

Rainbows

WINTER
1988



NOTICEBOARD

This year's Family Camp was followed up by a fund-raising activity held over the weekend of October 1st-2nd. Altogether, over £300 was raised, which will help us meet the costs of Rainbows - approximately 80p/copy, including postage - and of the materials needed for the next summer camp. The following is a report on this first fund-raising event.

THE AMARAVATI AMBLE —

A SPONSORED WALK FOR CHILDREN'S EVENTS

Hardly had the strains of the anthem of the closing ceremony of the Olympic Games cleared the airwaves on Sunday October 2nd, when the other great sporting event of the year began - the Amravati Amble!

The similarities in the two events were very few (as you might imagine!). Though the athletic achievements were considerably less in Hertfordshire than in Seoul, nevertheless the Amble had more to say about cooperation than competition and about harmony than division.

Families and supporters, sponsored by family and friends, came to walk around the meadow; others who had come to offer the meal that Sunday came either to join in or give financial backing - and they were very generous. At 12.30 p.m., in beautiful autumnal weather, Tan Ajahn and some of the nuns came to encourage the fleet of foot (and the not-so-fleet!) on the final assault.

Chand and Ram offered to sponsor ALL walkers in the last half hour period of the walk; but the afternoon developed a magical momentum of its own and the event "took off" when people of many nationalities, many sizes and many abilities were moved to join together in sharing time and effort. Tan Ajahn and the sisters were out all afternoon and the Amble blended into Dharma talk, walk and mutual encouragement.

The fund-raising went on - £201 was collected on the day itself, and sponsor money will come later when people have been able to collect their pledges.

Very early in my practice someone said to me, "When you learn to be generous, you will be surprised that giving and receiving are inseparable." Many people began the Amble believing that they had come to give (of time and effort) and within a short time realised that their act of giving was overshadowed by what they themselves received from the Sangha - ordained and lay.

Brenda Poplewell.



CONTENTS

Page

- 3 The Five Precepts
— illustrated by Mega
- 4 Precept Puzzle
— for older children
- 6 Children's Contribution
- 7 The Peacock and the Crow
— A short story by Beryl
- 8 'Learning to Live Right'
— Text by Ajahn Sucitto
- 10 'The Lost Peacock'
— A Jataka Tale, retold by Paul Hulse
- 12 'The Story of Kelab, Tara and Mui'
— A story by Sister Thanissara
- 19 Things to Make in Winter
— By Beryl
- 20 Caring for Wild Birds in the Winter
— By Beryl
- 22 'The Wise Student'
— A Jataka Tale, retold by Sister Saccā
- 26 Precept Puzzle — Answer Page
- 27 Parents' Page
— Text by Ajahn Tiredhamso

1989 SUMMER CAMP will be held from 21st-31st August. For further details, please see the enclosed sheet.

MAILING LIST: We are updating our mailing list. If you wish to continue receiving Rainbows, please fill in the enclosed form, and post it to "Rainbows", Amravati, BY APRIL 1st. If the form has disappeared, just drop us a line, and include your complete address (for checking). If we don't hear from you, we will take your name off the list.

FAMILY WEEKEND, 15th-16th April: Let us know beforehand if you'll be needing overnight accommodation. Please remember, however, that the Sangha is in silent retreat at Amravati during January and February - responses to letters and telephone calls will be suspended until the start of March.

ECOLOGY RAINBOWS: Our next issue will have ecology as its theme - care of nature and of the animal kingdom. Any contributions in this vein will be gratefully received. We should also like to thank all those who sent in material for this issue.

The Sangha

THE FIVE PRECEPTS



① Not to kill or harm other living beings.



② Not to take things which do not belong to us.



③ Not to take more than we need from life and not to misuse sexual energy so as to harm ourselves or others.



④ Not to use speech which hurts ourselves or others.



⑤ Not to take drink or drugs which harm the body or mind.

Precept Puzzle

Here is a jumble of newspaper headlines showing attitudes that lead people to break the precepts. Which headline belongs to which precept? Answers on back page.

Anyone can make promises

PASSION
FASHION

WINDY
Liquid
gold rush

colorful
captivating
audacious

BEING TALKED ABOUT

I'VE SPENT
THE LAST
12 YEARS
DRINKING MY
WAY ROUND
EUROPE

Why Not Crack Down on Smoking?

Message to shoplifters:
Don't smile you're on tele

A shot from the Battlefield

After all, in most cases, every-
thing you hear isn't true.

unbanned temper



All facts, straight from the
horse's mouth?

critics
shout abuse at the umpire

What does it take to make a
30-second commercial starring
one girl and three windows?
Only 16 people and £65,000.

WHEN THIEVES
FALL OUT

The Glittering World
HOOKED!

'I loved telling
stories when I was
little.

Heaven preserve me
from Great Wines!

When advice is based on hear-
say, it's advice best ignored.

CHEERS!

Tragedy
of Sudan
deaths

Luxury above all else

Precept Puzzle cont.

The precepts help to show us what we should not do, they also point to positive qualities that we can develop. These qualities can be called positive precepts. Which headlines do you think would fit with the following positive precepts? answers on back page

1. Being kind to ourselves, others, and the planet we live on.
2. Being generous to others.
3. Having simple needs Giving things up for a time.
4. Using Kind words-both written and spoken, to encourage + create harmony
5. Healthy Living-being fully responsible for the health of our bodies and minds.

Dear Sir or Madam,
I have written a design for my next book. I have written it by hand. It is written on the old paper. It is not a computer print. It is a real book. I will be glad to send you a copy if you like. I will be glad to hear from you. I will be glad to hear from you. I will be glad to hear from you.

The Methodist Church in Christchurch have been really excited about the idea of £1.50 in food for every £1.00 in food. They are raising money for the food bank in the city of Christchurch.

