita members and friends are involved in worldwide.

The View Leading To Liberation

Geraldine Dubreuil (Jinchok Wangmo)

In September 2010, the newspapers reported that three academics at the UCL Institute for Cognitive Neuroscience and the Wellcome Trust Centre for Neuroimaging linked introspection – the ability to think about our own thoughts – to the biology of the brain. It seems that people who are good at introspection, one of the key aspects of consciousness, have more grey matter in the prefrontal cortex and more white matter or nerve connections.

The objective of this workshop is to explore methodologies and perspectives to develop the mind's vast potential. We will consider visualization and internal mindfulness using visual art, introspection, and open seeing. We will look at how science now understands the value of introspection for the brain and examine how gendered language and our tendency to classify and categorize affect our perception. We will see how, by actualizing the experience of inner wisdom, it is possible to realize an expansive, joyful state in which there is nothing to grasp and nothing to release.

This workshop involves visualization practice to improve body, speech, and mind. Through drawing on paper, individuals refine their inner awareness. Through creating a mandala together, groups express their interdependence, grounded in compassion and loving-kindness. In addition, we will use intuitive collage and rubbings inspired by the Buddhas' teachings to understand empowerment and to recognize our true nature: pure, primordial, timeless, dynamic, intrinsic, completely open awareness. I will also present methods to develop *sila* effortlessly and spontaneously, both externally (ethics, honesty, moderation, simplicity, nonharming, mindfulness) and internally (character development, integrity, self-knowledge and awareness), with authenticity.

“When you open yourself to the continually changing, impermanent, dynamic nature of your own being and of reality, you increase your capacity to love and care about other people and your

capacity to not be afraid. You're able to keep your eyes open, your heart open, and your mind open. And you notice when you get caught up in prejudice, bias, and aggression. You develop an enthusiasm for no longer watering those negative seeds, from now until the day you die. And, you begin to think of your life as offering endless opportunities to start to do things differently." Pema Chödrön (*Practicing Peace in Times of War*)

Buddhist Women In The Interfaith Movement

Guo Cheen Shih

"The world will be saved by Western women," said His Holiness the Dalai Lama at the 2009 Vancouver Peace Summit. Our Earth is in crisis and it seems that many are looking to women to heal the planet and our human family. How will Buddhist women step into our full potential as leaders and guides alongside other women of spirit and faith in this moment? How will we individually reconnect with our deepest wisdom and with our spiritual roots? How will we collectively heal the many dimensions of separation that keep us fragmented and ineffective as agents of social change? How will we globally reclaim our rightful place as spiritual leaders in service of a balanced and compassionate new paradigm?

In this workshop, I will report on the redefinition of power in the interfaith movement from the North American frontlines and explain what is about to emerge in the frontiers of women's spiritual leadership. I will then engage participants in an exploratory conversation about support for these emerging patterns for transformation. Among the questions to be considered are how Buddhist women can contribute to intrafaith dialogue and how interfaith dialogue can strengthen and nurture the leadership capacities of women of spirit and faith for the sake of the human community. We will discuss how to encourage collaboration and understanding among religious women's organizations and networks and how to create an environment of trust, inviting women's voices to be heard, telling and witnessing each other's stories.

This workshop will offer multiple opportunities to explore potent questions about the current state of women's spiritual leadership. Participants will practice and model structures based upon shared leadership, collaborative practices, circle processes, deep listening, mindfulness, and compassionate action. Together, we will allow space for the emergence of spiritual guidance and collective wisdom.

Strategies for Buddhist Social Activism: Sharing Experiences

Beth Goldring

The purpose of this workshop will be to bring together Buddhist women already engaged in social activism and those not yet engaged, but interested in, social activism to share experiences and explore four key issues:

1. The relationship between social activism and Buddha's teachings and practice;
2. The existing range of Buddhist social activist practices and concerns (e.g., peace, poverty, education, the environment, prisoners and prison conditions, HIV/AIDs, etc.) and the possibility of extending concerns into new areas;
3. Commonalities and differences among both the concerns and the demands these concerns make upon practitioners; and
4. Strategies for strengthening work, not only to resist burnout and exhaustion but to allow the work to be life-affirming and genuinely sustaining for both clients and practitioners.

The workshop is intended to be as participatory as is comfortable for each participant.

Unmasking Esther: Liberation From Gender-Based Oppression – From Beauty Standards To Sex Trafficking

Bonna Devora Haberman

The sale of women and children into prostitution is one of the most egregious contemporary violations of human rights. Based upon exploitation of some of the most vulnerable members of humanity, this burgeoning global business meshes smoothly with the gears of culture, a perverse conjunction of power with money. Human trafficking is not an isolated phenomenon, but an extreme expression of gender-based oppression that permeates human society. Through everyday and ongoing processes of socialization, we internalize messages and practices that habituate us to participate in abuse, rendering the enslavement of girls and women in relentless degradation and rape tolerable to the "clients" and profitable for the "dealers." Messages and practices objectifying and dehumanizing women are deeply embedded in many layers of culture—in religion, economy, politics, law, literature, the media, and public discourse—in subtle and conspicuous structures.

