

*“Everything is interconnected ...
The concept of we and they
is no longer relevant.
We must look at the whole world
as one entity - just we.”*

- His Holiness, the Dalai Lama

Reflections on the Messages of the Dalai Lama

His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, gave two talks at UCSB April 24, 2009. The following day, Professor Nandini Iyer led a forum at the Institute on his messages. The notes below touch on only a few of the points made at both gatherings. However, the lectures delivered by the Dalai Lama can be heard online at the following website: <http://www.kcsb.org/>

The crowd of nearly 5,000 people rose to their feet in hushed silence as His Holiness, the Dalai Lama, walked onto the stage at the Events Center at the University of California in Santa Barbara. He paused and bowed deeply to the audience, as well as to those around him. Even before he had spoken one word, the Dalai Lama had delivered a key message – we are all fundamentally connected because of our inherent humanity, regardless of all the seeming external differences. The strong presence of the Dalai Lama spoke deeply to us.

Then the Dalai Lama prostrated to the image of the Buddha above the stage. Again, without saying a word, he delivered a second message - his teachings are based upon the ancient lineage of great teachers, and remain relevant today.

(Continued on page 3)

Theme for 2009: Expressions of Spiritual Striving

Aim 5: To deepen awareness of man's spiritual striving and its rich variety of expression
in the religions, philosophies and literatures of humanity. —Declaration of Interdependence

UPCOMING EVENTS

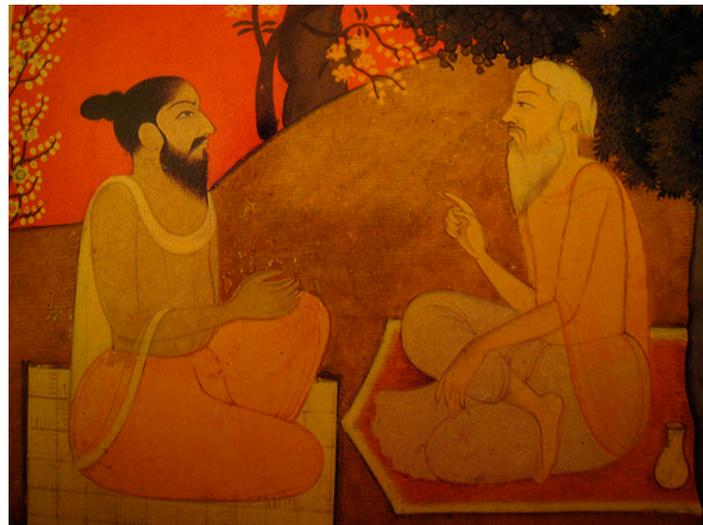


Symbolism of the Quest in Myth

Seminar: Saturday, May 9
2:00 - 5:00 pm
Concord House, 1407 Chapala St.
Santa Barbara
Presenters: Nandini Iyer
and Garrett Riegg

How do myths from different cultures depict the goals and challenges of a quest for knowledge or spiritual enlightenment? What meaning does such a quest hold for modern life? The speakers will offer their insights with reference to a variety of myths and stories and invite discussion of such questions.

For information: (805) 967-1055
<http://www.worldculture.org>



The Way of the Seeker

Seminar: Saturday, May 23
2:00 - 5:00 pm
Concord House, 1407 Chapala St.
Santa Barbara
Presenter: Pravrajika Vrajaprana

The speaker, a Vedanta nun and scholar, will underline the importance of asking questions in any search for spiritual understanding. The seminar will primarily center upon the dialogue in the Hindu text, the Katha Upanishad. Nachiketas's search is every person's search, and is as relevant today as during the Upanishadic times.

For information: (805) 967-1055
<http://www.worldculture.org>

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Reflections on the Messages of the Dalai Lama



Then, with a smile, he looked around at the audience with an air of recognition. The electricity in the air was palpable. Without saying a word, the Dalai Lama brought the crowd to a point of relaxed attention.

The first of two lectures to be delivered was entitled, 'The Nature of Mind'. He began by reciting in Tibetan an invocation to the Buddha by Nagarjuna. We were moved, challenged and inspired by his lecture on the nature of the mind.

He said we need to reduce the negative emotions of anger, hatred, envy, and fear, while strengthening the constructive emotions of loving kindness and compassion. It is through the mind that we can reduce the destructive emotions. The subtler levels of consciousness are out of reach of the coarser levels

of mind.

Ultimately, the essential nature of the mind is pure light. He also referred to it as the 'primordial mind' and the primordial Buddhahood; this pure mind is possessed by all human beings. This pure state of mind is obscured by the destructive emotions, but when these negative afflictions are cleansed, then one becomes reawakened to the essential pure state of the mind. His Holiness gave detailed teachings on different states of consciousness, based on the philosophical principles of the great Indian and Tibetan masters of Mahayana Buddhism.

The theme throughout the day was the absolute importance of treating all beings with love and compassion. He said all religions teach the message of forgiveness and tolerance, and encourage reducing anger, hatred, fear and suspicion. The Dalai Lama recommended resolving problems of the mind with the mind rather than relying on external means,

(Continued on page 4)