The heart of fine writing.

Learning to Live With Independence

Finding and preserving the wild country

WORK IT ALL OUT... Principles in practice

BEING KIND TO ACTORS

Mrs Hope knows Help is coming Would You?

You can help too.
Two Nations Join to Seek Answers

"It's hard to believe the good you can do by sponsoring a child. Unless, like me, you've seen it."

CURE FOR SMOKING

You can help too.



St. John Church in the city has been asked to provide a work party to refurbish and fix the old wooden building.

Call for action on environment

Hike raises £5000

"We need time to sit down and talk"

DON'T SWAT THE WASP

Goodbye shake, rattle and roll

How every £1 generously entrusted to Oxfam is used

OFF THE SHOULDER IS ALL SHE HAS

THE WORD THAT SAYS IT ALL

FUND RAISING

Shopping for a better world

Designers tell us how shoulders are in this season. They will have the clothes arrived in the shop than they're being in. £10 will hardly make a dent in your clothes budget but a credit card will hardly make a dent in your credit card.

"Helping people"

The Space in My Head

I have a little space in my head
Where all my thoughts go round
and round

And all the words I like to use
Are kept in that space
Like "mak" and "mok", things
like that

And, one of my favourites "blop".
Since my space is very small
It sometimes feels quite full
Like a balloon about to burst.

At night I like to sit in bed
And let all my thoughts come free
So I can collect some dreams
instead.

When I wake up in the morning
I catch the best and put them
back

But save a space for anything new
To float right into my space.

by Mimi Gordon, aged 7



THE PEACOCK AND THE CRANE



The peacock and the crane met one day, and tried to impress each other. The peacock spread out his great tail: "There! Show me anything as magnificent as that!"

The crane immediately sprang into the air, and glided above the peacock. "I cannot show a tail like yours, but follow me - if you can. It is true that your plumes are beautiful, and you can brag to your heart's content; but however beautiful your tail is, it cannot help you to fly."

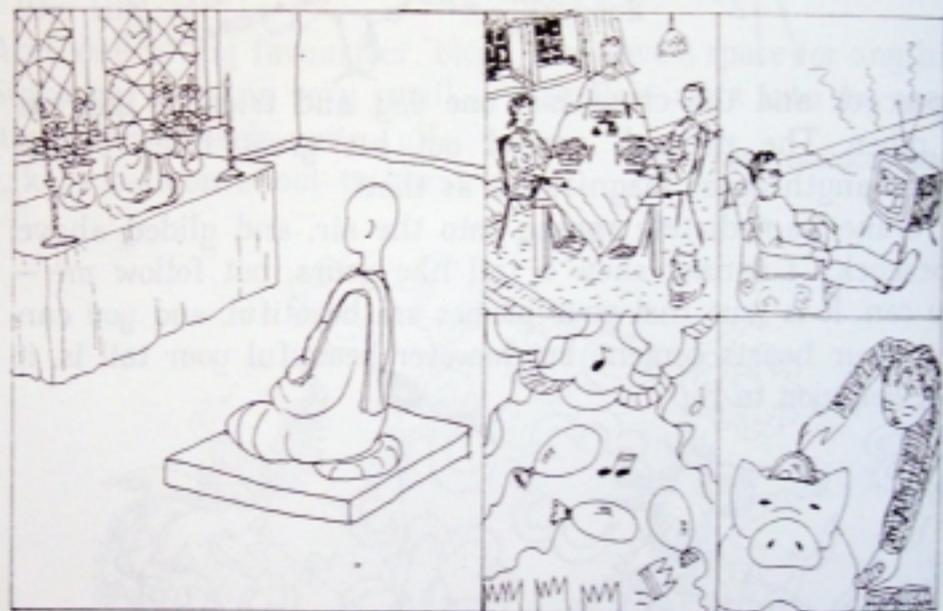


AS IT IS

and this is as it is - people who are not very thoughtful judge others by their appearance only. Often they just look at the other person's skin colour, or at what sort of clothes they wear. But the really wise ones know that true skills are of more value.

LEARNING TO LIVE RIGHT

THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING is called the *Dhamma-vinaya* (sounds like "Dum-mah Vinny-yah"). So it comes in two parts. The Dhamma gives us a way to understand life. The Vinaya teaches us how to act and speak wisely. Dhamma teaches us about the beauty and joy of a calm, clear mind. It also teaches us that if we do good we feel good, if we do wrong we feel wrong. Vinaya tells us what to do and what not to do to make our lives calm and clear. So Dhamma and Vinaya help each other.



The Vinaya begins with the Five Precepts (remember them?). If you follow these you don't make yourself or others, cross, frightened or muddled. The Vinaya that the monks and nuns use has these precepts and many smaller ones. Monks and nuns don't eat in the afternoon, and they don't have money. Also they don't watch TV or go to parties. This makes life simpler and calmer, so they can concentrate better on the Dhamma. If they didn't have Dhamma, life would be very boring. But having Dhamma makes up for all the things that they give up.

Some of the Vinaya used in monasteries is about little things like how to look after your room, and how to be polite. These things are very important if you want to live with a clear and happy mind. Some of the Vinaya reminds the monks and nuns not to ask for lots of things, not to lie or show off. Following these precepts means that people like and respect you; and you like and respect yourself. There are lots and lots more Vinaya teachings. They all teach you to live right.

Monks and nuns are lucky. They have their Vinaya written down, and they are taught it every year. Many people are not taught these things, so they become confused and hurt each other. Even though they have many things, they don't have much joy or peace in their hearts. It would be good if everyone learnt to look after the planet Earth, which is their home. It would be good if people learnt not to argue or fight. It would be good if they studied these things more. It would be better than watching TV and asking for lots of things.



