

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello everyone :)

Eliza Madrigal: maybe my rl cold is affecting technology :)

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Gaya !

Gaya Ethaniel: SL is not quite right for me either ^^;;;

Mitsu Ishii: your avatar looks fine to me

Eliza Madrigal: I was told I kept falling asleep and waking up...

Eliza Madrigal: narcolepsy

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Mitsu Ishii: huh

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Mitsu Ishii: oh

Dao Yheng: Hi Eliza, Gaya, Mitsu

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Dao :)

Dao Yheng: I think Mits is trying to get Kat online

Dao Yheng: she likes lojong

Mitsu Ishii: Yeah Kat is downloading SL on her old laptop

Eliza Madrigal: Ah, great

Gaya Ethaniel: ok :)

Dao Yheng: Does anyone have first thoughts about the aphorisms, or a favorite aphorism?

Eliza Madrigal: Well, the second one listed is one that seems to come up in various places....

Eliza Madrigal: "Treat everything you perceive as a dream"

Gaya Ethaniel scans the list :)

Eliza Madrigal: It can be criticized by some... the general idea of not taking things seriously... but I'm sure that's not what is meant

Eliza Madrigal: I wondered about others' thoughts there.

Dao Yheng: No, I don't think so -- more related to emptiness, I think

Gaya Ethaniel: For me, seeing as dreams means shedding ... to see clearly without attachments.

Gaya Ethaniel: I wasn't upset when I had my own funeral dream ... :)

Eliza Madrigal nods... those two thoughts go together quite nicely... we can't be attached to what we perceive as empty, in a sense?

Mitsu Ishii: The theme of dreams comes up a lot in Buddhism

Eliza Madrigal nods

Mitsu Ishii: for example there's the whole practice of dream yoga

Eliza Madrigal: yes I'm quite interested in that

Dao Yheng: Have you tried a little Eliza?

Eliza Madrigal: yes.. visualizing the white Ah...

Eliza Madrigal: a breathing technique or two

Dao Yheng: (Gaya, I remember you also writing about dreams)

Eliza Madrigal: yes, the laughing dream!

Dao Yheng: And did you notice a difference in your dream life?

Gaya Ethaniel: True but I don't know what dream yoga is. Stim once gave me an advice on 'what to do' during lucid dreams at one workshop. That's about it.

Eliza Madrigal: I can't say that a difference in dreams directly flows from the practice... but surely meditation/practice/reading affects dream life

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Tim :)

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Tim :)

Timbo Quan: Hello everyone

Dao Yheng: Hi Tim!

Mitsu Ishii: hi Tim!

Eliza Madrigal: I guess I have an easier time bringing rl practice into sleep than visa versa....

Dao Yheng: Interesting, say more?

Eliza Madrigal: daily 'seeing everything as a dream' is a bit illusive

Eliza Madrigal: Someone, in talking about emptiness

Eliza Madrigal: Hi Katharine

Dao Yheng: (Mits is showing her how to sit :)

Eliza Madrigal: said that the way things appear and the way they are, are congruous... when we're seeing directly...

Gaya Ethaniel: Hello Katherine

Katharine Kozlowski: hi

Gaya Ethaniel: Are you the Katherine we met a few months ago?

Mitsu Ishii: so we're talking about "Treat everything you perceive as a dream" one

Dao Yheng: Stim once gave us an easy exercise on seeing real life as a dream -- I don't think he'd mind me sharin this one since it's been described elsewhere too...

Katharine Kozlowski: yes, that was me

Eliza Madrigal: so i suppose it is a matter of attending to that on a regular basis... of, in rl stopping and seeing everything as a dream, like one would do in dreams, to stop and think "this is a dream"

Eliza Madrigal: Ah, would love that dao

Gaya Ethaniel: ah :) welcome back.

Dao Yheng: basically, very simple -- use a simple trigger like walking through a door or turning on water on a faucet and simply ask yourself is this a dream?

Gaya Ethaniel: Or how would I feel if this situaion was a dream?

Gaya Ethaniel: [That was re: Eliza's comment]

Eliza Madrigal: ah

Eliza Madrigal: So using 'something' as a tool...

Gaya Ethaniel: ah, that sounds fun Dao :)

Mitsu Ishii: the idea isn't so much to see things as illusory exactly so much as to realize that everything we perceive is co-dependent with the mind

Dao Yheng: The idea is that such a repetition can be used to help you become lucid in dreams

Mitsu Ishii: even when we're awake, it's like a dream in that sense

Dao Yheng: but Stim was also suggesting it as a way to see your life as well

Dao Yheng: (yes, what Mitsu said :)

Eliza Madrigal: hmm, nods...