This workshop unmask many faces of a bold biblical character, Esther, and her rise to leadership among her people. Based on her text, we explore the relevance of an ancient Jewish festival of masquerade for individuals and communities, empowering ourselves through collaborative, lively text study and participatory drama. We reveal hidden meanings and ethical issues ranging from subtle forms of gender-based oppression to the trafficking of persons and globalization, and the relationships among sexism, racism, and violence. This workshop transmits a liberatory interpretation of a classical text, its contemporary meanings and challenges. Focusing on the themes of sacred and profane, displaced vessels, uses & abuses, *Unmasking Esther* explores the interplay of gender and power in the Scroll of Esther and in our lives. We reveal the urgency and depth of personal and structural transformation accessible to us through active engagement with religious texts with the intention of improving the conditions of our society.

Meditation: A Priceless Gem For Monastics

Sister Khema

This workshop offers an interactive introduction to meditation practice to help lighten the mind and bring a smile into your life. Families love this meditation practice, because it brings them together in learning to apply the Buddhist teachings in daily life. This practice helps many people realize the importance of supporting and protecting Buddhist monastics who practice and teach in the 21st century.

The workshop begins with introductions, getting to know each other before taking a journey together. Each participant is asked to briefly share what s/he feels is the biggest challenge facing Buddhist monastics and families in this century? Then a second question is posed: The cessation of suffering is the primary gift the Buddha left us. How does this teaching demonstrate the priceless value of the Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha in the modern world? This discussion is followed by a 25-minute meditation on *metta* (loving kindness).

Next is a discussion of the phrase, "Meditation is life; life is meditation." Here we will recap the terms used to describe the practice: meditation, mindfulness, delusion, craving, purification, and mind training. A short powerpoint presentation will demonstrate how to implement the Buddha's practice of right effort in everyday life to help shift our perspective and move towards peaceful solutions. The Buddha taught purification of mind as a daily meditation practice for the direct relief of suffering. By reclaiming this basic meditation technique, a student begins to naturally replace reactions with new creative, peaceful responses. Buddhist monastics should be supported to further this practice in the world today.

Painting The Mind

Karun'a' Kuo

“Mind painting” is an activity in which one paints spontaneously and intuitively. In mind painting, one allows oneself to stay in an “empty” state and engages in artistic creation. In the initial stage, the painting may not seem to make much sense, but in time, as the mind and body collaborate naturally, one is able to enter a state of sub-consciousness or super-consciousness and to thus paint pictures and colors that speak hidden words. In addition to being a method of healing through art, “mind painting” probes into the myth of the universe and presents its way of functioning through the medium of the painter’s mind and body, instead of a scientist’s experiments. Through one’s innate and intuitive perceptual abilities and through one’s hands, mind painting allows the painter an encounter with the painter’s mind. Meanwhile, though reading or interpreting one’s own painting, the painter gains a deeper understanding into her or his own encounter and derives an enlightening sense of existence. Mind painting offers an opportunity to reconnect with the universe, through which we renew our energy and attain wisdom.

In this workshop, students will be given a brief introduction about mind painting. Over a span of two hours, they will have a chance to experience mind painting with the crayons and papers provided. The number of students will be limited to 15 per session.

Healthy Body, Healthy Mind: Moxibustion And Taichi

Rudy Lai and Frank Tien

It has long been recognized that mind and body are interconnected. To help us practice the Dharma, a healthy body is very helpful. This workshop introduces to Buddhist practitioners the ancient Chinese art of moxibustion, an easy, affordable, practical, and effective method to keep practitioners healthy. At least, it can help protect practitioners from serious diseases, so as to optimize health and enable them to practice better in this life. As an ancient Chinese saying goes,

“Whenever medicine and acupuncture cannot reach, moxibustion will take you there.” However, moxibustion has long been forgotten in the modern Chinese medical system. This workshop will provide an opportunity for all participants to have a hands-on experience with this special method. In addition, it will introduce some basic concepts in the Chinese medical system together with a few key acupressure points. Furthermore, some simple Taichi exercises will be introduced to help participants stay healthy, energetic, and effective in their daily lives.

Meditation Through Singing And Tea

Shen-chon Lai

This workshop is based on “Path through Voices,” which incorporates music, energy, and meditation. Through singing selected Buddhist songs, the presenters will lead participants to appreciate the musical arts in Buddhism and the practice of Zen meditation together. The contemporary melodies of the selected Buddhist songs are composed by Ms. Karuna Kuo (based in Taiwan). The lyrics include words from the Buddhist *sutras* as well as praises for Avalokitesvara Bodhisattva, Sakyamuni Buddha, and so on. Participants will practice integrating body and mind through the practice of singing and meditation. Through this experience, they will gain a deeper understanding of the Buddhist teachings on dependent arising, emptiness, the middle way, and Buddha nature. The workshop will conclude with a session on “Zen tea.” After singing and meditation, tea appreciation will help us reach another realm in the sound of silence.

