

Village eView

July 24, 2019

Marjenta Gray, Guest Editor

COMING UP

Human Relations Lab,
August 4-10

MAITRI: Extending Loving Kindness to Oneself

In Buddhism, loving kindness is the first of the Four Virtues:

1. Loving Kindness
2. Compassion
3. Sympathetic Joy
4. Equanimity

Maître (m uy trée) is a Sanskrit word translated as “unconditional friendship with oneself”.

For many people who meditate, the cultivation of friendliness or benevolence is one of the main aims, especially in Buddhist culture. This process begins with the idea of being benevolent to oneself before extending this to eventually fan out to all sentient beings.

Unconditional acceptance of ourselves can be hard to come by. Most of us on a growth or spiritual path desire to be good people; kind, patient, loving partners, spouses, and parents, trusted and giving friends, appreciative and attentive to our parents, reliable and competent workers. Yet, it is so easy to snap at our child, spiral down the same argument with our spouse, find feelings of anger, jealousy, or shame clouding our good intentions.

Learning to accept all of ourselves, the positive and the parts we are not proud of is key to being our best Selves.

For many, it is easier to have compassion for others, give to others, praise others, and always see where we, ourselves, are lacking. We are told not to be selfish or self-centered. The problem with this directive is that it is difficult to fully accept and give to others if we are not first extending acceptance and compassion to ourselves.

On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System

The American Association for the Furtherance of Community

Convocation: A Church and Ministry

Mandala Resources, Inc.

Sahale Learning Center

The EcoVillage at Sahale

PRACTICING MAÎTRE

by Marjenta Gray

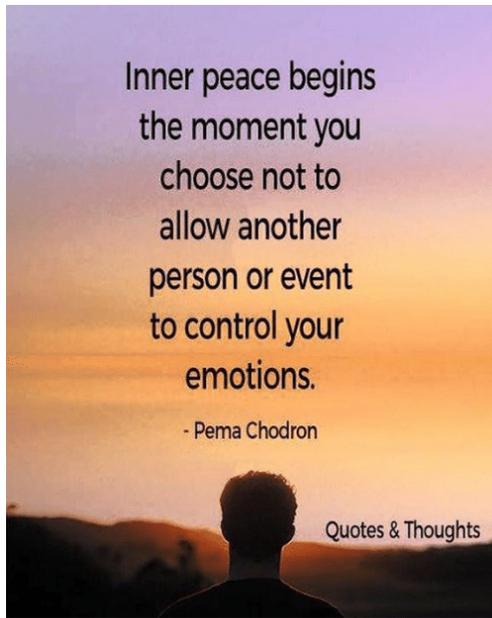
When I visited my brother and sister-in-law in February, my brother told me his recent mindfulness meditation practice has three parts; first, gratitude, then, acknowledging what will help him return to his mediation practice, and then loving kindness towards himself. I think of Buddhism as becoming self-less, so was surprised that after meditating for about 20 years, he is focusing his loving kindness on himself. I did take on his practice (not as often as I might, which I could be unkind to myself about). And, there have been times when I've observed my mind, as I extended loving kindness to myself, where my eyes filled with tears as I realized how unkind I was towards myself.

Recently, when I searched for a podcast to listen to while taking a walk, several Pema Chodron talks on maître came up. I listened and was inspired by her teachings. I would like to share her teachings with you, and how they have impacted me.

Pema Chodron says, in her book, *How to Meditate: A Practical Guide to Making Friends with Your Mind*, "I teach about maître a lot, and it is often misunderstood as some kind of self-indulgence, as if it is just about feeling good and being self-concerned. People will often think that that's what I mean by maître. But it's somewhat subtle what maître is and what it isn't. For example, you might say that taking a bubble bath or getting a workout at the gym is maître. But on the other hand, maybe it isn't, because maybe it's some kind of avoidance; maybe you are working out to punish yourself. On the other hand, maybe going to the gym is just what you need to relax enough to go on with your life with some kind of lightheartedness. Or it might be one of your 65 daily tactics to avoid reality. You're the only one who knows.



So, it's important to be clear about what maître means and not to come away with a misunderstanding of maître as some kind of indulgence, which actually weakens us and makes us less able to keep our heart and mind open to ourselves and the difficulties of our life. I often use this definition: maître strengthens us. One of the qualities of maître is steadfastness, and that's developed through meditation. So, through boredom, through aches, through indigestion, through all kinds of disturbing memories, to edgy energy, to peaceful meditation, to sleepiness, it's steadfastness. You sit with yourself, you move closer to yourself, no matter what's going on. You don't try to get rid of anything—you can still be sad or frustrated or angry. You recognize your humanity and the wide gamut of emotions you might be feeling." The practice is to notice what is going on inside, but not attach our "story" to it, not act it out.



