



Brooking Street Bulletin

Issue #94, January 2023



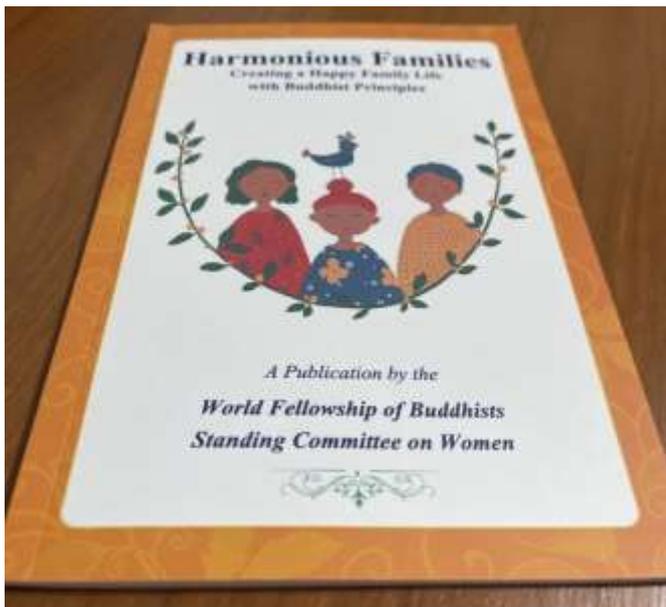
Buddhist Discussion Centre (Upwey) Ltd.

A.C.N. 005 701 806 A.B.N. 42 611 496 488
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*Namo Tassa Bhagavato Arahato
Sammāsambuddhassa*



'Harmonious Families: Creating a Happy Family Life with Buddhist Principles'.

Photo: Claire Ransome

***'Harmonious Families' Published by
The World Fellowship of Buddhists
Standing Committee on Women***

The World Fellowship of Buddhists Standing Committee on Women has published their book 'Harmonious Families: Creating a Happy Family Life with Buddhist Principles'.

Important Dates in 2023

Every Saturday	<u>10.00am – 10.00pm</u> Dhamma Day Meritorious activities
Every Saturday	<u>8.00pm – 10.00pm</u> Buddhist Meditation & Discussion Class
Every Sunday	<u>4.00pm – 5.00pm</u> Buddhist Hour Live on 3MDR Radio 97.1fm
Monday, Wednesday, & Sunday	<u>8.00pm – 8.30pm</u> Nightly guided meditation by senior students
ONLINE - Zoom	
Saturday, 28th January	<u>8.00am – 9.00am</u> Tu An Buddhist Temple Visit
Saturday, 4th February	<u>2.00pm – 4.00pm</u> Hoa Nghiem Buddhist Temple Visit
Every Saturday 18 th Feb- 25 th March 29 th April- 3 rd June	<u>2.00pm – 4.00pm</u> Introduction to Buddhism Course “Bringing Wisdom to Life” (6 weeks)
Onsite at Centre	
Saturday, 11th March to Sunday, 12th March	Labour Day Long Weekend Bhavana Course (2 days)
Tuesday & Thursday 18 th April – 8 th June	<u>8.00pm – 9.30pm</u> Introduction to Buddhism Course “Bringing Wisdom to Life” (8 weeks)
Zoom Online	
Friday, 7th April to Monday, 10th April	Easter Bhavana Course (4 days)

Our Centre has been a member of this committee for many years and our Abbot, Anita Carter wrote the text for the book and a number of our Members



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helped editing the book, along with the rest of the committee. Thank you and well done to all involved.

The book was offered to all of the delegates at the recent World Fellowship of Buddhists Conference held in Thailand in October 2022.

Article: Claire Ransome

Padmasambhava Tsok Days in 2023

Tuesday, 31st January
Wednesday, 1st March
Friday, 31st March
Sunday, 30th April
Tuesday, 30th May
Wednesday, 28th June
Friday, 28th July
Saturday, 26th August
Sunday, 24th September
Tuesday, 24th October
Wednesday, 22nd November
Friday, 22nd December

Christmas 5 Day Bhavana Course – Taming the Mind

The Buddhist Discussion Centre Australia held a Five Day Bhavana course from the 27th to the 31st of December 2022 with the Teacher being our Centre's President and Director, Frank Carter. The main theme was Taming the Mind. The Dalai Lama asserts that 'without taming the mind there is no way to be happy.' Over the five days, participants were provided with many Teachings on various practices needed to tame our minds. Taming the mind allows us to see clearly what is occurring in the moment, helping to increase the frequency of wholesome mental activity and apply corrective antidotes to disrupt and reduce the arising of unwholesome mental tendencies. As one member describes the process: 'taming the mind is a gradual training that requires a gentle and patient attitude

with an acceptance of how things are yet firmly restrains when appropriate'.