How To be An Authentic and Compassionate Woman Writer

Wendy Lin

Have you thought about how Dalai Lama or Thich Nhat Hanh could write so many books? It seems that they never lose any ability to write and their wisdom is much greater than ours. Certainly, women can also write beautiful and authentic stories, from our own sensibilities and experiences. Our wisdom is not less than men's and we have the same potential to attain enlightenment as men. Why not write some interesting stories about what we have seen and what we feel from a Buddhist woman's perspective? We can express how the worldly things we observe are related to the Buddhist teachings.

As a Buddhist laywoman from Taiwan, the influence of Buddhism has been with me since I was born. My grandmother used to pray in front of Quanyin and liked to say to me, "Wendy, please be a compassionate woman when you grow up and help people however you can. That way, you will be able to accumulate merit and have a better rebirth in your next life." Gradually, as I studied more deeply, I began to understand that the Buddhist teachings are more than a belief system. In my experience, Buddhism is also a great tool for healing, helping us understand how to relate to everything that happens to us. It even helps me write Buddhist stories to heal readers' hearts and past wounds. Since we are not perfect people, most of us do not use skillful methods to heal our emotional trauma or do not know how the Buddhist teachings can help us deal with everyday issues, even relationship problems. Therefore, I became a writer to collect real stories about ordinary people, writing down their true experiences of integrating the Buddhist teachings in order to inspire the readers. The key question is: How do we find these real stories? Where do we find these people? How can we write those stories with an authentic and compassionate heart so as to create a bridge to the readers? This workshop will inspire and help us explore our potential writing talents.

The workshop begins with some writing tips for participants First, I will share my personal writing experience of working with HIV/AIDS patients at an orphanage and nursing home, explaining how I conducted interviews with them and won their trust, then wrote their stories. Second, I will explain how to integrate these true stories with the Buddhist teachings, with the goal of inspiring the readers. Next, participants will gain actual writing experience, starting by interviewing each other and writing their stories. Then we will have time for discussion and Q&A. The homework assignment is to interview a great Buddhist nun or laywoman practitioner who is walking the bodhisattva path. Telling her story could touch your heart and inspire all of us. Most importantly, we will have fun together writing these amazing Buddhist woman's stories!

Hatha Yoga Practice

Lars Mathiesen

Explore the physical postures of yoga (asana) as a way to prepare the body. Hip openers and core strengthening poses to help make seated meditation and prostrations more comfortable. Twists and inversions to encourage better digestion and immune functioning. A regular asana yoga practice encourages overall health and well being so we may be better able to be in service to others. Energizing, fun and a great way to take care of the body. A sense of humour and a willingness to learn about your body are suitable prerequisites; however, flexibility and previous experience in yoga are not at all required.

Practice notes: Try not to eat 2 hours before the workshop (3:30-4:30). Do drink water as proper hydration is important. Please dress in loose comfortable clothing that will allow easy movement and stretching. Please do bring a large bath towel and a smaller hand towel.

Yin/Meditation Yoga Practice

Lars Mathiesen

An opportunity to journey inwards and explore surrender with the seated minimal effort postures of yin yoga. Combining meditation and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM) Meridian theory it is likened to an acupuncture session to encourage balance in the body. Each evening session will focus on a different TCM organ pair: Kidney/Urinary Bladder, Liver/Gall Bladder, Spleen/Stomach, Lungs/Large Intestine and Heart/Small Intestine. No prior experience necessary.

Practice notes: Try not to eat 2 hours before the workshop (4:30-5:30). Do drink water as proper hydration is important. Please dress in loose comfortable clothing that will allow easy movement and stretching. Please do bring a large bath towel and a smaller hand towel.

Women Not Allowed: Pollution Taboos in Northern Thai Buddhism

Kulavir Prapapornpipat

This workshop investigates the origin of the tradition of not allowing women into sacred spaces, practiced in northern Thailand. The origin of this tradition can be traced back to the Lawa and Haripunchai periods. At the time, Haripunchai was significantly influenced by Brahmanism or Hinduism. Brahmanism believes that menstruation has the power to dominate or nullify black magic and sacred objects; therefore, menstruation should be feared. Since that period, this belief spread throughout other parts of the Lanna kingdom. *Rishis* or hermits in Brahmanism and monks in Buddhism have played a significant role in perpetuating this belief.

Although there is evidence that, historically, the area dominated by Lanna culture was matriarchal, this was gradually replaced by patriarchal culture. The fear of menstruation, found in Brahmanism, became solidified into a *khued* (prohibition) in Lanna belief. The belief became a tradition and women were forbidden to enter sacred spaces.

There are many factors that make Lanna the only area of Thailand that has this prohibition. Lanna is the location of the former kingdom of Haripunchai, which is the oldest source of Brahmanism in Thailand. Lanna Buddhism also has a strong belief in black magic, ritualism, and traditionalism. All of these factors contribute to Lanna's social and cultural structure of patriarchy and male-dominated sexuality, which supports this prohibition.

It is possible that this tradition disappeared at certain periods, because of wars. It was probably restored in Lumphun Province by Tai Yong, who was a believer in black magic. There is evidence that the Haripunchai *chedi* or *stupa* was a model for other important *chedis* in northern Thailand, such as Lumpang Luang *chedi* in Lumpang, Shae Hang *chedi* in Nan, and Doi Suthep *chedi* in Chiang Mai. If the Haripunchai *chedi* had restored the tradition of pollution taboos by a certain time, other *chedis* probably took both the architecture and the prohibition from the Haripunchai *chedi*.