In May

Anniversaries

- 2nd Satyajit Ray, Bengali filmmaker b. 1921
- 4th T. H. Huxley, English biologist b. 1825
- 5th Soren Kierkegaard, Danish philosopher, theologian b. 1813
- 5th Karl Marx, German philosopher, historian, revolutionary b. 1818
- 6th Sigmund Freud, Austrian psychiatrist b. 1856
- 7th Rabindranath Tagore, Bengali poet, philosopher, musician, writer, educator, Nobel Laureate b. 1861
- 7th Robert Browning, English poet, playwright b. 1812
- 7th Johannes Brahms, German musician, composer b. 1833
- 8th Helena Petrovna Blavatsky, Russian Countess, co-founder of the Theosophical Society d. 1891
- 9th José Ortega y Gasset, Spanish humanist philosopher b. 1883
- 12th Florence Nightingale, Italian nurse, writer, statistician b. 1820
- 14th Robert Owen, Welsh social reformer, founder of socialism and the cooperative movement b. 1771
- 21st Albrecht Durer, German painter, printmaker b. 1471
- 22nd Raja Ram Mohan Roy, Indian religious, educational reformer b. 1772
- 23rd Carolus Linnaeus, Swedish botanist, physician, zoologist b. 1707
- 23rd Franz Anton Mesmer, German physician, astrologist b. 1734
- 25th Ralph Waldo Emerson, American essayist, philosopher, poet b. 1803
- 27th Jawaharlal Nehru, political leader, Prime Minister of India d. 1964 (con't. p. 5)

such as drugs and alcohol. The discipline of meditation is part of the purification of mind, and grows out of a motivation to free all beings from suffering. He repeated several times that he is not a healer, nor does he make any extraordinary claims for himself.

“Ethics is a universal value.”

The Dalai Lama extended the teaching of compassion in his second talk, “Ethics for Our Time”, by explaining the fundamental nature of humanity as one. He said, “We need essential global responsibility. Think – 6 billion human beings – all equal.”

Maintaining a healthy mental attitude will help individuals face unhappiness, doubt and fear. He said, “The only thing which brings inner peace is my own inner value – compassion, and the spirit of forgiveness, and also, a realistic attitude. These things bring inner comfort.” Compassion opens our heart to others and allows us to see reality better.

Towards the end of the second lecture, His Holiness was asked, “When life becomes such hard work,

how do you maintain a peaceful and happy heart?” The Dalai Lama responded by saying that mind, like matter, has many components. He explained that even a tiny flower has many particles, shades, and colors. Similarly, the mind is not just of one type. There are many different elements to the mind.

He compared the discipline of the mind to caring for flowers, but just as one should not over tend or neglect one’s garden, one should not over-discipline or under-discipline the mind. He then referred to a passage by a Tibetan master that explained that if when observing one’s mental state one recognizes a greater tendency towards grasping at things that are impermanent, one should apply an antidote. The antidote is to reflect more on the impermanent and transient nature of things. On the other hand, if one has a tendency to not take one’s time seriously, then it is important to reaffirm the awareness of the preciousness of human existence.

He said that regardless of one’s stage of life, young, middle-aged or older, there will be drawbacks. Mentally knowing these things, we will

understand that problems are part of the nature of life. Many Tibetans see problems as the result of their own karma, and therefore accept responsibility for the problems that arise as the consequence of causes that they sowed earlier. He explained that one’s mental attitude is the key factor.

The Dalai Lama referred to a passage by the Buddhist saint Shantideva saying that if there is a solution to a problem one is facing, then there is no need to worry about it. However, if there is no solution, then there is no point in worrying about it at all. His characteristic chuckling laughter followed – and the crowd joined him in laughter.

“Conversation on Messages of the Dalai Lama”

The next day Professor Nandini Iyer led a forum, “Conversation on Messages of the Dalai Lama”, at the Institute. She began with a brief history of Tibetan Buddhism.

Again and again, she pointed out that, as the Buddha emphasized, we need to think things out for ourselves in the mind to try to make the mind clear. Rather than rely on others to *(Continued on page 5)*

tell us the meaning of texts and teachings, we need to think through the meanings ourselves. Our problems arise due to the ego, the constantly changing entity, with its grasping demands; therefore, we need to clear up the false notion of the self before the mind can understand clearly.

A question was asked about how the truth of suffering would be reinterpreted again and again. The suggestion was to put oneself in another's shoes. Professor Iyer distinguished between suffering and unhappiness. While suffering is inevitable, unhappiness is not. Think of why you are unhappy to gain understanding.

Professor Iyer explained when answering a question about meditation and self-study that the Dalai Lama talked about the gap between ordinary states and mindfulness. Meditation involves an internal focus such as through Deity Yoga or on a mandala. We are all potential Buddhas; whether we become Buddhas is dependent on our own effort. *Russ and Gerry Lewin*



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New: Audio and video links – "Unveiling the Kumulipo"

PRISM ONLINE COMMUNITY CALENDAR

PRISM lists member-recommended community events of interest on the IWC website. Please e-mail suggestions to donna@worldculture.org.



Looking Forward

Emerson on Circles

**Forum: Saturday,
 June 6, 2009
 4:00 – 6:00 pm
 1407 Chapala St.,
 Santa Barbara**

Speaker: Joseph Miller

In May

Anniversaries (cont.)

- 30th Joan of Arc, French heroine, Catholic saint d. 1431
- 31st Walt Whitman, American poet, essayist, journalist, humanist b. 1819

Observances

- 1st May Day, Ancient Druid new year celebration, Roman holiday honoring Flora, the goddess of flowers.
- 1st International Workers' Day or Labor Day celebrated worldwide
- 8th (2009) Buddha Purnima observed in India to honor the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha
- 10th (2009) Mother's Day celebrated in the U.S.
- 11th The world's oldest known printed book, the Diamond Sutra, printed in 868 C.E.
- 15th (2009) U.N. International Day of Families observed worldwide
- 17th Brown vs. Board of Education landmark ruling by the U.S. Supreme Court regarding segregation first announced in 1954
- 20th David Livingstone crossed Africa coast to coast in 1856
- 21st Charles Lindbergh completes first solo, non-stop flight from New York to Paris in 1927
- 24th First telegraph message sent by Samuel Morse in 1844
- 25th (2009) Memorial Day commemorates U.S. men and women who died in military service
- 29th Fall of Constantinople in 1453