This is very similar to teachings we have learned in the Goodenough Community, initially taught by John and Colette Hoff.

It is so easy to think our problems come from outside us. Recently, I have been working with this tendency. At my job that I started in April, my supervisor told me last week that they are reevaluating staffing, and it's possible my position may be eliminated. You can imagine I was upset to hear this. I received this news relatively calmly, but later, had feelings of extreme self-doubt, anger, grief, and sadness. I did allow myself to have those feelings when I was not at work; they were there, and I couldn't will them away. But I know from painful experience that I don't need to tell my supervisor about my feelings, or blame her, or act out by shirking my responsibilities or being huffy towards

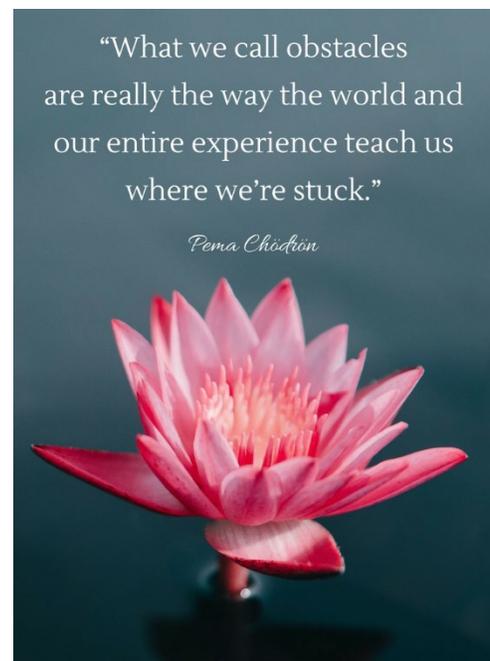
her. This would not help and would likely make the situation worse. I don't have all the information about what has gone into the possible decision she told me about. Does it help me to think of myself as a victim, at the effect of my employers? I can think, "Maybe if I had done this, or hadn't done that, or was more of this, or less of that, this wouldn't be happening." And, perhaps if I'd been different, there might be a different outcome. I will learn what I can to improve. I will do my best. I am in a learning process in my life, and how could I expect myself to know all my lessons without having some pain to remind me of them?

Where does maître come from? How can I relax, and love all that's inside me, and also my body?

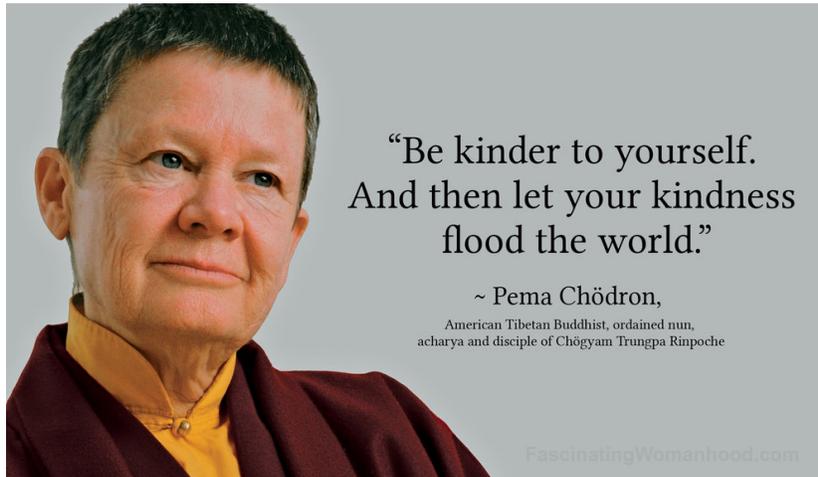
Pema Chodron says, "This has a lot to do with our relationship with pain, our relationship with difficulty. The Buddha said that in a human life there is pain, and much of it is unavoidable. Aging, illness, loss and grief happen to all of us. It's also true that, with practice, we can de-escalate some of the pain that we create for ourselves.

The Buddha taught to not struggle against pain. That is not a message people want to hear. We tend to think that if we are doing things right, we will not have pain.

The Buddha said that the root of suffering is ignorance. "Ignorance of what?" we may ask. His teaching is that ignorance of true reality causes suffering. In our ignorance, we are entrenched in our way of seeing and



doing things, seeing ourselves as objects, pitted against each other; separate, different, at odds with others, the environment, events, our schedules. Pema Chodron talks of how ignorance is a dense sort of energy, really like an energetic block that love and lightness can't get past. The root of happiness is the dissolving of ignorance. She talks about reality and true nature as being limitless and fluid, part of the whole of beings and things, not isolated. Colette recently wrote about "flow." Being "in flow" is being aligned with true reality. In that state, things work. Relationships can seem effortless. Tasks get done and don't feel cumbersome and difficult. It's



feels like being helped by something beyond our individual selves.