Mindfulness Yoga: Liberating The Body And The Mind

Jayanta (Shirley Johannesen)

Mindfulness yoga is the integrated practice of mindfulness meditation with hatha yoga. In this workshop we will mindfully move the body with intention, and explore our own level of comfort and ease in a variety of yoga postures. Attention will be given to basic principles and alignment, and modifications will be offered to help individuals understand and work with their own unique limitations. We will take time to explore simple postures (and variations) while expanding awareness of the body/mind through both stillness and flowing movement.

Mindfulness yoga is not about putting oneself in any particular yoga pose (*asana*), but to experience this very moment, with this very breath, and to closely watch how the body and mind react to the various postures. The practice is the moment-to-moment experience of mind/body in any posture, focusing on the breath, and observing the thoughts and emotions that arise and pass away. It is a time for self-understanding, wisdom, and liberation.

Mindfulness lies at the core of Buddhism. Through mindfulness yoga we can refine our attention and awareness. It is a uniquely powerful vehicle for cultivating deep insight into the ultimate causes of suffering and the possibility of liberation from them. This mindfulness-based mind/body approach is a “letting go” which reduces stress and, and thereby enhances health, well-being, and spiritual development. It is important to see such a practice as a way of life, and to nourish it both on the mat and in everyday life. With open awareness and timeless presence we are able to experience things as they actually are, and allow ourselves to let the postures unfold – liberating the body and the mind/heart.

Some Adventures of Guanyin In China

Gene Reeves

Though often neglected by scholars, the radical transformation of the Indian *bodhisattva* Avalokitesvara into the Chinese and East Asian Guanyin is one of the most important developments in the history of Buddhism, a transformation that resulted in a radical transformation of Buddhism itself. There are several dimensions to this transformation: from female to female and male, from *bodhisattva* to *buddha* and *bodhisattva*, from the robes of a prince to the robes of a laywoman, and from the a place “on high” to a low, earthly place.

Looking back, we can see that these developments are entirely consistent with what can be found in Chapter 25 of the *Lotus Sutra*, the chapter on the universal gateway of the *bodhisattva* known as Regarder of the Cries of the World.

Religions have often been understood to be different paths to the mountain top, to some kind of peak experience. But Guanyin directs us in the opposite direction – to the low places, to the dirty and depressing places where people are suffering, enduring suffering, and overcoming suffering. It is primarily in such low places that we can encounter a living Guanyin, one who brings the compassion of the Buddha to those in need and helps us see Buddhism as a religion of compassion as well as of wisdom.

The Rise of Female Meditation Teachers

Brooke Schedneck

Whether lay or ordained, female meditation teachers are becoming more and more prominent in the global Buddhist landscape. This can be seen in Buddhist centers in the United States and other countries, where the equality of women is an important component. However, female meditation teachers can also be seen in more rooted Buddhist societies, as clearly evidenced in Thailand. In this workshop, I offer an overview of the female meditation teachers located in Thailand: Ajahn Naeb, Mae Chii Brigitte, Kathryn Chindaporn, Mae Chii Kaew, and the meditation teacher assistants at meditation temples such as Wat Chom Tong and Wat Rampoeng.

After this overview, the workshop will be opened up to the audience to discuss the female meditation teachers in their home countries. Each participant or group of participants will be asked to think of a local or more well-known female meditation teacher and describe her qualities.

The last part of the workshop will be spent gathering together all the examples of female meditation teachers and noting their common characteristics. Together, we will try to discover whether there are any similarities to be found among these female meditation teachers and point out how their instruction is shaping the way meditation is taught and thought about in the Buddhist world.

**Understanding Through Art: Exploring *Bija*,
The Seeds Of Store Consciousness, Through Art Making**

Suellen S. Semekoski

This experiential workshop will explore the use of spontaneous art making in the Zen tradition. It uses simple lines, shapes, and forms to begin to explore the visualization of what is referred to in Gestalt psychology as mindbody states and in Yogacara Buddhist practice as *bija* or seeds in the storehouse consciousness. Gestalt psychology, like mindfulness practice, places importance on the here-and-now, present moment awareness, and only references history or the past as it reflects long-standing patterns of behavior, known in Buddhist mindfulness practice as “habit energies.”

This workshop uses ideas of art making as an isomorphic expression, or expression of the mindbody, to help visualize thoughts, feelings, and mental perceptions made visible by the energy of line, shape, and form. We will refrain from drawing fully crafted representational images or symbols, because a studied approach moves us away from spontaneous embodied creation. This Zen-like spontaneous approach to art making uses present-moment process and non-judgment. It does not utilize the historic referencing to Zen art in the repetition of skills in the style of a master over a lifetime of study.