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Mitsu Ishii: for me, the Lojong are always very helpful because they're so short and in some ways very blunt reminders of various points, also they're kind of funny

Gaya Ethaniel: I will keep that exercise in mind over the coming week I think.

Mitsu Ishii: and applicable in many varied situations. for example "When everything goes wrong, treat disaster as a way to wake up"

Mitsu Ishii: or "Take all the blame yourself."

Dao Yheng: The potential problem I see with Lojong is that there is awa way to take these exhortations in a

negative way

Gaya Ethaniel: In what sense negative?

Eliza Madrigal: hm, as in taking blame?

Dao Yheng: like that last one -- I'm sure it doesn't mean "Blame yourself, you silly goose"

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Eliza Madrigal: most of us blame ourselves for everything in a very disempowering way sometimes... so yes doesn't seem it could mean to do that

Gaya Ethaniel: heh :)

Mitsu Ishii: like the phrase that inspired Chekhawa "Victory and gain for others, defeat and loss for oneself"

Mitsu Ishii: could be taken negatively :) but really it's an exhortation to stop worrying about results, and to be happy for others

Eliza Madrigal: in the sense of exchanging self for others.... having a sense of generosity...

Dao Yheng: but if you're in a bad mood (as I tend to be in wintertime :) then it's easier to fall into self-abnegation

Gaya Ethaniel: Even taken literally, "Take all the blame yourself." can be useful as it is easy to blame external factors/others.

Gaya Ethaniel: And nothing wrong with us or we haven't done anything wrong.

Mitsu Ishii: every time I read the Lojong it just makes me happy, sometimes I even get little tears :)

Dao Yheng: (Mits is a sucker for those stories about recognizing the error of your ways...)

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Mitsu Ishii: yes, I always cry when the villain recognizes the error of their ways in a movie or TV show. I really identify with that!

Gaya Ethaniel: I liked this one, something on my mind at the moment I guess: Foster three key elements; a teacher, an effective practice, and conditions conducive to practice.

Mitsu Ishii: I feel often like I was some huge villain in a past life.

Gaya Ethaniel: hm ...

Eliza Madrigal smiles

Gaya Ethaniel: ah ... ok

Eliza Madrigal has made some hugely blind moves in this one...

Mitsu Ishii: yes and I'm still trying to make up for all the damage I did

Gaya Ethaniel: What is 'this one' Eliza?

Eliza Madrigal: this life :)

Gaya Ethaniel: ah ok

Eliza Madrigal: The sentence you pointed out, Gaya ... especially this last part "conditions conducive to practice"

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes?

Eliza Madrigal: what does that mean to you... ordering life/time in such a way?

Mitsu Ishii: Yes I am curious Gaya how you imagine you are working on the issue of finding a teacher and practice and so on

Gaya Ethaniel: Not sure yet ... if it doesn't refer to arranging time/space only.

Gaya Ethaniel: For two days, I spit on paper, 'No Robot' ... so it may also be about being aware of one's practice as well?

Dao Yheng: :)

Dao Yheng: that's definitely a tricky one -- getting a sense for what is helpful at a given time

Eliza Madrigal: "no robot" ?

Dao Yheng: sometimes, it can seem totally pointless, but you just need to stick with it a bit

Mitsu Ishii: one other thing to note about the Lojong is that there is a practice that usually goes with the teaching of the aphorisms

Dao Yheng: other times, it really is time for a change

Gaya Ethaniel: Well ... sometimes I do get into a routine without seeing what's required each time freshly.

Eliza Madrigal: with each one Mitsu?

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes, regular practice in general seems to help towards that ... seeing better what's more suitable.

Mitsu Ishii: no, the whole set. the practice is Tonglen

Mitsu Ishii: <http://www.shambhala.org/teachers/pema/tonglen1.php>

Eliza Madrigal: Ah, yes....

Mitsu Ishii: it's probably most closely related to this one: "Solve all problems by accepting the bad energy and sending out the good."

Mitsu Ishii: but it's in the spirit of the whole set of aphorisms

Gaya Ethaniel: Re: finding a teacher, I just go about and see ... I've been looking around for a while :)

Anyway, no need to hurry ...

Gaya Ethaniel: Re: practice, I just experiment as I go along, try something different here and there when necessary. Sometimes, I just make it up.