The Buddhist practice is meditating on, having a real experience of knowing, what happiness is and what suffering is; not just conceptually, but really understanding from our own contemplation.

The Four Virtues are catalysts to help us relax and befriend ourselves. Here is a maître practice, that Pema Chodron leads, that can help awaken feelings of love and friendliness towards our self and others:

1. Create 2 lists. On one, list people who, when you think of them, you immediately feel gratitude. On the second list, put people you naturally feel compassion for. Each list can be just a few people, or more, as you wish. You can include animals or people who have passed on.
2. Starting with yourself, think, "May I enjoy happiness and the root of happiness." Start where you are and gradually try to expand. If you feel frozen, without feeling for yourself, imagine a tiny hole that allows just a pinprick of light and love into your heart, towards yourself. As you meditate, see if you can allow the hole to grow just a little bit larger, allowing in a few more beams of love. If there are other thoughts and feelings there, notice them, acknowledge them, and say the maître blessing again. And again.
3. Move on to the people on the list, who you naturally feel gratitude for. Say, in your mind, "May you enjoy happiness and the root of happiness." Is it easier, or harder to say this to others than it was for yourself? Just notice.
4. Continue with the people you feel compassion towards. "May you enjoy happiness and the root of happiness." Imagine each person, or being, enjoying happiness and the root of happiness. Notice your thoughts and feelings as you do this.
5. Imagine a very close friend and extend the blessing to them. "May you enjoy happiness and the root of happiness." There might be other feelings there, since close

relationships are complex, and often encompass conflicting feelings. Notice and repeat the words to them in your mind.

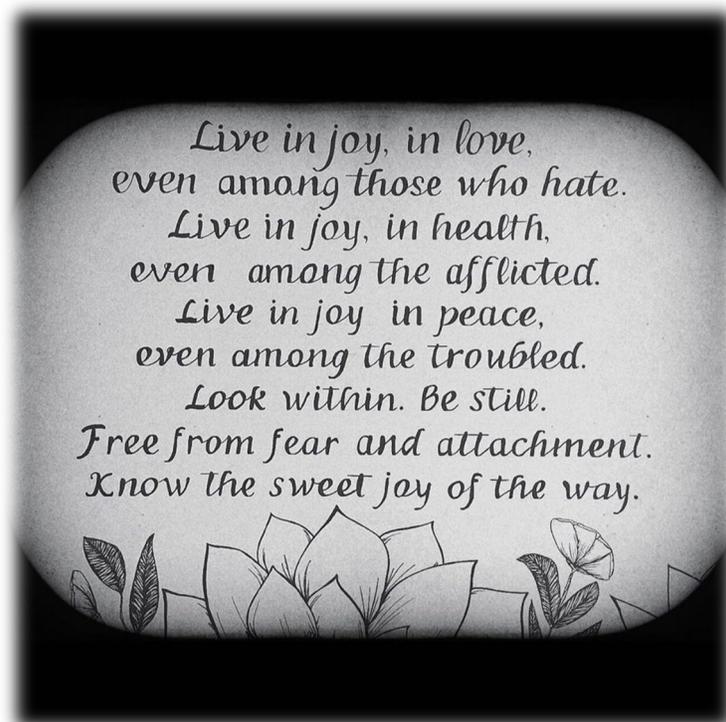
6. Move on to a “neutral” person in your life. There can be many people who fall into this category; work colleagues, neighbors, people we interact with at stores, the doctor’s office. “May you enjoy happiness and the root of happiness.”
7. Then move to a person who brings up strong negative feelings. It might be someone who brings up anger, hurt, or fear in you, someone you would rather not think about. Try the blessing on them. “May you enjoy happiness and the root of happiness.” It’s OK if it’s hard to feel love when you say this. It can take a lot of practicing to get to that point. As when imagining a tiny hole that allowed love into your heart towards yourself, think of the same tiny, tiny hole allowing love into them. See if it can get just a little larger, letting in a slightly warmer, brighter beam of light.

This practice can open you to give more to yourself and others, and also bring up insights.

In just over a week, the Human Relations Lab will begin. It could be a whole week of practicing maître, learning to be friendlier to yourself, and extending that love out to others. I know I intend to use it that way!