Participants will create and identify at least six mindbody states and compare and contrast similarities and differences of embodied experience among themselves. When we are able to see our common embodied experiences, such as joy or anger made visible, we may be able to understand how misperceptions arise between people based on differences such as race, gender, culture, etc. We will discuss how abstract images can be used in meditation to help visually organize feelings, thoughts, and mental perceptions, and write simple *gathas* (verses) or breathe poems to our images. We will practice a brief sitting meditation using our *gathas*, along with the images, in order to help strengthen seeds and transform habit energies through our breath practice. No former art experience is necessary, just an open and willing mind and heart.

Creative Watering Of Seeds Of Consciousness Or *Bija*, Through Art, Writing, And Poetry

Suellen S. Semekoski

This workshop will expand on ideas for the workshop “Understanding through Art: Exploring *Bija*, the Seeds of Store Consciousness, through Art Making.” However, it is not necessary to have attended that workshop in order to participate in this one.

A list of *bijas* found in the store consciousness will be presented. Through painting and drawing, participants will identify the energy of a seed from their store consciousness that they want to understand more deeply. Using ink and string, participants will initially create a spontaneous mark or gesture as the basis of their drawing. Walking around the drawing on the floor, participants will embody their “thinking” and begin to discover and identify possibilities of images found in the marks and gestures. We will then develop those images into full drawings using chalk pastels. Adding color and detail, we can more fully imagine the transformation of the raw energy of a seed into an image. In order to accept whatever images unfold or arrive, we will do a short writing exercise and create a *haiku* in response to the image.

This is a playful and spontaneous approach to understanding the seeds of storehouse consciousness through creativity. No former art experience is necessary, just an open and willing mind and heart. Participants should wear comfortable clothes or cover their clothes, in case they get a bit dusty or dirty with chalk. All ages are welcome. Only imagination is required.

Speakpeace: Actively Engaging Vietnamese and American Communities Through Children's Art And Creative Responses

Suellen S. Semekoski

This workshop will introduce participants to the history and benefits of cultural exchanges with the Vietnamese community in Chicago and the Midwest through art and poetry. It focuses on art as a means to bring communities together around the issue of peace and engage them in a creative experience together. In the Zen Buddhist tradition, experience is a highly regarded form of learning. This workshop will similarly engage participants in creative responses as a form of learning, using poetry made by local communities in response to art exhibits, video clips of performances and readings, and personal testimonies about the power of art focused on peace.

In May and June of 2011, I will bring the Speakpeace exhibit to Chicago and the Midwest in an effort to foster healing among Americans, the Vietnamese community in Chicago, artists, poets, and local Buddhist communities. The exhibit presents art about war and peace created by Vietnamese children and also poetry about peace (peace stanzas) created by Americans in response to the children's art. This cultural exchange uses art to bridge understanding, promote healing, and foster peace. In Chicago, in conjunction with the exhibit, I will arrange programs involving Kent State University, Soldier's Heart Community, our local Buddhist Peace Fellowship, the local Vietnamese community of Chicago, Columbia College Poetry Center, the School of the Art Institute of Chicago art therapy program, and artists from the National Veterans War Museum in Chicago, as well as the Children's Peace Village and War Remnants Museum in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam.

Mindfulness In Motion

Saw Htut Sandar

Mindfulness (*sati*) is a method of meditative practice in Buddhism that involves cultivating awareness of one's body, actions and thoughts. Mindfulness in motion means cultivating awareness in motion or meditation in motion. Human life is filled with manifold activities, and although the human lifespan is very short, a human life offers the best opportunity to cultivate all the various perfections (*kusala paramitas*), so as to reach the bliss of *nibbana*. Therefore, having obtained a human life, it is important to use all available time in the most beneficial practice of mindfulness (*satipatthana*) and insight (*vipassana*) meditation, using every motion of the body. Only *satipatthana vipassana* meditation brings one to *nibbana*.

This practice was first introduced by the Buddha in India some 2500 years ago. In Myanmar, *satipatthana* meditation was popularized by the respected monks Ledi Sayadaw, Webu Sayadaw, Taungpulu Sayadaw, Mahasi Sayadaw, and the laymen Sayagyi U Ba Khin and S. N. Goenka. The Buddha summarized the method for achieving mindfulness by referring to mindfulness of the body, feelings, consciousness, and other phenomena (*dhammas*). The Buddha said that the practice of mindfulness is the way to purify our minds, overcome all sufferings, and reach the noble path.

Among the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, in this workshop we concentrate on the first one: contemplation of the body or mindfulness of the motions of the body. This practice can be divided into three parts: mindfulness while sitting, mindfulness while walking, and mindfulness while performing

daily activities. First, we focus on being mindful of just one prominent movement. If our mind is focused on one specific movement and becomes really concentrated, then we can practice being mindful of other movements, one by one. In this way, our contemplation becomes deeper and more advanced, until we gradually gain insight.

While sitting, we can be aware of something that we see and thus focus our mindfulness on seeing. Hearing some sound, we can focus our mindfulness on hearing. While sitting, we can focus on sitting. After that, we can focus on where our hips or thighs touch the chair or floor and thus focus on touching. In this way, while sitting we can develop all four types of mindfulness: seeing, hearing, sitting, and touching. During our daily routine, we can focus our mindfulness on all the small daily activities or motions that we do, such as opening and closing doors, making our bed, changing clothes, preparing meals, eating, drinking, and performing other small movements. If we study and practice mindfulness in motion earnestly, soon we will be able to acquire penetrating knowledge and insight (*vipassana*).