Learning to live right is like learning to ride a bike. It's difficult at first, but in the end it's worth it. People like monks, nuns and parents will help you. You should ask them to teach you how to live right. And you can think to yourself: "What can I say or do that will help others?" And: "What should I not say or do because it causes trouble?"

We are alive for many years, and it can be wonderful if you learn how to live right. So try to learn a little every day!

Ajahn Sucitto

THE LOST PEANUT

ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO... A KING AND HIS MIGHTY ARMY STOPPED TO REST BY A CITY.

TIME FOR A REST CAMP!



A MONKEY WHO HADN'T EATEN FOR DAYS WAKED AS THE LEGIONS ROLLED IN, AND REALISED THIS WAS HIS CHANCE TO EAT A HEAVY MEAL.

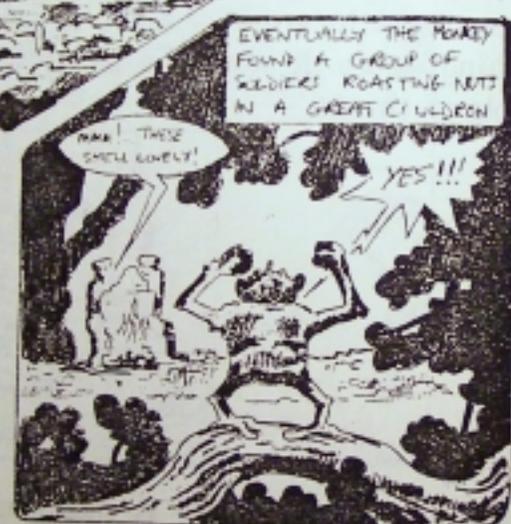


AT LAST! ... FOOD!

EVENTUALLY THE MONKEY FOUND A GROUP OF SOLDIERS ROASTING NUTS IN A GREAT CAULDRON.

WAA! THESE SMELL LOVELY!

YES!!!



THE SOLDIERS WENT AWAY TO ALLOW TIME FOR THE PEANUTS TO COOL AND IMMEDIATELY THE HUNGRY MONKEY HOPPED OVER TO THE CAULDRON AND BEGAN TO EAT THE NUTS IN GREAT MOUTHFULS.

DELICIOUS!



THE MONKEY'S HUNGER WAS FAIRLY SATISFIED, BUT, ALAS, HIS GREED WAS NOT!



BOY! I'LL HAVE TO TAKE SOME OF THIS HOME!

HE SCOOPED UP PILES AND PILES OF PEANUTS, AND WITH THEM PERSISTENTLY BALANCED, HEADED BACK FOR THE TREES.



HOW CLEVER I AM!

SUDDENLY, A NUT SLIPPED AND FELL TO THE GROUND.

NO!



THAT'S MY PEANUT! I MUST GET IT BACK!



WITHOUT THINKING, HE DISCARDED THE OTHERS AND WENT TO LOOK FOR THE FALLEN PEANUT.



BETTER FIND IT FIRST! THERE'S ALL KINDS OF GREEDY CREATURES IN THIS FOREST!

NOT SURPRISINGLY, HE FAILED TO FIND THE LITTLE PEANUT, AND SUDDENLY REALISED HE HAD LOST ALL THE OTHERS AS WELL!



AND, THE FOOLISH MONKEY, IN BEING MISERLY ABOUT ONE PEANUT, LOST ALL HE HAD.

THE STORY OF KELAB, TARA AND MUNI

MANY YEARS AGO there was a country called Sukhavati. In the west of that country there was a huge mountain range that went on for miles and miles. These mountains were large and difficult to climb. The tops of the mountains were covered with crystal white snow, and at the bottom there were beautiful green forests and sparkling clear

rivers. Many sorts of animals and colourful birds lived there happily alongside the village people who were kind and gentle.

Half-way up the mountains there were some carefully hidden caves. In one of these caves there lived a wise man called Kelab. His face looked as old as the mountains and he had a clear bright mind and a pure loving

heart. Kelab understood many things about this world; he could see into the minds of the people and animals who lived in the forest below.

At the other side of the mountain range



Kelab's face looked as old as the mountains.

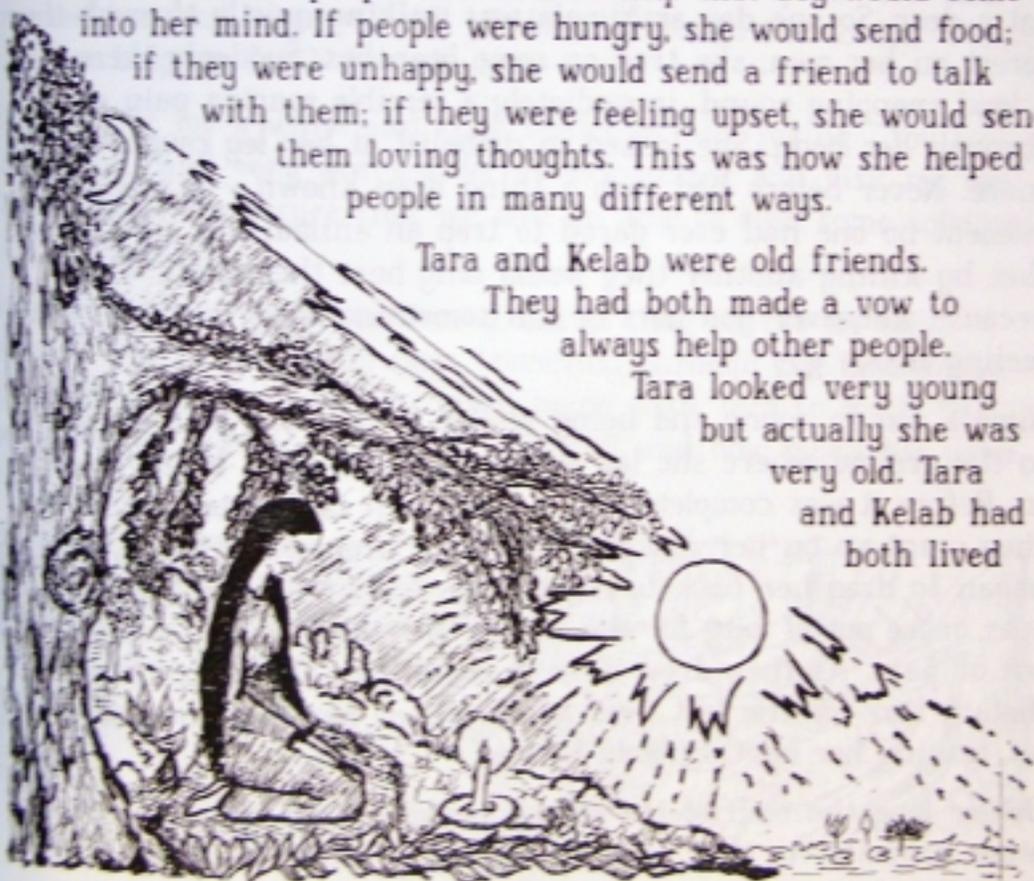
there was a vast ocean which seemed to go on for ever and ever. The sea was always clear and calm and the sky above was always blue. During the day the bright sun would shine into the water; at night the radiant moon would cast a golden light upon the sea and the stars above would twinkle as if they were speaking to those who looked at them.

