

BODHINYANA GROUP

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

~ Welcome and guidance





Brothers, sisters and friends in the
Dhamma

Gathered together seeking the Truth
Walking this Path The Great Sage
discovered

Kindness, compassion and forgiveness
Will guard us
Being humble, respectful and of service
Will nourish us
Patience, wisdom and the Dhamma
Will guide us

Gather dear friends,
Together we wont lose sight of this Path
That draws us to the light in our hearts

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Is the group for me?

Do you have an interest and basic understanding of Theravada Buddhism and some experience in meditation?

Are you interested in applying the teachings according to Theravada Buddhism to your daily life?

Are you looking for a group of like minded friends to share your experience and learn?

If yes, perhaps the group is for you - why don't you read a bit more about us and see.

If not, then there are other sessions run by the monastery that might still interest you, do check the monastery events calendar or drop us an email.

What is it and how does it work?

- ~ Bodhinyana group was established ~ 25 years ago.
- ~ It is a weekly Meditation & Dhamma discussion group run by Lay Buddhists associated with Amaravati Buddhist Monastery.



~ It has developed a way of working without much apparent structure or hierarchy

-The teaching roles are spread amongst us and treated lightly.

~ We do not look to 'gurus' to lead the group.

~ There are usually a number of experienced and long term Theravada practitioners present who will keep the meetings on course.

Purpose of the Group



1. Encouraging friendship between lay-Buddhists.
2. Providing lay-Buddhists with an opportunity to teach the Dhamma.
3. Encouraging lay-Buddhists to discuss our own experience, problems and benefits of practice.
4. To practice right speech – harmonious, truthful and wholesome speech.

5. To gain an understanding and appreciation of Buddhist teachings, Pali and Theravada terms, and sources.
6. To build up an understanding of the way Amaravati works and the opportunities it brings for lay practice, such as attending lay and monastic events like Days of Practice, retreats, Observance Days and festivals, giving Dana and other ways to relate to the Sangha.
7. To notice, understand and work through the Dukkha that can sometimes arise when relating with others within conventional organisations such as lay-Buddhist groups.

Our Principles

The meetings operate on a number of principles:



1. That **time is shared** amongst those who wish to offer a reflection and not dominated by one individual.
2. That **reflections are offered without necessarily requiring response**. Periods of silence following a reflection can encourage those to speak who haven't already spoken.

3. We encourage reflections from the heart and from our own experience rather than from theory or books although excerpts from suttas / books or poetry can be used for discussion.
4. Our teachings are rooted in Forest Theravada and not Mahayana, Pure Land, new age, pagan, Christian, Islam, and so on, although these might be referred to.
5. We encourage anyone who wishes to, to offer to introduce an evening. This is because sharing our perspective on Dhamma and how we apply it in our lives is a valuable source of development. This is entirely voluntary and to be agreed with the senior members. Do not feel discouraged if you are asked to wait a while before leading.

6. No one should feel they are expected to speak. It is OK to remain silent during a discussion.

7. Experienced practitioners use their knowledge and judgment to correct misunderstandings of the Dhamma. The right time to do this may not necessarily be during the meeting.

8. Arguments over doctrine or teachings should be discouraged and the leader or a senior member may suggest a period of silence during discussion if this is felt to be useful in re-establishing a reflective atmosphere.

Joining instructions



You are welcome to join in the Bodhinyana Hall or on zoom on Wednesday evenings.

Joining on zoom

- Please email bodhinyanagroup@gmail.com for the zoom link

- Please add your location to your name.



- Please try to join the waiting room by 7.30pm so we let everyone in together.

- If its your first time joining us you will be invited to say hello.

- We will do a short chant at the start and end. We use chanting book volume 1 which can be downloaded from <https://amaravati.org/dhamma-books/chanting-book/> or pujas.live.

- In person attendees at the Bodhinyana Hall will chant together. You can chant along from home but please keep yourselves muted for this time.

Joining from Bodhinyana Hall

- Please arrive by 7.30pm.
- If you are able to arrive a few minutes early to help with setting up, that would be greatly appreciated.
- If you arrive late, please be as quiet as possible so as not to disturb others.
- You may choose a cushion or chair to sit.



Programme

7.00 -7.25 pm

- Set up in Bodhinyana Hall

7.30 pm

- Open zoom meeting
- Welcomes and introductions

7.40 pm

- Chant dedication of offerings Bodhinyana Hall attendees.
- Leader leads meditation up to approx. 8.15 pm followed by talk & discussion

9.20 pm

- Closing chant (Bodhinyana Hall attendees) & goodbye
- Close zoom meeting
- Clear up Bodhinyana Hall (equipment, mats and cushions)

9.30 pm (latest)

Leave the Hall

We hope you find it an enriching and enjoyable experience.