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: That's Tonglen?

Eliza Madrigal: . There are many ways to do tonglen...

Gaya Ethaniel: Pila and I did something similar with a tai chi posture the other day. That was fun.

Eliza Madrigal: it's a practice I've engaged in a bit... watching news coverage...

Mitsu Ishii: I think what I like about Lojong and Tonglen is that it's a different focus from where I started with Buddhism and practice. I started out primarily focused on mindfulness, "beginner's mind", emptiness, fresh awareness/presence, etc.

Gaya Ethaniel: He actually described it as 'receiving and transmitting' which made a lot of sense to me.

Eliza Madrigal: hmmm

Mitsu Ishii: but I realized later that there's a very central/key matter which has something to do with giving up, letting go the need for things to work out in a particular way

Gaya Ethaniel: Yes train broad and deep ... practice on every object.

Gaya Ethaniel: But then again, can't overload a cow like a lion :)

Eliza Madrigal: ah, so tonglen then for you Mitsu, is a constant practice of 'taking the lesser portion' as Stim says...?

Dao Yheng: cow like a lion -- I've never heard that before :)

Mitsu Ishii: I think Gaya is looking at another translation

Gaya Ethaniel: lol that was "Don't put an ox's load on a cow."

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: That's not about knowing limits ... funny how I read it.

Mitsu Ishii: or translating it differently in her mind :) well, not just the idea of taking the lesser portion but giving up on the need for things to go a certain way in general

Mitsu Ishii: I actually apply it also even to my hopes for others

Mitsu Ishii: Once I asked Steven/Stim for advice because I was trying to help a friend and he was suffering

a great deal

Mitsu Ishii: and I was trying to help him, and I couldn't figure out how to do it

Mitsu Ishii: because he wasn't understanding what I was trying to say

Gaya Ethaniel: ^^;;; I just read them through without reading explanations on this site:

<http://www.unfetteredmind.org/mindtr.../fullindex.php>

Mitsu Ishii: so I asked Stim about it, and he said "consider the possibility he will NEVER understand"

Gaya Ethaniel: Now Stim is asking too much ^^;;;

Mitsu Ishii: that hit me like a lightning bolt ... I had to give up my hopes even for my friend, and just help even though it may never work!

Gaya Ethaniel: Isn't it also because with hope, fear is born?

Mitsu Ishii: yes, I think hope is pernicious! :)

Eliza Madrigal: :)

Gaya Ethaniel: :)

Eliza Madrigal: hm, just help

Eliza Madrigal: no attachments to results

Mitsu Ishii: right "abandon all hope of results" --- even for others

Katharine Kozlowski: I used to have a printout of the lojong that I read over and over again on the subway

Mitsu Ishii: you call it "subway" where you live too?

Mitsu Ishii: oh Katharine said that!

Gaya Ethaniel: [tube or underground here]

Katharine Kozlowski: somehow it was comforting to read it even if i didn't think i could live up to them

Dao Yheng: Mmm -- how so Kat?

Katharine Kozlowski: I'm not really sure, maybe it was just reminding myself that this other stance was possible

Katharine Kozlowski: I also think there was something helpful about going through the whole list, rather than just concentrating on one of them

Eliza Madrigal: Seems kind of like vows... you can't do them... but somehow attending to them can kick them in? activate them in a kind of 'not doing' way...

Gaya Ethaniel: That makes sense.

Mitsu Ishii: yes, though they seem quite varied, they hang together quite well as a group

Gaya Ethaniel: Once in a while look through the whole list.

Eliza Madrigal nods...

Mitsu Ishii: unlike Zen koans which are very pointed and really seem to work better when you focus on one at a time, the Lojong are more gentle in a way, and seem to work well as a group

Gaya Ethaniel: Wonder if we can come up with a Lojong exercise to do until next meeting?

Eliza Madrigal: nice idea Gaya

Dao Yheng: Seems like a couple came up in this conversation -- life as a dream, or simply reading a few each day?

Gaya Ethaniel: Great, sounds good.

Eliza Madrigal: I am definitely going to think of tools/triggers I might use in daily life... to remind of life as a dream...

Mitsu Ishii: okay, we can start with the dream one

Mitsu Ishii: okay, take care everyone great to see you all bye

Dao Yheng: OK, thanks all!

Timbo Quan: ok bye all - take care

Eliza Madrigal: Thanks everyone, bye for now :)

Katharine Kozlowski: bye

Gaya Ethaniel: See you later :)