Introduction to Engineering integrating Tibetan Culture and Buddhism

Marisol Mercado Santiago

Effective educational approaches that can help Tibetan students learn science and technology while at the same time cherish their Tibetan culture are part of the priorities of Tibetans in exile. In this workshop I will present ways that can help teachers see how concepts of science and engineering can be associated to Tibetan architecture and culture in order to help Tibetan students understand concepts of engineering while at the same time strengthening their cultural heritage. Participants are welcome to join the discussion to share suggestions and educators' experiences. The workshop is targeted to Tibetans, educators, and school administrators who wish to learn this culturally relevant approach of education for Tibetans. The workshop content is an ongoing work of a future doctoral dissertation that is supported by the National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellowship. The Tibetan Mongolian Buddhist Cultural Center in Bloomington, Indiana, United States, is supporting me to achieve my doctoral dissertation work.

Workshop Goals:

This workshop seeks to help you in your professional development. It is targeted to Tibetans, to educators of Tibetans, and/or Tibetan school administrators. The workshop goals are:

- 1) To help you see the possibility to associate basic engineering and science concepts with Tibetan architecture, culture, Buddhism, and sustainability to help your students learn basic engineering and science knowledge that may help them later in their life and studies.
- 2) To help you with starting resources and content that you can adapt according to your school and students' needs.

Peace Of Mind

Thich Nu Tri Lien

Most people would be glad to have some peace of mind in their life. They would be happy to forget their troubles, problems, and worries, and enjoy a few moments of inner calmness and freedom from obsessing thoughts.

What is peace of mind? Peace of mind is a colloquialism that refers to a state of being mentally or spiritually at peace, with enough knowledge and understanding to keep oneself strong in the face of

discord or stress. Being “at peace” is considered by many to be healthy and the opposite of being stressed or anxious. In other words, peace of mind is the absence of mental stress or anxiety.

Peace of mind is conducive to better emotional and physical health, increased energy, stronger mental powers, improved memory and a better ability to learn and study. It also helps people handle more efficiently the daily affairs of life, and especially stressful and difficult situations. Regular study and meditation practice help inner peace grow. Repeated affirmations about peace help the mind become more accommodating.

A peaceful mind is a powerful mind. A peaceful mind brings an inner happiness that affects other people in positive ways. A person who is able to silence the inner chatter of the mind is free from worries, anxieties, and fears. It is possible to gain this kind of inner freedom through meditation, equanimity, and developing detachment and the ability to filter and sift through thoughts without getting involved and swept by them. By reducing the number of thoughts in the mind, we can gain mastery over our mind and be able to focus it on whatever we want. We will be able to use our mind in better and more useful ways.

Peace of mind is an inner condition, independent of external conditions and circumstances, and is a skill that can be learned. If we are well trained in peace, we can remain calm and in control of ourself and our mind, even in the midst of problems and unpleasant situations. We enjoy inner peace and feel happy and satisfied. Life flows smoothly and affects our relationships, health, work, and finances in positive ways. We are able to remain at peace without worries, tensions, or busyness.

This workshop will introduce daily meditation practices that help calm the mind. This calmness positively affects our inner being, body, circumstances, and the people we meet. It transforms us into generators of peacefulness and calm. Inner peace also helps create peace around us. By creating peace in our inner world, we can bring it into the external world, becoming a positive influence on others.

Building Buddhist Feminist Leadership Through A Rainbow Bridge

Wan Teng Lai

This workshop will provide a free, fair, and open platform for all participants to express and share their visions concerning the critical components of Buddhist Feminist Leadership (BFL). In order to enable everyone’s voices to be heard and viewpoints to take into account, the design of the workshop will adopt the VIPP (Visualisation in Participatory Programme) technique, a people-centered approach to planning, training, and group events. VIPP approach has been widely recognized worldwide for facilitating participants’ discovery, exchange of ideas, debate, and reflection on various issues. However, the VIPP approach has yet to be adopted for Buddhist activities. The approach of this workshop will be particularly interesting, due to the wide variety of the participants’ backgrounds, nationalities, and expertise. To come to an agreement about the critical elements of BFL requires interactive discussion and mutually beneficial exchanges among all participants, which is possible by adopting the VIPP technique. In line with the meaning of BFL, the process will challenge perceptions and encourage reflection on how the BFL style is different from traditional patriarchal leadership and, most importantly, how BFL can benefit society.

Over time, VIPP has proven its function of creating a strong sense of ownership among participants. The module of BFL (to be created by all the participants) is seen as a bottom-up suggestion from participants who join the workshop to Sakyadhita committee members for consideration in grooming Buddhist Feminist Leaders. At the same time, it is hoped that participants will continue to adopt and adapt this highly recommended technique in their planning, training, and groups events with members of different generations and experiences in other organizations. The VIPP approach has been shown to be an important tool for brainstorming ideas and producing creative and practical solutions to a range of issues

close to the hearts of the concerned parties.