At the edge of the sea there were some small islands; on one of the islands lived another wise person called Tara. Her only wish was to help anyone who was in some kind of trouble. Every morning she would wake up early before the dawn broke, and as the night shadows began to lift she would light a candle and then sit quietly in front of the flame. As she watched the flame flicker, the faces of all the people that needed help that day would come into her mind. If people were hungry, she would send food; if they were unhappy, she would send a friend to talk with them; if they were feeling upset, she would send them loving thoughts. This was how she helped people in many different ways.

Tara and Kelab were old friends.

They had both made a vow to always help other people.

Tara looked very young but actually she was very old. Tara and Kelab had both lived



At dawn, Tara would sit quietly in front of a candle flame. She would send loving thoughts to people who were upset.

for many years as there were always so many people to help.

Now, in the forest below the mountains there lived many different kinds of animals. One of them was a large lion called Muni. He was peaceful and loving and had the wisdom to understand many things. Usually the village people and the animals of the forest lived happily together. One day something happened which caused some trouble. A very beautiful animal, a deer called Nimala, disappeared. Her friends wondered what had happened to her and they became very worried for her safety.

What had happened was that some of the village people had become hungry. They were hungry because they had been too lazy in the summer months to harvest enough fruit and grain for the winter. As the winter months approached they decided to kill and eat a deer. So one day as Nimala was walking quietly through the forest on her own, she trod on some branches. Suddenly there was a loud snapping sound, immediately a terrible searing pain shot through her body. She looked in disbelief at her leg caught in a snare. Never before had such a thing been known - up until that moment no one had ever dared to trap an animal - as they knew that by killing another they would only hurt themselves. This is because whenever you hurt or kill something there is always a bad feeling inside you.

Nimala was in agony and being unable to bear the pain she sank to the ground where she lay watching as the night began to close in. Before it was completely dark some men came from the village; they crept up on her and placing a rope around her neck, they began to drag her back to the village. Tears fell from Nimala's eyes, more out of pity for the wrong that the men had done than out of pain. As they drew near to the village she looked to a distant star for the last time, gently closed her eyes and passed on, leaving her earthly body behind.

Before long the men of the village began to take the lives of other animals. As they began to kill more and more, they also started to argue amongst themselves, and they didn't think twice

about lying. Before long the village people no longer lived in peace and no longer did the animals feel safe in their presence.

Now Muni the lion was very troubled by the things that were happening in the forest. As the wisest of animals he knew that for the peace of everyone it was his duty to do something that would help stop the trouble. Muni was one of the few beings who knew where Tara lived. "It is from her that I should seek help," he thought.

So one morning he set off on a long journey towards the great ocean. As he arrived at the edge of the sea where the islands were, he saw Tara sitting peacefully. Her eyes were deep and thoughtful. As soon as he saw her, Muni felt a sense of relief; he knew that she would be able to help. Muni went up to Tara and greeted her and began to tell of the troubles in the forest. "Please can you help us Tara?" he asked.

She thought for a while and then smiled at him saying: "You look tired Muni and very worried, let us go together and visit my old friend Kelab: I am sure that we will be able to find some solution to this problem."

So after preparing the necessary things they set off on their journey. They spent many days travelling through the mountains. It was very tiring, but Muni loved being with Tara so much that he never really noticed how tired he felt and how much his paws hurt.



One day, Nimala was quietly walking through the forest.

At last after many days, they arrived at the mountain where Kelab lived. They climbed up to the cave where he was seated, surrounded by many people who had come to see him. The sun shone brightly and there was a sweet smell of jasmine in the air. Tara went to Kelab and told him about the troubles in the forest. Kelab looked sad; he sat still for a long time. There was a great silence amongst all the people there. After a while he spoke, saying that he knew of the trouble as he had seen into the hearts of the village people.

"You see," he said, "they no longer keep the Five Great Precepts of good behaviour. If they had kept the first precept they would not have killed Nimala - that is when the trouble started."

"You know Muni," said Tara, "it is very difficult for people to have any peace or happiness if they break the precepts." They thought about it for a bit longer then Kelab told Muni that he must return to the forest and call a meeting with the village people.

"But they might kill me too!" said Muni, who suddenly felt weak at the knees.

