



westernchanfellowship.org

March 2021

NEWSLETTER 41

WESTERN CHAN FELLOWSHIP NEWS AND EVENTS

Please refer to the website at www.w-c-f.org/Q342 for the latest events updates and more details.

10TH – 17TH APRIL: FREEING THE HEART: EVERYDAY BODHISATTVA PRECEPTS

LEADER: JAKE LYNE. VENUE: ONLINE VIA ZOOM [HTTP://W-C-F.ORG/Q487-410](http://w-c-f.org/Q487-410)

There will be no need to book time off work during Monday to Friday 9-5. This retreat is suitable for those with prior experience of intensive residential meditation retreats, or of online WCF retreats.

A Bodhisattva is a person on the path of awakening, conscious of suffering, developing empathy for the joys of others and learning to act freely in order to help others.

The Chan version of the Bodhisattva precepts incorporates the five lay precepts; five other related precepts to do with speech, intentions and views; the three refuges; and the three pure precepts – relating to personal behaviour, good works and helping others.

This online retreat will be limited to 15 retreatants and in it we will bring awareness and self-reflection to the precepts in daily life. We will practice meditation intensively for a day at the beginning and a day at the end of the retreat. During weekdays we will meet for practice in the morning and again in the evening. During daily life between these sessions our focus for awareness will be a specific precept.

There will be teachings on the Bodhisattva path and the precepts and in evening sessions we will explore the Dharma in daily life by sharing our experience of holding a precept in mind during the day.

Participants should plan to attend all sessions: please be sure the arrangements will work for you.

Personal interviews will be scheduled for times between group practice sessions.

APRIL 24TH – MAY 1ST WCF CONNECTED PRACTICE

ENHANCE YOUR PRACTICE IN YOUR OWN ENVIRONMENT

Anyone who wishes to participate is invited join us in a commitment for a period of connected and enhanced practice undertaken in our own environment. Under lockdown or not, whether at home or in the workplace we will be encouraged by the silent support of knowing that we are not practising alone. We intend to raise the tempo of our practice for this period, increasing our capacity to be aware in our daily lives. A Mindfulness Bell will be rung at noon each day, when all participants may pause and be

joined in the silence that the bell marks. Members of our Sangha may use this opportunity in many creative ways.

Co-ordinator Hilary Richards. For further information see: <http://w-c-f.org/Q487-413> or contact connected-practice@westernchanfellowship.org

15TH – 20TH MAY: FINDING FREEDOM RIGHT WHERE YOU ARE

LEADERS: JULIET HACKNEY AND ALYSUN JONES. VENUE: ONLINE VIA ZOOM <HTTP://W-C-F.ORG/Q487-411>

This retreat will help participants to enter into the reality of daily experience, exploring and reducing the separation that is commonly felt between mind and body, and between individual and environment. Practice will help to bring habitual reactions into awareness and allow participants to gently release them resulting in greater appreciation of life in the here and now. There will be meditation, working with the body and emotional awareness, connecting with the environment and nature, and supporting each other through sharing.

This online retreat will be limited to 15 retreatants. We will practice meditation intensively for a day at the beginning. During weekdays we will meet for practice in the morning and again in the evening. During daily life between these sessions there will be opportunities to explore what is going on for you, through various practices. For this reason, it would be helpful to give yourself a light schedule at work on these days, or not work at all.

There will be teaching in the morning sessions and we will have opportunities to share our experiences of the day, in the evening.

Participants should plan to attend all sessions: please be sure the arrangements will work for you.

Personal interviews will be scheduled for times between group practice sessions.

This retreat is suitable for those with prior experience of intensive residential meditation retreats, or of online WCF retreats.

5TH – 12TH JUNE: ECODHARMA RETREAT

LEADER: JAKE LYNE. VENUE: ONLINE VIA ZOOM

There is no need to book time off work during Monday to Friday 9-5, but it is advisable to avoid unusually demanding commitments. Between scheduled sessions we will continue our practice in daily activities. This retreat is suitable for those with prior experience of intensive residential meditation retreats, or of online WCF retreats.

It is said that when Mara challenged the Buddha to produce a witness to verify his awakening, the Buddha touched the earth and the earth verified his enlightenment: Mara was silenced. After his enlightenment the Buddha doubted whether it would be possible to show the way to others. But what else was there for him to do? So, he went on to share his experience and insight and everything followed from that.

We are of the earth, and not only is the earth our witness it is also a mirror facing humanity. Chan Buddhism is this-worldly, we practice not in order to turn away from the world, but to turn towards it. It is very clear that our world is in crisis and that to continue as we are is not sustainable. How can we continue to respond and change, individually and collectively?

In this retreat we will start from dukkha, the first noble truth, in this case grief for the world in crisis. 'Grief work' is a process of facing the truth of loss, and of finding a new way. Grief is also an expression of love. Dharma practice can uncover a profound love and appreciation for all forms of life in our finite and intricately interconnected world.



Going deeply into love and grief will be the framework for our experiment on this retreat, the aim of which is to help us awaken to the truth of our situation, set aside the obstacles we create with our own minds and clarify our own authentic response at a time of crisis – our own way of touching the earth.

This online retreat will be limited to 15 retreatants. We will practice intensively for a day at the beginning and a day at the end of the retreat. During weekdays we will meet for practice in the morning and again in the evening. In between, we will continue practice on the theme of the retreat through the activities of the day.