To commence the Five Day Bhavana course, members conducted a puja or offering for the great heavenly deity Maha Bodhisattva Sarasvati who represents vast learning with regard to words and their meanings for the purpose of understanding the Buddha Dhamma. It is a ceremony designed to promote scholarship and cultivate a highly effective learning mind. The Bodhisattva Sarasvati is also very helpful for academic or creative endeavours and most beneficial to students. According to the Sutra of Golden Light, Sarasvati made vows to the Tathagata with regard to helping Teachers and Students in the study of the Buddha Dhamma.

One member claimed he 'felt the presence of Sarasvati who was a great help in purifying my mind. Her mantra helped to settle everything and bring about clarity.'

After lunch we read through a collection of short teachings from the Buddhist Nun Venerable Pema Chodron and various extracts from the Dhammapada, the Theragatha and the Majjhima Nikaya. Venerable Chodron advises that taming the mind requires the development of friendliness to the arising and falling of phenomena. She asserts that whether the mind is experiencing small flickering thoughts or loud and intoxicating ideas, it is important to realise that in meditation, it does not matter, there are no preferences for one phenomenon over another. The point of mindfulness is 'seeing what is, noticing that, accepting that, and then going on with life, which, in terms of the technique, is coming back to the simplicity of oneness, the simplicity of the out-breath.' For one member, Chodron's teaching provided great relief that mindfulness is not challenging or exhausting, requiring great effort or skill, it is simply bringing the mind back to the present, moment by moment, second by second.



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In the Dhammapada, the Buddha acknowledges that taming the mind is challenging when he teaches that ‘Just as a fletcher straightens an arrow, so does the wise man straighten his mind which is fickle and unsteady and difficult to guard and difficult to restrain.’

In the *Discourse to Ganaka-Moggallana* from *Majima Nikaya 107*, The Buddha provides advice on controlling our senses:

‘Come you monk, be guarded as to the doors of the sense-organs; having seen a material shape with the eye, do not be entranced with the general appearance, do not be entranced with the detail; for if one dwells with the organ of sight uncontrolled, covetousness and dejection, evil, unskillful states of mind, may flow in. So fare along controlling it, guard the organ of sight, achieve control over the organ of sight. Having heard a sound with the ear... Having smelt a smell with the nose... Having savored a taste with the tongue... Having felt a touch with the body... Having cognized a mental state with the mind, do not be entranced with the detail. For if one dwells with the organ of mind uncontrolled, covetousness and dejection, evil, unskillful states of mind, may flow in. So fare along controlling it; guard the organ of mind, achieve control over the organ of mind.’

As fuel for the cultivation of the Buddhist Path, practitioners are encouraged to make vast stores of merit or wholesome karma towards realisation of the Dhamma. The significant project during the five days was the cataloguing of books for our library. The activity of cataloguing books is done as an offering to the Buddha Dhamma. Our teacher advised us to explicitly set our intention before commencing this task in order to make the right causes. Members were asked to express (aloud) their wish to preserve the Buddha Dhamma for the goal that all beings may attain full and complete

enlightenment. When performing tasks at the Centre, it is important to recollect the real purpose of our actions. The objective is not simply to create a comprehensive and ordered library, but to engage in the act of taming the mind through the observation of precepts and the maintenance of mindfulness. When classifying a text under a subject, our wish is that the book is easy to find for a person seeking information. We also wish to uphold the truth by cataloguing the title under the most accurate and appropriate section.

On the third day of the course participants were blessed by a visit of a Member of the Buddhist Sangha, Most Venerable Digamadulle Wimalananda Thero, Abbot and Spiritual Advisor of Sakyamuni Sambuddha Vihara in Berwick. After the offering of dana, he conducted a Dhamma talk in which he recommended some helpful responses to negative mind states. The first involved doing the opposite, for example, in the case of extreme irritation prompt metta, or loving kindness, when we are experiencing sloth and torpor, prompt action or vigorous effort. He advised not to take ownership of unwholesome thoughts by prompting the view that such thoughts are not me, they are not who I am and I do not need to react to them. Employing mindfulness, we can observe the five hindrances rise and fall and comprehend the danger they pose to our happiness and well-being. This will assist us to develop a tailored antidote to reduce their severity and frequency.