"Don't worry," said Tara, "I think that by now they have suffered so much unhappiness that they will be willing to listen to you." Tara continued by saying : "You must explain to them the importance of the Five Great Precepts; if they keep them then they will be at peace but if they do not they will fight amongst themselves. The precepts are more important than jewels, because they keep the hearts of people pure."

Kelab then told Muni that it was important to let the village people know that the animals needed their protection as they were easily hurt; and that they should always be kind and loving to the animal kingdom. Muni was glad at heart to hear these words of advice; he thanked Tara and Kelab and they wished him well.

"Have a safe journey Muni," they called to him as he was just about to pass out of sight. Muni travelled back to the forests as quickly as possible so that he could explain to the village people what he had heard.

After travelling for many days, Muni eventually came to the edge of the village. He carefully walked to the village camp fire where he heard the sound of many voices in hot discussion. He gingerly peered through the trees to see what was going on. He saw the elders of the village huddled round the fire.

"Things have been going very badly of late – families arguing with each other, children not respecting their parents, and people have been seen fighting on the streets," said Jitsu who was one of the elders.

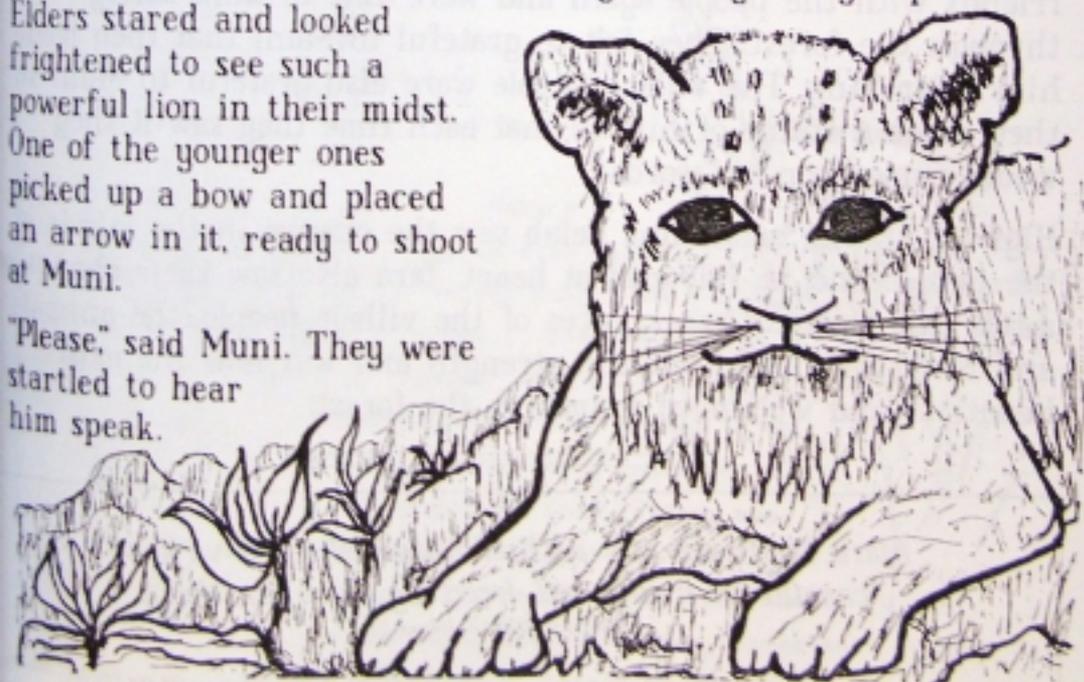
"People don't trust each other any more," said another.

"In the old days you could always leave your house open and disagreements were talked over in a sensible manner," said another who was called Sirichan.

"I just don't know what we can do," said Medsu who was the chief of the village people. He stared sadly at the dying embers of the fire.

Muni felt a surge of courage, he drew himself up and boldly walked through the trees to the centre of the gathering. The group of Elders stared and looked frightened to see such a powerful lion in their midst. One of the younger ones picked up a bow and placed an arrow in it, ready to shoot at Muni.

"Please," said Muni. They were startled to hear him speak.



Muni was the most beautiful and well-loved animal in the forest.

"There is no need for that - I have come in peace."

The young man felt such awe that he slowly put down his bow and arrow. Muni told them of Kelab and Tara. He told them of the importance of keeping the Five Precepts and how this was a way to peace and harmony.

"You see," said Muni, "when someone vows to keep the Five Precepts they become a truly noble human being. They are liked and trusted by others and they attract many good things to themselves. Even the animals trust them and feel safe in their company." He went on to say that the people of old always kept the precepts and that was why they lived long, happy and healthy lives.

"As Elders of the village you must set an example by keeping the precepts yourselves and by telling others how important they are," he said.

The Elders saw the wisdom in Muni's words and from that day on they kept the Five Precepts very carefully. The animals became friends with the people again and were able to walk safely through the forest. They felt so grateful to Muni that they made him their king. The village people were also grateful to Muni so they made a statue of him so that each time they saw it they would remember his words.

High up in the mountains Kelab saw the change in the minds of the people and he felt glad at heart. Tara also saw their change of mind. She saw the happy faces of the village people, the animals and Muni who had grown in strength and was now the most beautiful and well-loved animal in the forest.