Participants should plan to attend all sessions: please be sure the arrangements will work for you.

Personal interviews will be scheduled for times between group practice sessions.

DAILY ONLINE EVENTS

On most days of the week there are online events available for you to attend. Please see the list at <http://w-c-f.org/Q728>

DAY RETREATS HOSTED BY LOCAL GROUPS

Several local groups arrange day retreats and other events from time to time. For details see the website events page <http://w-c-f.org/Q342> and individual group pages at <http://w-c-f.org/Q3>.

Events are subject to modification or cancellation depending on COVID situation and guidance nearer the time. Please contact your local group to be informed of other future events and of arrangements during the period of social distancing.

South Devon Chan Group will be holding two Day Retreats in the next 6 months, both planned to be online at the moment although the second one will be in person if this is permitted by then. **Sunday**

28th March led by Jake Lyne, **Saturday 24th July** led by Alysun Jones. Please contact Jeremy Woodward southdevonchan@westernchanfellowship.org if you would like to join in.

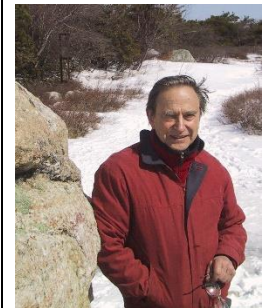
The Bristol Chan Group will be holding a half-day online retreat led by Jake Lyne on **Sunday 21st March**, 9.00 to 1.00. The theme will be Ecodharma. Numbers will be limited, so do contact Pat Simmons, at patsimmons.cet22@yahoo.com if you would like to join in.

The Dales Chan Group is continuing to hold Sunday meditation mornings. Our next date is **Sunday 14th March**. We are holding them approximately every 6 weeks. Please enquire by email to derbyshiredaleschan@westernchanfellowship.org

The Medway Towns Group is scheduling **monthly half-day online retreats on Sunday mornings** from 9am to 12pm. Dates will be published on the website shortly, starting in March. These events are best suited to people with some experience of meditation as the session will be largely an opportunity for sustained meditation practice.

10TH ANNIVERSARY COMMEMORATION OF JOHN CROOK

It is ten years since the passing on in July 2011 of the founding Teacher of the Western Chan Fellowship, Dr John Crook, *Jingdi Chuandeng*. WCF will hold an online event to remember and celebrate John and his contribution to Buddhism in the West. We'll announce the details on the WCF website once they are finalised but the event will be held on the afternoon or evening of Saturday 17th July.



BOOKS OF JOHN CROOK'S WRITINGS

We've notified you previously that John Crook's son Stamati has published compilations of some of John Crook's writing and poetry on Lulu.com. The compendium of New Chan Forum articles by John is now also available on Amazon

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Circling-Birds-John-Hurrell-Crook/dp/0955685915>

<https://www.lulu.com/search?contributor=John+Hurrell+Crook>

AGM OF WESTERN CHAN FELLOWSHIP CIO

We plan to hold this online on the morning of 5th June. All members will be circulated nearer the time with full details and times.

DON'T MISS A NEWSLETTER!

We usually send newsletters by both post and email and which you receive depends on your preferences on record in your WCF account. Sometimes, to save postal costs, we send a newsletter by email only and you will miss out if you are not registered for emails about our events.

To receive email newsletters you must have opted in to promotional emails – if you have not done that then data protection law forbids us from sending newsletters to you. To do that, login to your WCF account at <https://www.westernchanfellowship.org/login/> then select Communication Preferences, then Update your record and select "Consent given for email about our events and other activities".

SPRING SANGHA SOCIAL ZOOM EVENT ON SATURDAY 3RD APRIL 5PM-7PM

All welcome. This is a chance to have a chat with each other and entertain each other for a couple of hours. Please join us for a bit of a party 🍷🎧🎮🎵🌸🍷. The Zoom Invitation will be distributed via group leaders and WCF talk, or contact Juliet at derbyshiredaleschan@westernchanfellowship.org

NON-WCF EVENT OF INTEREST

DHARMA DRUM RETREAT CENTER ONLINE RETREAT MARCH 20TH – 27TH (IN ENGLISH)

<https://dharmadrumretreat.org/upcoming-events/stillness-in-motion-online-retreat>



This non-traditional seven-day online retreat is designed for those who seek a convenient way to maintain and renew their meditation practice and apply it in their daily activities. This retreat includes: Daily afternoon dharma talks, live streamed 1:30 pm ET, available via video recordings; Daily email reflections selected from Zen Wisdom by Master Sheng Yen to inspire our learning; Three meditation sessions; Group discussion and sharing.

Most significantly, this is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to hear several of Master Sheng Yen's Western dharma heirs give dharma talks in a single retreat. We encourage participants to attend all sessions. Otherwise, considering your other obligations, choose those that fit your daily schedule and create a schedule for yourself. Now is the time to experience the inner strength and tranquillity of meditation. Please join us! For questions, please contact apply@dharmadrumretreat.org

DHARMA INTERVIEWS

Personal interviews are routinely offered on residential retreats and sometimes also on day retreats. COVID has suspended these activities and left a void for those feeling the need for an interview. Simon Child is offering online interviews e.g. using Skype or Zoom, for those who would like that. This offering is primarily for those who have had WCF personal interviews in the past. If you would like to request an interview please email teacher@westernchanfellowship.org



FEMALE KESTREL
(INFRA RED LIGHT)