Another teaching studied during our course was the Mahayana Sutra titled *The Seer Vyasa’s Questions* in which the Buddha describes in detail the life and death of beings born in several different sensual heavens. As students considered these Teachings they came to a much better appreciation of the precarious outcoming of not taming our minds addiction to sensual desire. The many good activities we do throughout our lives provide strong potentials for a future birth in a sensual heaven if



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our minds of sensual desire have not been tamed correctly.

Throughout the five days, students were given a rare and valuable opportunity to learn and practice taming the mind. A Dhamma Centre is a most precious environment where students can develop powerful skills and traits that will help them make progress along the Buddha Path. We express our sincere gratitude to our Abbot Anita Carter and Teacher Frank Carter for running this course and to Buddha Shakyamuni for turning the Wheel of the Dhamma.

Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu

Article: Simon Kearney & Frank Carter



Sarasvati Puja

Kathina Ceremonies

Every year at the end of the three month rains retreat in October, Theravada Buddhist Temples conduct their Kathina Ceremonies, the annual offering of robes to the Venerable Sangha.

The Buddhist Discussion Centre Australia encourages all members to attend one or more Kathina Ceremonies per year. The Buddha explained that offering robes to a Sangha member is one of the most powerful and beneficial types of merit. Participants are provided with a most auspicious opportunity to practise generosity, the first of the six perfections in Buddha Dhamma. Our teachers advise that when offering to the sangha, recollect the offering is made to the entire Buddhist community of monastics from the past, present and future. It is also recommended one makes the offering on behalf of all beings. Doing so produces vast amounts of merit and ensures the action is completed with a pure intention.

After a break of three years, members were fortunate to attend four ceremonies at various locations across Melbourne. We visited Sakyamuni Sambuddha Vihara in Berwick, Daham Niketanaya in Yuroke, Dhamma Sarana in Keysborough and Wat Thai Melbourne which was held in Box Hill Town Hall.





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Article: Simon Kearney

Above: David, Mark, Simon, Brooke & Vinse attending the Kathina Ceremony at Daham Niketanaya, Yuroke



Simon receiving Blessings from the Ceremonial Kathina Robe at Daham Niketanaya Buddhist Temple in Yuroke

Photo: Brooke Cross

Bunnings Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser

The Sausage Sizzle Fundraiser at Bunnings Warehouse Scoresby held on Melbourne Cup Day, 1st November 2022, raised \$1,432.71 for our Centre and \$76.35 for Dhammarajika Orphanage in Bangladesh. Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!

We had a steady flow of customers and our team was kept busy in managing the event given the wet and rainy conditions.

Congratulations to all who participated in this meritorious activity of serving food and raising funds for our Centre and Dhammarajika Orphanage.

Our volunteers worked harmoniously and efficiently together. Thank you so much for your

help and support. Well done to all!

The Sausage Sizzle Fundraisers are an opportunity for our Members to practice generosity (dana) and friendliness on a public site. They are fun opportunities for us to make merit by providing food, whilst helping our organisation to generate substantial funds. Participating in such activities creates good karma for our own wellbeing and happiness and teaches us service to others.

There are Five Blessings that arise from giving food.

“In giving a meal, the donor gives five things to the recipient. Which five? He or she gives life, beauty, happiness, strength, and quick-wittedness.

Having given life, he or she has a share in long life, either human or divine.

Having given beauty, he or she has a share in beauty, either human or divine.

Having given happiness, he or she has a share in happiness, either human or divine.

Having given strength, he or she has a share in strength, either human or divine.

Having given quick-wittedness, he or she has a share in quick-wittedness, either human or divine.

In giving a meal, the donor gives these five things to the recipient.”

May you have long life, beauty, happiness, strength and quick-wittedness for offering nutrients to others.

Article: Mark Fowler

Online and Local Dhamma Classes

From August to November, the Buddhist Discussion Centre Australia conducted two eight-week online courses based on our text *Bringing Wisdom to Life*. Running on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, classes explored the fundamental



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elements of Buddhist practice.