To watch the videos about maître, and guided meditation by Pema Chodron, search on YouTube for: **Pema Chodron Explains Maître** and **The Practice of Maître - Loving Kindness**.

NAMASTE.



The Human Relations Laboratory



Your task is not to seek for love, but merely to seek and find all the barriers within yourself that you have built against it. Rumi

At this Lab, you will learn how to deal with the three A's: Arrogance, Anxiety, and Anger which are common barriers to relationship.

Lab is a place of spaciousness where anything can happen. It is a week of experiential learning that encourages your development toward being a more mature, integrated person. You can also expect a taste of heaven in a heavenly setting!

And.... You can get your toes into some really healthy, happy soil! So now is a great time to register at www.goodenough.org/lab



The Human Relations Laboratory is getting close . . .

Register now!

Our on-line registration process is now working well. Go to www.goodenough.org On the front page, scroll down to the Lab information and push register! We are asking **all** who plan to attend the Lab to complete the registration form. Please use the appropriate button to pay the full amount or at least a deposit. Consider inviting a friend or work colleague!

Claudia Fitch at Greg Kucera Gallery

July 18 - August 24

Opening First Thursday Reception: August 1, 6-8pm



Artist talk on Saturday July 27, 12 noon
Greg Kucera Gallery
212 3rd Ave, Seattle 98104





The deAnguera Blog: Where's Heaven?



The Human Relations Lab is approaching! In fact it is less than two week away. What is the topic? Heaven. We are going to talk about heaven.

I have written about heaven before back in March of this year. Christianity has me believing it is out there somewhere and I can go there as

long as I ask Jesus to forgive me of my sins.

If heaven is someplace I can only go to after death then there is really no point in our talking about heaven here on earth.

But is heaven really a place? I believe it is the way we come together as loving human beings. As I have said before that can best happen in the midst of adversity.

One of the people we will be studying is Julian Rotter, a clinical psychologist who did major work in behavioral therapy. We will be studying on what he has to say about positive reinforcement. This sounds a lot like B.F. Skinner, the author of *Walden Two*, the utopian novel which eventually brought me to the Goodenough Community and Sahale.

Walden Two caught my attention because it portrayed a fictional community designed to work for people. Positive reinforcement as a way of life where punishment was avoided. I guess maybe I was looking for something better while in high school.

For me a very important component of heaven is having the tools to reach my full potential as Mike.

I have done comedy at the Swamp during many past Labs and have gotten rave reviews every time. This community is an easy place to stand out. In fact we are all encouraged to contribute something.

The outside world forces us all to compete with each other for recognition and makes those few who make it into super stars.

Zac and Avi Caswell were able to pull off a music festival with their friends last weekend. They had the assistance of a good friend, Ryan Hoover who helped organize the event. Almost



everyone who attended where about Zac and Avi's age. A large group of young people. A great way to introduce our community to these folks.

Would you believe Draï Schindler, Amanda Lovett, Josh DeMers, Julie Wolf, Marley Long, and I were performers during the music festival? I even got to strum on my McNalley strum stick along with Avi on the guitar. Marley played her flute, Amanda used a rattle, and Draï used a rain stick.

We all got positive reinforcement along the way. Avi even tuned my strum stick for me.

Heaven can also involve magic. Several people danced with lighted hoops and flaming torches. My little \$40 camera from Faith Works, church charity at the Belfair Senior Center (HUB) captured it on glorious video. The results totally blew my mind.

The same camera can also take wonderful pictures for the eView like the one on the left of all my friends smiling for me and the one on the right of Marley and Draï rehearsing for our music performance.

I never had this much attention before coming to Sahale. This place can put on shows as entertaining as the mass media but everyone is included. No auditions are necessary.



*What is more beautiful than Julie Wolf watering the garden in her sari?
Now that's heaven!*

Inquire into the mind
using the mind itself.
All concepts will
cease and you will see
what the nature of
mind is.
Anam Thubten

Editor's note: This event is open to anyone interested and is being held at Sahale!



5 pm on Wednesday Aug 28th, to 2 pm on Sunday Sept 1st.

Would you love to have more close, connected, juicy relationships?
Need some inspiration and renewal?

This 4-day festival offers conscious movement, ceremony, respectful touch, relationship and communication skills, and tantric meditations all in a lovely rural wooded retreat center near Seattle.

Step into an open, caring community of like-minded souls, and come play with us!
These events are potent moments for increasing hope, vitality and joy, carrying us all forward on our paths.