Please get in touch if you have any questions

Randula & Martin

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January 2023

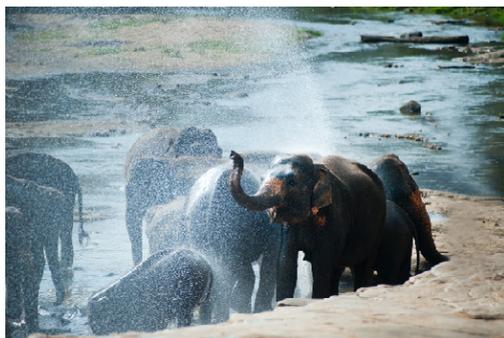
Related websites:

Amaravati Buddhist Monastery

amaravati.org

Amaravati Lay Buddhist Association

alba.amravati.org



Teachings on Spiritual friends

Ven. Ānanda said to the Blessed One, “This is half of the holy life, lord: having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues.”

“Don’t say that, Ānanda. Don’t say that. Having admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life. When a monk has admirable people as friends, companions, & colleagues, he can be expected to develop & pursue the noble eightfold path.”

- SN 45:2; Half (of the Holy Life) Upaḍḍha Sutta
Trans: Thanissaro Bhikkhu

This was said by the Blessed One, said by the Arahant, so I have heard:

“Monks, with regard to external factors, I don’t envision any other single factor like friendship with admirable people¹ as doing so much for a monk in training, who has not attained the heart’s aspiration but remains intent on the unsurpassed safety from bondage. A monk who is a friend with admirable people abandons what is unskillful and develops what is skillful.”

A monk who’s a friend to admirable people – who’s reverential, respectful, doing what his friends advise – mindful, alert, attains step by step the ending of all fetters.

- Itivuttaka 17

Trans: Thanissaro Bhikkhu

Source: <https://www.dhammatalks.org/>

If as a companion you find a wise and prudent friend, one who lives well, you should overcome all impediments and keep this person's company, joyously and mindfully.



If you do not find a wise and prudent friend, one who lives well, like a king who abandons his conquered kingdom, or a lone elephant in the forest, you should go your own way alone.

- Dhammapada, v325, 326

Then Sāriputta went up to the Buddha, bowed, and sat down to one side. The Buddha said to him:

“Sāriputta, they speak of a ‘factor of stream-entry’. What is a factor of stream-entry?”

“Sir, the factors of stream-entry are associating with good people, listening to the true teaching, proper attention, and practicing in line with the teaching.”

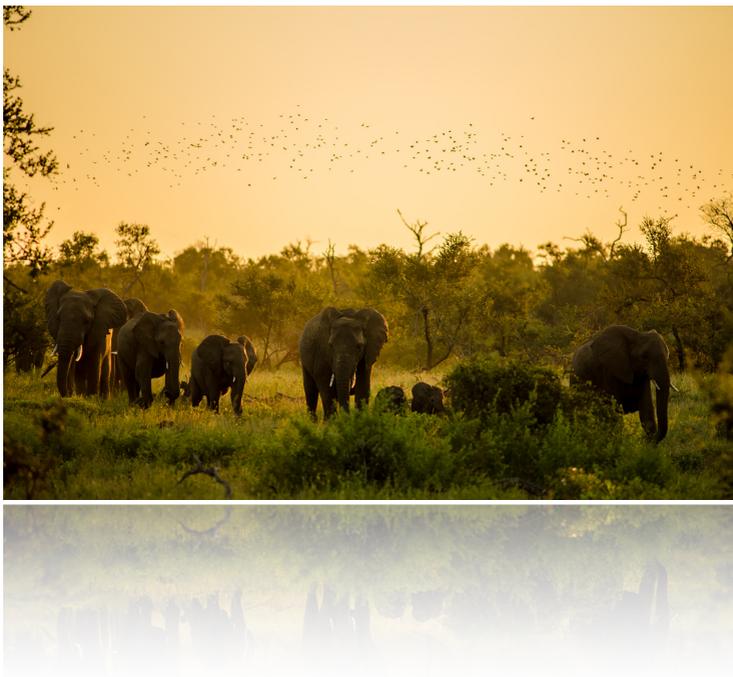
“Good, good, Sāriputta! For the factors of stream-entry are associating with good people, listening to the true teaching, proper attention, and practicing in line with the teaching”

SN55: Dutiyasāriputtasutta
Trans: Bhikkhu Sujato
Source: <https://suttacentral.net>

A reflection on Spiritual friends

True Friends on the Path – Staying Connected

<http://alba.amaravati.org/dhamma/dhamma-reflections/true-friends-on-the-path-staying-connected/>



Photos courtesy of <https://www.rawpixel.com> and
<https://www.pexels.com/>

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