Bringing Wisdom to Life is designed to help participants gain an authentic experience of what Buddhism has to offer persons in the modern Australian context. We discussed such subjects as how to increase our generosity throughout a standard working day, what practising the precepts looks like and the many and various opportunities a person has for practising mindfulness. At the end of each class we would set activities based around the topic discussed during that specific lesson. We encouraged students to practise the skill of letting-go by requiring them to find a minor event that they kept replaying in their mind. Participants investigated the influence of the positive reinforcement of one or more precepts on their lives. The discussions facilitated by the teachers were engaging and thought provoking, inspiring a few to explore the practise more deeply.

Article: Simon Kearney

Ksitigarbha Altar

As observers can see, the Bodhisattva Ksitigarbha Altar is progressing. As the past few months has seen the two side walls and back panel put in place with the roof supports now installed. The roof design and the roofing material has been confirmed and the material prepared for the cutting and assembly stage.

Claire's donation of a carved antique wooden decoration for the altar will be used as the primary decoration on the main roof support beam.

Perseverance, patience and careful attention is has been needed on the path to completing this wonderful altar offering.

Article: David Yates

Annual General Meeting

Our Centre's Annual General Meeting was held at the Centre on 13th of August 2022.

Congratulations to Members who were newly elected to the positions below:

- Assistant Fundraising Manger: Mark Fowler
- Assistant Social Media Managers: Connie Siow and Jenny Liu
- Joint LAPAM Manager: Simon Kearney

We thank all the office bearers and management team members for your continued effort, to ensure that the Centre is sustained and fulfils its purpose of bringing Buddha Dhamma to more people.

If you wish to obtain a copy of the minutes, please contact Connie at wbu@bdcu.org.au.

Article: Connie Siow

Marketing and Social Media

Digital Marketing Promotion

In the last six months, we continue to promote our online and in-person 'Bringing Wisdom to Life' course via the chosen digital marketing platforms, which are:

- Facebook – including Facebook posts, Facebook ads and sharing posts on various Facebook groups
- Weekend Notes
- Meet Up
- Eventbrite

In October/November 2022, we have added a new marketing campaign to promote our weekend meditation sessions. Thank you to Simon Kearney and Peter Marshall for offering your time for the video production.

During the year, we ran three digital marketing



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campaigns for our courses, which resulted in around 60 registrations for our two online courses and 30 registrations for our onsite course. Of this number of registrations, around 50 percent of the people actually attended the classes. To provide the right teaching conditions for the online classes, we conducted two classes each week for 15 participants.

In January/February 2023, the social media team will come together to review the current marketing efforts and create a new marketing plan for the year. We want to improve our marketing performance and explore new ways or new channels to promote our Centre’s activities. If you have any feedback or would like to get involved, please contact Connie.

Article: Connie Siow

Library Report

Homage to the Buddha, Dhamma and Sangha.

The Buddhist Discussion Centre, like many other Buddhist temples, offers a place where beings come to hear, practice, realise and preserve the Buddha Dhamma, the words and teachings of Lord Buddha. Our heritage library began in 1978 and has expanded its collection from year to year, mainly through the generous donation of books by individuals or other Buddhist organisations. Preservation and dissemination of the Buddha Dhamma is at the core of our Centre's mission.

During the Christmas Bhavana course held on 27th-31st of December 2022, members of the Centre were able to put their cataloguing skills learnt during the September Bhavana course to practice.

Members gathered into three teams, they worked joyously and collaboratively in cataloguing of Dhamma books for the heritage library as part of their merit making activity.