The proposer has been trained in a two-day VIPP training by two world-class Germany VIPP trainers in 2009. She has facilitated a number of meeting and workshop with students, academic staff members by adopting and adapting the VIPP technique.

Monastic Education for Nuns in Korea

Dong Geon Sunim

This workshop will discuss monastic education and training for Buddhist nuns, taking the system of education and training developed in Korea as a starting point. Monastic education for nuns has a long history in Korea. Dong Hak Buddhist College is the oldest monastic college for *sramanerikas* and *bhiksunis* in Korea. Since its founding in 1860 by Bhiksuni Man Hwa, it has preserved the *bhiksuni* tradition through a system of intensive education and training. This workshop will present the key qualities of the Korean *bhiksuni* training system by presenting the history of nuns' education and training at Dong Hak Temple. At Dong Hak Buddhist College, nuns learn the importance of integrating Buddhist practice into every action of daily life, in addition to the Buddhist studies curriculum on the Tripitaka, the bi-monthly *uposatha* ceremony, and other activities, Dong Hak Buddhist Collage held a postgraduate course for *bhiksunis* in 2009.

Buddhist Women In The Global Information Era

Venita Tanusuwito

The world we live now is a world of information technology. Everyone can easily access the internet, which make our world seem smaller. Each one of us can get any information from nearly anyone who is connected to the internet. The wave of information nowadays is unavoidable. People who surf the internet can be exposed to any kind of influence, whether good or bad. We need to be wise and selective about the information that we receive.

The teaching of Dharma can also be done by using information technology. Many monks and nuns have used the internet to spread the Dharma. They have personal websites and blogs where they answer questions from around the world. Even laypeople have created Buddhist websites from all kinds. All the benefits of information technology are available to Buddhist women. The question is how we can maximize the benefits of this expansion of knowledge and minimize the bad influences and misinformation that can also be accessed on the internet.

Buddhism And Children Caught In Domestic Violence

Upasika Prajñacharita

Children hold the hope for humanity's future, yet many children are victims of domestic violence. Two to four million women are physically battered each year by their partners and children are often the real victims. Annually, it is estimated that 10 million children in the United States are at risk of witnessing domestic violence. Childhood victims of violence grow up so emotionally impaired that they become abusers or get abused. In 53% of domestic violence cases in which a man was abusing a women, children were abused as well.

When children witness domestic violence, they may suffer from depression, chronic anxiety, and post-traumatic stress disorder. They may become juvenile delinquents, "street kids," adult criminals, or get involved with drugs or alcohol. These children are more likely to become aggressive and have temperament problems, lower self-esteem, and lower verbal/cognitive/motor abilities than children who

do not witness domestic violence. Boys who witness domestic violence as children are more likely to batter their female partners as adults than boys rose in nonviolent homes.

Applying the Buddha's teachings can help break this cycle. This workshop is designed as a training session that offers relevant information about psychological trauma in relation to Buddhist psychology. Participants will learn about maladaptive mental patterns and family dynamics in cycles of violence. Further, they will discuss valuable Buddhist communication skills for intervention.

Chinese Buddhist Music Appreciation

Guo Qing

This workshop will focus on the theory and practice of classical Chinese Buddhist music. It begins with a short introduction to the musical instruments that have been used in classical Chinese Buddhist music for over four thousand years, including the *guqin* and heptachord. Next is an explanation about the Noble Eightfold Path and awakening are conveyed in artistic media and the long-standing connection between Buddhism and aesthetics. A heptachord piece that includes allusions to women in Chinese history will be featured.

The second part of the workshop will be performative. A repertoire of *guqin* pieces will include "The Empress's Hidden Bitterness in Han Palace," "Lamenting Xiang Ri," "Lyrics of the Autumn Wind," "Pursuit of the Male Phoenix," "Plum Blossoms in Three Movements." and "Flowing Water."

The third part of the workshop will feature songs accompanied by instrumentals: "Song for a Beauty," "Song for Yue's People," "Thinking of Wangsun," "Departure to the Front," "Song of an Autumn Midnight," "For a Guest," and others.

Classical Chinese Buddhist Songs

Guo Qing

This workshop will introduce a genre of classical Chinese instrumental music that conveys Buddhist ideas and atmosphere. The presentations will include;

- Buddhist Songs with Guqin (a Chinese sitar-like instrument) and Heptachord Ensemble: "Praises to Buddha Shakyamuni," "Praises to Amitabha Buddha," and others.
- Guqin and Heptachord Solo: "High Mountains and Flowing Water"
- Heptachord and Xiao (Chinese clarinet) Ensemble: "Wild Geese on the Sandbank"

Music, Life-force, and Holistic Health

Yuh-Wen Wang

Since ancient times, music has been considered to be powerful in affecting human beings, both in Asian and Western cultures. In ancient China treatises and the writings of Plato, music was considered to be so powerful that practicing and listening to it needed to be strictly regulated. Nowadays, however, this power is mainly recognized in the field of music therapy. In daily life, many people are unaware of the effect that music has, other than creating a certain atmosphere for activities such as relaxing, dancing, business, or religious rituals. Yet even healthy people can benefit from good and benevolent music and be elevated to a higher body-mind-spiritual state.