*Mara finds not the path of those who are virtuous,
careful in living, and freed by right knowledge.*

DHAMMAPADA IV, Verse 57

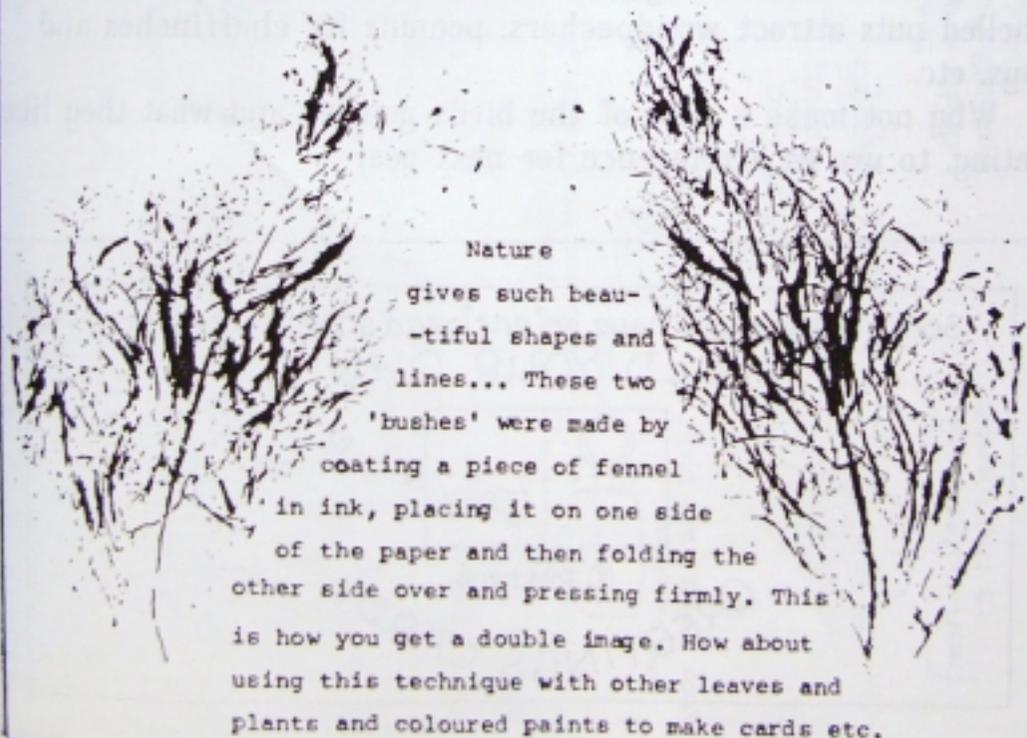
Reprinted with permission of the Pali Text Society

THINGS TO MAKE IN WINTER.

MAKE A VEGETABLE MANDALA.



This one is made of cauliflower 'trees', carrot 'stars', potato 'half moons', circles and broad bean blobs!



Nature gives such beautiful shapes and lines... These two 'bushes' were made by coating a piece of fennel in ink, placing it on one side of the paper and then folding the other side over and pressing firmly. This is how you get a double image. How about using this technique with other leaves and plants and coloured paints to make cards etc.

CARING FOR WILD BIRDS IN THE WINTER

When the winter is harsh, many birds suffer from hunger. Not all birds enjoy berries, and the ground is too hard for digging earthworms. We can help them by providing some of the foods they like, from our own pantry.

The most popular way is to hang nuts in a net, or on a string, or a coconut half from a tree. **DO NOT USE** dessicated coconut, as it is not digestible and can kill birds.

Bread and cheese and cake can be scattered but this will be eaten by the bigger birds like gulls and starlings. So you need also to hang something up so all types of birds are catered for. You can also buy wild bird seed mixtures.

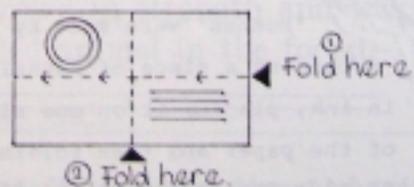
The diagram (on the following page) shows how to make bird cake and gives some ideas for where to put it. You should also remember to provide fresh water for drinking and bathing, and to do it regularly, as it will ice over.

You can add any suitable ingredients for variety, and will enjoy watching the variety of birds you attract.

Cage-bird seeds and grains attract finches and sparrows, whole shelled nuts attract woodpeckers, peanuts for chaffinches and jays, etc.

Why not make a note of the birds you see and what they liked eating, to use as a reference for next year.

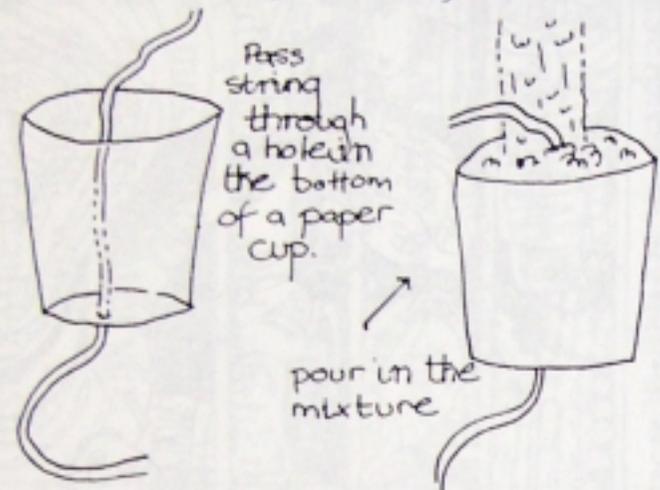
Some issues will have an enclosed sheet for you to...
FOLD YOUR OWN



GREETINGS CARD

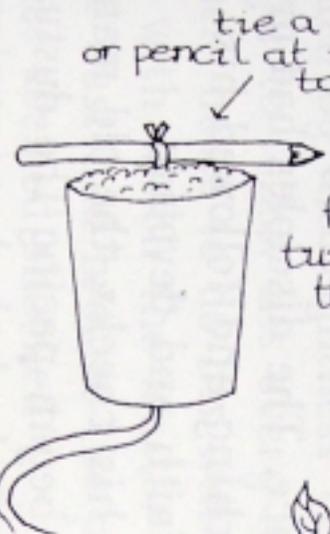
Here is the bird cake recipe:

1) a block of hard vegetable fat, 2) cooked rice or oatmeal, 3) stale cake crumbs, 4) currants, 5) bread crumbs. Melt the fat and stir in the ingredients, pour the mixture, as shown, into a mould.