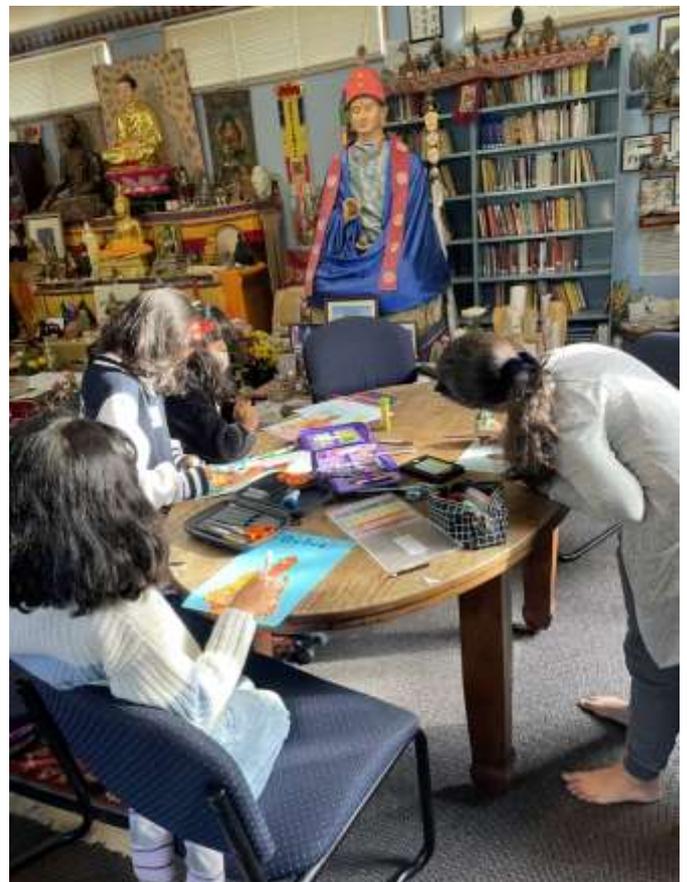
The Buddha Dhamma is rare to meet, we must look after it well and make the causes for ourselves and others to meet with the Dhamma again and again. May we always have the fortune to meet with the Dhamma, practice the Dhamma and realise the Dhamma for the benefit of self and all sentient beings. Thank you for assisting to keep the Buddha Dhamma in the world.

Sadhu Sadhu Sadhu.

Article: Vinse Cheung

Children’s Buddha Dhamma Classes

In 2022 we ran Children's Classes in Term 1, 2 and 3. Our classes have been well-attended with around 8-12 children attending each session, along with their parents. It's been wonderful to see the same families choosing to return each term.





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Above: Children’s Buddha Dhamma Class at the Centre

The families have had the opportunity to learn about the story of the Buddha, be introduced to Buddhist Teachings such as mindfulness and generosity, participate in guided meditations, learn Buddhist songs and do activities such as colouring in and crafts.

We have received great feedback from both the children and parents that they have found the sessions engaging and beneficial. Thank you to our teachers Claire, Sally, Simon, Vinse and Brooke for leading the classes.

We will run Children's Classes once again in 2023. The dates will be advertised soon on our website. Please email wbu@bdcu.org.au if you are interested in attending.

Article and Photo: Claire Ransome

Members News

Claire & Destin are delighted to announce the birth of their baby, Orlando. Members of the BDCU held a baby shower on Saturday 8th of October and Claire gave birth the following day, Sunday 9th October! Claire & Des wish to thank the members for the loving support and generosity offered by the members in their journey to becoming parents.



Connie celebrating her Birthday at the Centre, pictured with Anita, Frank and Vinse.



Claire’s Baby Shower with Anita, Frank and Simon



Frank celebrating his Birthday at the Centre

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BDC Members attending Claire's Baby Shower



Vajrasattva Puja held at the Centre in October



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Member's Recipe

Favourite Biscuits

Ingredients

- 125g Softened Butter
- 1 TSP Vanilla Essence/Paste
- ½ Cup White Sugar
- ½ Cup Brown Sugar
- 1 Egg
- 1 Cup Plain Flour
- ½ TSP of Bicarb Soda
- ½ TSP of Baking Powder
- ½ Cup of Dark Chocolate Chips
- ½ Cup Desiccated Coconut
- 1 Cup Rolled Oats

Method

1. Preheat oven to 175 degrees fan forced.
2. Line two baking trays with baking paper.
3. In a large bowl, place the butter, vanilla and both sugars and using either hand beaters, electric mixer or by hand with a wooden spoon, combine until lighter in colour and creamy in texture.
4. Add the egg and beat until well combined.
5. Add remaining ingredients and stir until just combined.
6. Using a Teaspoon, roll balls of the mixture and place on pre-lined trays leaving space in between each to allow for expansion.
7. Press down lightly on each ball of dough to flatten slightly.
8. Bake in preheated oven for ten to fifteen minutes until lightly golden.

9. Allow to cool on tray before storing in an air tight container or tin. They will stay fresh for about a week.



Article and Photo: Brooke Cross