

# BODHI BULLETIN

DHARMA NEWS FROM BODHI MONASTERY • JANUARY 2003

## Good Question, Good Answer

*The following is a translation of an answer to a question asked of Ven. Master Jen-Chun during our meditation sitting on 11/24/02.*

**Q** Shifu, you spoke of the need to examine the self in your Dharma Talk yesterday. What guidance can you give us to do this during meditation practice.

**A** To learn Buddhism, one must begin by understanding oneself. It is the most difficult task. If one is able to understand oneself, one will be able to understand everything around them. One will be able to subdue or dissolve one's defilements – internally will not be trapped by the self-ego, and externally not disturbed by the environment. In order to acquire such ability, one must learn to meditate. Meditation will help us focus our minds and not be scattered. Once the mind is focused, then we can contemplate the Dharma.

After the mind is focused and settled, how does one contemplate 'no-self'?

Most ordinary people are attached to the notion of a real self. They believe in the existence of a 'self' that is permanent and dominant.

Believing in permanence is when one thinks that there is a real self within our body and mind. Then we must ask ourselves the question: Where is this self? If it is in us then we should be able to isolate it and identify it. Even if we were to use X-ray, will we be able to see the self? After investigation and scrutiny, we will come to the conclusion that there is no self that is permanent.

Believing in dominance is when one thinks that one has total control over one's own life. If that's the case, can one stop death or sickness? With today's medical advancements, we still have no say over our lives when it comes to sickness or death. Therefore, how true is dominance?

If we cannot identify a real self, nor can we have dominance over our lives, then where is this real self that we think exists? By persistently asking ourselves the above questions during meditation, then gradually our notion of a self can be dissolved.

When the Dharma refers to the self, it refers to the conditioned self – the self that arises from causes and conditions. Understanding that the self is due to all sorts of causes and conditions, we can dissolve all kinds of conflicts, and establish all kinds of wholesome conditions. We must learn to make good use of this conditioned self and dissolve the notion of a real self.

### Sign Up for Intro Course

The six-week Introduction to Buddhism and Meditation Course begins on January 4th and runs through February 8th. There is still time to register. Call or e-mail for more information.

Please call or e-mail us for more information:  
tel: 973.940.0473 email: [info@bodhimonastery.net](mailto:info@bodhimonastery.net)



## NEWS

### Pali Course to be Taped

If you could not join the course being run on Saturdays, you will be able to listen to the taped lessons at a different time yet to be determined. You will need to purchase the course book and do the drills to benefit.

### Shifu and Bhante Join in with Us

Shifu and Bhante will be answering questions we may have on our practice after meditating with us on Sundays.

### Basic Meditation Instruction on Jan. 5th

Ven. Adam gives instruction from 9:30am-11:00am on the first Sunday of every month. Please dress in layers as it is chilly in the Monastery.

BODHI MONASTERY  
67 Lawrence Road  
Lafayette, NJ 07848

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# January Saturday Dharma Talk Schedule

Ven. Master Jen-Chun (Shifu) and Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi (Bhante) will be giving Dharma Talks through January.

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|                |                 |   |
|----------------|-----------------|---|
| SAT., JAN. 4TH | 10:00am-10:45am | Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi Dharma Talk                              |
|                | 10:55am-11:30am | Monthly Ceremony<br>(Circumambulation, chanting, offerings) |
|                | 11:35am-12:00pm | Lunch/Free time   |
|                | 12:00pm-1:00pm  | Merit Gathering (volunteer chores)                          |
|                | 1:15pm-2:00pm   | Ven. Master Jen-Chun Dharma Talk                            |

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|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| SAT., JAN. 11TH | 10:00am-10:45am | Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi Dharma Talk     |
|                 | 11:15am-12:00pm | Lunch/Free time                    |
|                 | 12:00pm-1:00pm  | Merit Gathering (volunteer chores) |
|                 | 1:15pm-2:00pm   | Ven. Master Jen-Chun Dharma Talk   |

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|----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| SAT., JAN 18TH | 10:00am-10:45am | Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi Dharma Talk     |
|                | 11:15am-12:00pm | Lunch/Free time                    |
|                | 12:00pm-1:00pm  | Merit Gathering (volunteer chores) |
|                | 1:15pm-2:00pm   | Ven. Master Jen-Chun Dharma Talk   |

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|-----------------|-----------------|------------------------------------|
| SAT., JAN. 25TH | 10:00am-10:45am | Ven. Bhikkhu Bodhi Dharma Talk     |
|                 | 11:15am-12:00pm | Lunch/Free time                    |
|                 | 12:00pm-1:00pm  | Merit Gathering (volunteer chores) |
|                 | 1:15pm-2:00pm   | Ven. Master Jen-Chun Dharma Talk   |

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## SPECIAL NOTE FOR THOSE REGISTERED FOR THE PALI CLASS:

Class will begin at 2:30pm not 2:45pm. The course starts Saturday, January 4th.

## BODHI BRIEFS

### GET WELL SISTER BRANDY

We transfer merits to Sister Brandy that she may get well soon. She is on sick leave for about a month.

### CHILDREN'S BUDDHISM BOOKS IN CHINESE DELIVERED

We are developing our children's Buddhism program in Chinese. Ms. Tsi-Pei King will be working with the children.

### BRING YOUR CHILDREN!

A local children's organization has donated general children's books in English for the children to enjoy while their parents listen to the Dharma Talks.

### THANKS FOR THE TURKEYS

We may not eat them but we were happy to give them to those who needed them. Turkeys were collected and offered through our Food Pantry during the holidays.

### REMINDER:

Evening Chanting Liturgy is held 7 days a week from 4:30pm-5:00pm. All are welcome.

*We welcome contributions or ideas for the Bulletin. Though we may not always be able to use them, we do appreciate your input.*