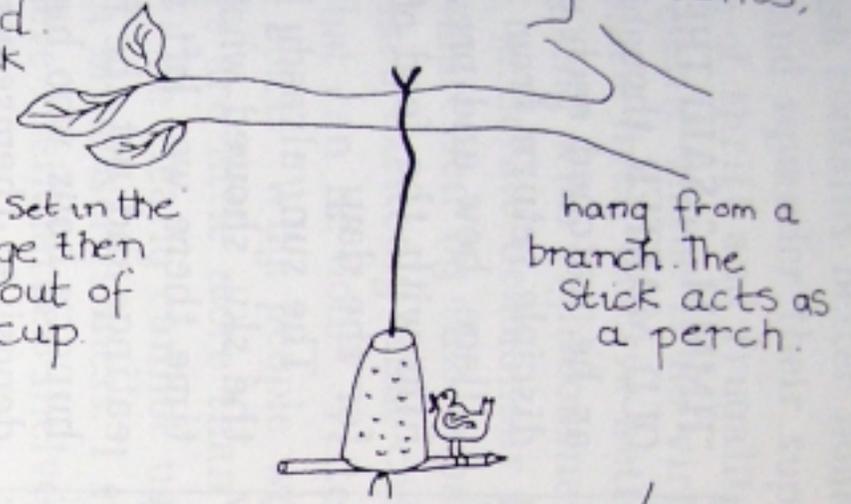
Pass string through a hole in the bottom of a paper cup.

pour in the mixture



tie a stick or pencil at the top.

Set in the fridge then turn out of the cup.



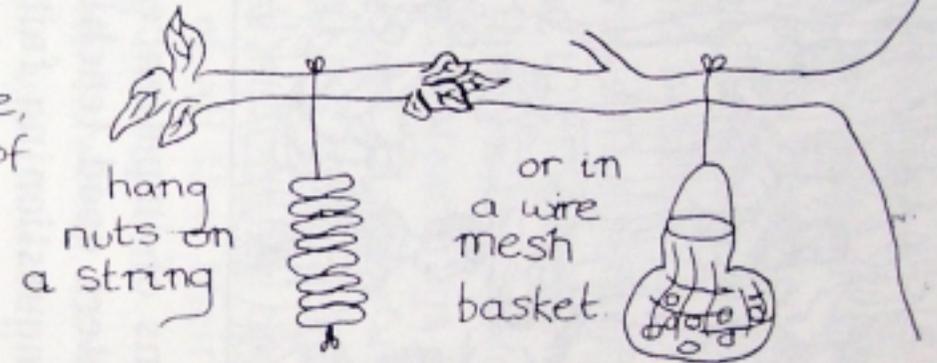
hang from a branch. The stick acts as a perch.

or



pour mixture into lined cake tin.

Set in fridge & slice, put some in crooks of trees.



hang nuts on a string

or in a wire mesh basket

Thrushes and Blackbirds love rotting apples.

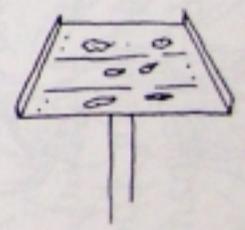


fresh water daily in the winter

Dead Sunflowers and michaelmas daisies have seeds which attract birds.



use Birdtable for scraps, crumbs, or seeds.



THE WISE STUDENT



"HMMM ..." SAID THE WISE OLD MASTER thoughtfully, as he watched each young disciple return from the village, bow and present him with the food offerings for the day.

The sun, already high in the sky, showed what little time there was left for eating; and yet the fourteen hungry boys who had deposited themselves on the scrawny grass in front of

him, showed no signs of impatience. The disciples had grown strong on their master's good teaching and followed his instructions with unquestioning faith and devotion.

Passing a boney finger across his cheeks, the old man shifted from his meditative position and began pacing the dusty expanse from the glade to the house. His stick clacked reassuringly with every second step and yet not one quizzical glance was exchanged by the disciples.

Unusual concern seemed to furrow the old man's brow, skillfully hiding a deeper undiscernable, mischievous joy. What was he planning? Slowly, he turned to face the semi-circle of devoted eyes.

"My sons, there are many farmers whose



looking and growing under the weight of seven hundred lbs. their rubbish contains better nutriment than our soil. Many of them spill and squander their supplies, and get seem to adopt a selfish policy of their's and frequency of the more right of an abundance. Such sturdy virtue is no virtue at all. He who has upright restrained lines, deserve better treatment."

Dealing with righteousness, the master sat down - his usual pacific, moderate demeanor having deserted him. Many of the boys, impressed by this apparent display of strength, jumped up and asked excitedly what could be done . . .

"What can be done?" reiterated the master with measured anger in his voice. "Why, people who till the soil and get squander its produce are little more than slaves, slaves of the very earth itself! We clearly cannot use our teachings to relieve their hearts of such blind self-reliance. I suggest that we use our will instead - to relieve their harder slaves of a little weight!"

The boys by this time were absorbing bookish phrases, exhilarated by the "rightness" of all that their aged teacher had said, eager to follow his every instruction.

In their haste to do his will, however, no-one noticed the real concern with which the master was now regarding their actions. Clench of steel had broken the general air of the globe, and the very trees seemed shocked at the disciples' activity, so used were they to the measured movements of a community at peace with their meditations, work or line of instruction.

Then, amidst the turmoil of excited chatter and planning, the master became aware of another observer - a young disciple, who although lame and obviously unable to climb and stand





anything, did not look dejected, just calm and unmoved.