Our Workshops will focus on

- Tantric Arts
- Communication
- Personal & Spiritual Development
- Movement Meditations
- Aware Touch and Consent

Note: Goodenough Community friends and members will not have to pay room and board. Contact Colette at hoff@goodenough.org

Go to www.cascadiatantrafest.com/



At the “OUR” Ecovillage – in
British Columbia
September 13 - 15
Friday 2:00pm - Sunday 5:00pm
<https://ourecovillage.org/5th-annual-west-coast-communities-conference/>

This conference is an intentional experience of community. Whether you live in an intentional community / ecovillage / co-housing and are interested in joining or starting one, are a networker or organizer, or are new to intentional communities, this conference will have something for you. Come learn about the intentional communities of western North America, gain skills and understanding for living in and developing intentional communities, and find mutual support and camaraderie with others involved with intentional community. Come celebrate the diverse types of community that exist, expand the potential of increased inclusiveness, and explore Intentional Communities and Ecovillages and Co-Housing as a model for impacting wider social change. The Goodenough Community is a sponsor for this event!

Spatialist for Hire

Pam Jefferson



Do you need help with organizing a room for more efficient storage and use of the space? Do you need help sorting and organizing your stuff? I can do all of it for you or just give you some ideas for you to work with. My hourly rate is \$25.00. You can reach me at **206 372 9801**.

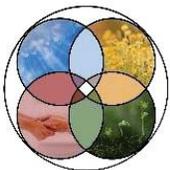


Programs and Events of the Goodenough Community

What makes community meaningful and fun? The richness of life in community comes in many ways – getting together informally over a meal ... celebrating a significant birthday with long- time and newfound friends ... working together in a creative endeavor ... collaborating in a work party ... thinking deeply with others about what it means to be fully alive and connected with ourselves, each other, and Spirit ... and more.

In the Goodenough Community, we recognize such ways to connect as expressions of living life fully and in communities of all kinds. Throughout the year we offer programs that help you participate in your own development, learn about relating well with others, and discover your potential to have a good time in life and with others.

We welcome your interest and your participation, and hope that you will join us at any – or many! – of this year’s events. More information about programs and upcoming events can be found on our website: www.goodenough.org



The **General Circle** meets Mondays at 6:30 for light dinners & business at hand. Fall schedule to be announced.

The Women’s Program is a long-established and ever-growing way for women to enjoy each other’s company, learn about themselves as women, and even perhaps to experience the Divine Feminine. For more information, contact Hollis Guill Ryan, hollisr@comcast.net



The Third Age - Those age 60 and older have been gathering every other month, Friday evenings in Seattle. Stay tuned for the next meeting date! Contact Kirsten Rohde for more information: krohde14@outlook.com

The Men’s Program

Our **Men’s Circle** is an expression of brotherhood and practice with wisdom, gathered from own lives, other men’s work advocates and the founders of this circle.

For more information, contact: bruce_perler@hotmail.com





Pathwork, a Program of Convocation: A Church and Ministry On alternate Sunday evenings an interfaith circle of practice meets between 7:00 and 9:30 PM under the leadership of Colette Hoff. This is a time to learn together about our personal development, to talk out our chosen practices for the development of a spirit filled life, and to learn the skills of joining with others in service. **Gatherings are in Seattle.** Contact Colette Hoff for more information: hoff@goodenough.org

Summer Camp for Youth

New dates for Summer Camp 2020 will be announced. Summer Camp is a wonderful opportunity for children 9 to 12 to have a full camp experience in a beautiful setting with loving leadership.

Contact: Irene Perler, Irene_Perler@hotmail.com



Human Relations Laboratory, August 4 to 10, 2019

This intense and joyous week-long event is a communal experience of personal growth and relational development within a rich culture with art, music dance, song, drama and more. This summer we will celebrate 50 years! Contact: Colette Hoff, hoff@goodenough.org

True Holidays Celebration, Saturday, December 7, 2019

Be part of this fun-filled family-oriented evening and prepare yourself for the winter season (whatever faith tradition you follow) that fills your heart. Contact Elizabeth for more information.



Work and Play Parties throughout the Year

Traditionally, the Goodenough Community sponsors work parties over **Memorial Day weekend** as well as other times throughout the year, to express gratitude for the presence of our beloved retreat center, Sahale, and to experience the satisfaction of playing and working together. Please email hoff@goodenough.org with information about what may be coming up. It is a great time to bring friends to share Sahale!



Quest: A Counseling and Healing Center

Our belief is that mental and emotional health is a prerequisite for spiritual well-being, collaboration, and the expression of compassion. Quest's counseling and education programs, open to all interested individuals, focus on empowering individuals, couples, and family groups to be happier and more effective in relationships. Call Colette (206-755 8404) to make arrangements.