This workshop aims to help participants be alert to the fact that their mind and physical condition are constantly in interaction with their sound environments. When one enjoys music that is benevolent, her energy level can be lifted, so that she is more able to better handle various things she needs to do, both mentally and physically. First, the workshop introduce related notions in classical documents of music and video clips of various musical cultures. Second, it will lead participants to ways of listening to music, so that musical effects can be fully experienced and recognized.

Translating the Dharma

Jhin (Jean) Wookee

Many Dharma translators from various countries participate in the Sakyadhita Conference. If they can meet to share their knowledge and experience, this will give them an opportunity to enhance their translation skills. Further, they can network to contribute their skills in Dharma translation on future occasions.

The workshop will be structured in four sections. The first section will be sharing skills and experiences with Dharma translation. I will share my some of my own practical knowledge and experience gained during my professional career as a Dharma translator for over 15 years and the participants will also share their expertise and experiences. The second section will a presentation of Dharma translation projects in Korea, including the development of a dictionary of Korean-English Dharma Terms by Ok-bae Jeon and the development of English Dharma resources for children at Hello Dharma School by Min-hi Kim. The third section will be a practice session: on paraphrasing moderated by Yeon-ju Hong, a certified simultaneous translator. Each participant will have opportunities to practice paraphrasing a given English presentation and critiquing each others' performance. After one round of paraphrasing presentations, there will be a second round, so that participants can confirm that their translation skills have improved.

Forgiveness Practices

Malia Dominica Wong

All of us have experienced hurt at some time in our lives. When we feel hurt, we try many different ways of forgiving and moving on. But, sometimes, the tools we have been using may seem inadequate to help us break through exceptionally tough situations. And even if we are good at forgiving past hurts, our vocabulary can always be expanded.

This participative workshop will take a look at some practices from other cultures that can be used to help us in our practice of forgiveness. The methods presented will help participants learn to let go of past hurts on the mental, physical, and spiritual levels. The workshop culminates with a period of creative self-reflection.

All Sentient Beings: Our Animal Friends

Rotraut (Jampa) Wurst

This workshop will explore what it means to live together with all sentient beings in one world, with resources that we must share with everyone. It will especially focus on animal welfare, meaning the physical and psychological well-being of non-human beings. From Wikipedia, we learn that "The term *animal welfare* can also mean human concern for animal welfare or a position in a debate on animal ethics and animal rights." This concern for our animal friends is based on awareness – the awareness that animals are sentient beings, just as we are. If our animal friends are sentient beings who are used by

humans, we need to consider their well-being. But many humans do not like to think about animals as sentient beings, because then they have to consider what it means for sentient beings to be used in scientific research, in the pharmaceutical or cosmetic industries, or meat for human consumption. As Buddhists, we need to be mindful in our thoughts, speech, and actions. How can we speak, think, and act mindfully toward our animal friends?

This workshop continues a conversation begun at the 11th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women in Vietnam, jointly facilitated with Sra. Karma Tashi (Savinder Gill).

LGBTQ Across Cultures

Rotraut (Jampa) Wurst

At the last Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women in Vietnam, I held a workshop called “Walking together in Diversity on the Buddha’s Path.” The workshop explored how Buddhism links people together with the intention to foster understanding among people of diverse individual and cultural backgrounds. Together, the participants of the workshop were very careful and respectful in our speech, so as not to offend anyone. LGBTQ issues are widely misunderstood, so we carefully discussed questions of social acceptance, respecting the fact that there are different ideas of family and individual identity in different cultures. In that workshop, we learned that, as long as we are open-minded and sympathetic to others, it is possible to be curious about each other.

From that experience, we also learned that different lifestyles, such as lesbian partnerships, could be discussed openly. It was the wish of the participants at that workshop to have another workshop that would not only continue the conversation, but also give participants a chance to speak more concretely and without feeling constrained and without fear of being rejected by others. In this workshop we will consider the challenges and aspirations of LGBTQ communities in different cultures. It’s time for the Buddhist LGBTQ community to come out!

Dharma Rap

Rotraut (Jampa) Wurst

Often the younger generation is not interested in Buddhist texts, ethics, or culture. To catch their attention and keep it, we need to use skilful methods (*upaya*). In Germany, we have been experimenting with what we call “Dharma Rap,” transmitting Buddhism through the medium of rap music. This modern style of making music sings or, more accurately, recites texts in a rhythmic style, focusing on problems and topics that young people are interested. When we use this creative popular format, we are able to get young people interested in Buddhism.

At the 10th Sakyadhita International Conference on Buddhist Women in Mongolia in 2008, I held a workshop on “Buddhism and Pop Culture.” In that workshop, we created and performed a rap based on an old Buddhist text in Newari language, chanted by nuns and translated into English, so it could be understood by everyone. The rhythmic style brought the text alive and made it contemporary, for easy access. In this new workshop, I would like to focus especially on the popular genre of rap. The intention is to bring together different cultures from all over the world, different Buddhist traditions, and people of all generations, as we were able to do in Mongolia. In this workshop, we will use this modern medium to talk about Buddhist values and share ideas to create a new rap together.