

Sangharakshita Skype Q & A: Aryaloka Retreat Center, July 15th 2012



thebuddhistcentre @buddhistcentre

Abbreviations: Q = Question, A = Answer, DM = Direct Message, RT = Retweet

– We just connected with the New York city Sangha, who are joining in with the call...

– Q. Where did you first learn Mindfulness of Breathing & Metta Bhavana?
#Bhante

– A. In Singapore, from a monk there, during his time in the army. The Metta Bhavana he just picked up!

– Q. Advice about the Just Sitting practice. How long should I sit?

– A. It depends on context. If you're meditating every day not necessarily for long time. But if on retreat, as long as you can/like is great!

– Q. Importance of solitary retreats if you have family, work responsibilities? #Bhante #Triratna

– A. It's of utmost importance to do longer retreat, at least one time a year, despite practical difficulties.

– Q. Did your experiences in India around Dr. Ambedkar provide a blueprint for formation of FWBO/Triratna?

– A. Was in India many years before met Dr. Ambedkar. But when saw effect of conversion on ex-Untouchables he was more aware of socio-economic

– ...aspects of Dharma in people's lives. At time intended to stay in India but when came back he thought about it more. pic.twitter.com/Z35T4gVB



- His vision of a 'New Society' still alive and important in offering an alternative way to live.
- Q. Triratna now worldwide across cultures. Do you see difficulties in that for a common approach?
- A. Not so much these days. Secularised Western cultures has impinged everywhere. But much in local traditional cultures we need to absorb.
- Q. Thoughts on long quote about "the Ideal Society".
- A. The Ideal Society = The New Society. The nucleus is sangha of Order members, Mitras & Friends. Living & working together. Model...
- ...is based on a network where we co-operate with each other rather than compete. [#triratnaconnect](#)
- Q. Is there a more international scale compassionate project we in

Triratna could engage with collectively?

– A. Mentions the Roma people in Romania and Subhuti's work (influenced by Ambedkarite work in India) to fight for religious freedom.

– Q. What are books that are still most influential for you?

– A. Diamond Sutra that he first heard and made him realise he was a Buddhist! Now has audiobook since going blind and still listens!

– A. The Dhammapada and the Nikayas, particularly Majjhima Nikaya: Sutta Nipata, Itthivutaka, Udana. We should have acquaintance with these!



– RT: ལྷོ་མཁའི་སྐྱེ་བུ་ @dharma_gal

"Attenta a @buddhistcentre con las palabras de Sangharakshita."

– Order members should give more attention to learning & studying them! Also Mahayana: White Lotus Sutra Lectures on these in Gangtok & Bombay

– Remembering talk in Bombay at Nichiren temple, monk bearing drum. Explaining the Nichiren chant saluting the White Lotus Sutra.

– Vimalakirti Nirdesa, Sutra of Golden Light. Latter perhaps most important. Series of lectures available on <http://www.freebuddhistaudio.com/series/details?num=X19>

– Non-sculptural: most important single poetic influence apart from Shakespeare is Milton's Paradise Lost. Myth of Protestant spirituality.

– Non-scriptural! :) Also Shelley's poetry. Learned by heart! Ode to a Skylark. Also Coleridge, AE Houseman, Tennyson. American: Walt Whitman!

– Finds 'Sea Drift' by Whitman very moving. There was a setting by Delius

(?) that is very beautiful! Also many philosophers.

– Q. The place of science in Triratna? (ed. see: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvU-lzS1XJ> for video of this section.)

– A. An omission from his book list! Recalling reading The Origin of Species! Values the openness of science. Doesn't think it needs to prove

– ...the truths of Buddhism. Hopes scientists will make their contribution to Triratna!

– Q. Any more papers from you & Subhuti defining aspects of teaching?

– A. Yes! But no sneak peeks! :)

– Q. How do you see future of Buddhism?

– A. Bit bleak picture overall. But bright spots are India and the West. Otherwise hard to say, so many imponderables...! We must each play part



– DM:  ལྷོ་མཁའི་བརྗེ་དྲུང་ @dharma_gal

So happy and thankful to read Bhante's words @buddhistcentre Is it possible to tell him that we in Mexico are following this. Thanks

– DM: @dharma_gal We'll try! :)

– Sangharakshita mentions his new book! From <http://www.lulu.com/shop/sangharakshita/dear-dinoo/paperback/product-18811936.html>. Collection of editorials from Maha Bodhi Society journal+ substantial intro

– Kalyanaprabha editor - long piece to on Anagarika Dharmapala. Bit of advance publicity! Old writings, strong stuff, even bit shocking! :)

– Q. On ageing. Any teaching for those of us who are ageing & what's your experience?

– A. “I think I can safely say I’m an expert in that area!” 1. Accept that we are old gracefully, including lack of attractiveness!

– Against cosmetic surgery! 2. Recognise effect on our faculties & abilities. 3. Recognise old age NOT just preparation for death!

– Stage of life itself. References James Hillman. Old age has own benefits & rewards. Having to slow down encourages mindfulness & reflection

– If health permits, intensify practice of Dharma. Not because you’re going to die sooner, but because it’s always good to!

– Q. What would your last words of advice be?

– A. “One doesn’t usually plan one’s last words!” MUCH LAUGHTER I may quote a poet, I may say something unexpected!

– Sangharakshita saying a warm hello to the Mexican sangha following on Twitter. He has heard great things about work there and community!

– Q. Vajramati in NYC asking for advice. What should he do?

– A. All my teachings and lectures! :) “I think I’ve probably given too much advice in the course of my long life!”

– People thanking Sangharakshita for time & teaching. Talking about technology helping connect sanghas! #triratnaconnect <http://thebuddhistcentre.com/community>

– Listening to our teacher <http://instagr.am/p/NG3Ty7vTla/>



- Sangharakshita live! <http://instagr.am/p/NG3ih9PTlj/>



– The newest member of the Triratna Buddhist Order thanking Bhante!
Time to say goodbye...

– Many thanks to Aryaloka and Eric Wentworth for hosting and setting up.
The live tweets now end...! [#triratnaconnect](https://twitter.com/triratnaconnect) <http://thebuddhistcentre.com/community>



– RT: Padmabandhu DH. @padmabandhu

@buddhistcentre Hoy Festival del Día del Dharma en el @centro_budhista
<http://www.budismo.org.mx/festivales/index.html>

– (July 16th) Well, sadly, it looks like Aryaloka's recording of Bhante's Q & A on Sunday is lost... But we do have one...

– (July 16th) @Sangharakshita on the place of the Sciences within
#Triratna : <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tvU-lz ...>