Tapping his stick on the ground, the master brought the noise to a hush, and in the settling dust, motioned for the lame one to step forward.

"Miro. Do you not wish to do your master's will?" The boy bowed his head. "Do you not feel angry that in our good and virtuous

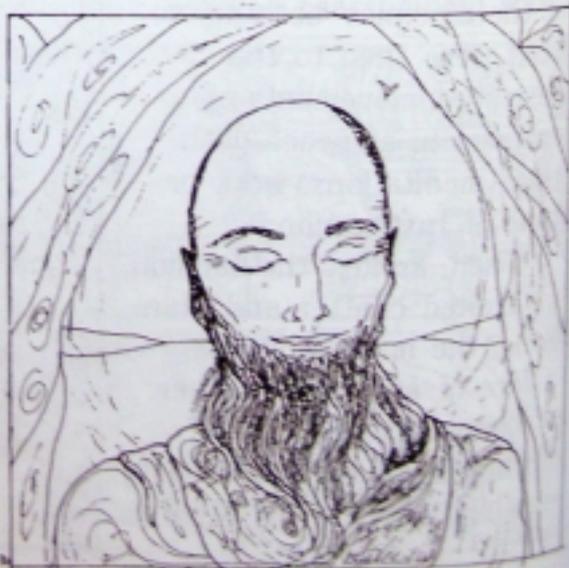
community we are living like beggars and that people who have no goodness or spiritual understanding are living like kings?" Miro fixed his gaze on a stone.

Probing further, the master said: "Perhaps it is just your lame leg that holds you back?" The sniggering of the other disciples rippled through the glade, tailing off sheepishly before the boy's gentle quietness.

The Master asked again: "What is it that troubles you, Miro?"

"Dear Master, I have trained with you from a very young age, and there is much respect and love in my heart for the many ways in which you teach us. This lameness would not stop me from climbing mountains if it were to save your life or perform some other act of service for you. But what you are asking us to do today - I cannot do."

Almost imperceptibly the master's face lightened, yet he



remained hesitantly for the
top to sit down. Still in
an awkward afraid, the
top listened intently to
the confirmation of their
master's will.

"My heart tells me that
years of virtuous living
mean nothing at all, if we
use our own purity to judge
and condemn others. It is
not, the farmers are mean
and selfish in action and
speech, but our response of
anger and criticism is even more repellent."

Peering, he cast a rueful glance at the down-faced gathering
who were now shuffling uncomfortably.

"We all have a master," he said, making no allusion to the guest, but
sitting figure beside him. "but it is really only his wise words of
truth and goodness that should be followed."

A mellow joy tilted the Master's lips and spread spider-like
patterns from eye to ear.

"Truth," he said, resuming his more gentle stance and tone of
voice. "Now, at last, there is one amongst you who clearly under-
stands my words. Mine has come to know for himself, the pure
word of Truth and Goodness - for not even his old teacher could
bring him into doing until he listens to the voice of the Master in
his own heart."

Understanding that they had failed the test, the other disciples
lowered gradually to Mine, and resolved to listen more scruply for
the voice of Wisdom in their own hearts.



*Sanctified, upon their journey
above all these deeds of impurity,
the practice of virtue is by the life here.*

CHAPTER VIII

CHAPTER VIII, 10-12-13

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THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING, in its earliest cultural context, focused on the internal spiritual practices in contrast to the external rituals prevalent at that time. The Buddha emphasised the need for individual effort and self-reliance. We have little control over the external aspects of the world, but we do have some degree of control over ourselves, so that is where we should start our practice. "One is one's own refuge" literally means "depend upon yourself", "look to yourself", "have confidence in yourself". It refers to the relative, conventional, empirical self which can choose to do good or bad, can make decisions and initiate action. In this way we take responsibility for ourselves. Our suffering is created by our ignorance, so we need to remedy it by gaining confidence in our own inner wisdom.

*By oneself is wrong done, by oneself is one soiled;
By oneself is wrong not done, by oneself is one purified.
Purity and impurity depend upon oneself;
no one can purify another.*

DHAMMAPADA, Verse 165

*You yourself ought to strive:
the Buddhas only show the way.
Those who enter upon this way and meditate
are released from the bonds of Death.*

DHAMMAPADA, Verse 276

THE GOAL OF BUDDHIST PRACTICE IS NIBBANA, a state difficult to describe but within reach of every individual. Out of respect and reverence for the lofty heights of spiritual truth, we frequently push the goal into the realm of human impossibility. But the very existence of people practising the teachings should be a living reminder that Nibbana is attainable. Although Nibbana is above and beyond everything which is common to us it can be realised by the honest and the perseverant through the teachings of the Buddha. Nibbana is exceedingly pleasant and worthwhile and can be achieved in this life. Like human happiness, Nibbana can be achieved here and now.

*Nibbana, though very subtle and fine,
is not hard to obtain for one intent upon the goal,
who is skilled in mind and of gentle manner,
and who practises the moral conduct of the Buddha.*

THERAGATHA, Verse 71

*Nibbana, as taught by the fully-enlightened One,
is indeed the highest happiness: the sorrowless,
stainless peace, wherein suffering is dissolved.*

THERAGATHA, Verse 227



The Buddha

by Katy Haines

RAINBOWS is a Dharma magazine for families. It is published three times a year by Anaravati Publications, Anaravati Buddhist Centre, Gt Gaddesden, Hemel Hempstead, HERTS HP1 3BE. RAINBOWS is printed for free distribution, and is funded entirely by donations. If you enjoy reading RAINBOWS and would like to contribute towards producing and distributing it, please make your donation payable to The English Sangha Trust, Anaravati. If you are currently receiving RAINBOWS but do not really want it, please let us know! We also appreciate being told of any inaccuracies in the mailing list. Please send all correspondence to 'RAINBOWS', at the above address.