

Discovering the Dharma

Taught by H.E. Trungram Gyaltrul Rinpoche

In a series of programs sponsored by the United Trungram Buddhist Fellowship and Dharmakaya

The Dharma, the true reality, is trans-cultural. It is true in all times and in all places. The teachings of Buddha, known as the Buddha Dharma, describe the true reality: the way things actually are, the way the world works, and the way to see the reality. Buddha taught the skillful means by which the underlying reality of things can be realized. He taught what he himself understood at the moment of his enlightenment, and he taught it so each of us could achieve the same. His insights (what he understood) and his teachings (his methods for each of us to understand through our own efforts) constitute Buddha Dharma – the path.

“Discovering the Dharma” is a comprehensive program for both beginners and intermediate practitioners. The program progresses through fifteen different sections covering all major topics of Mahayana Buddhism. It offers a range of skills through meditation, study and practical approaches to daily life – a wealth of skills for making one’s life more meaningful.

Within each subject area, participants will attend teachings, engage in meditation relevant to those teachings, read texts and teaching transcripts, and do short retreats. The final portion of the program, “Special Integrated Retreat”, is a series of longer retreats and special practices designed to help participants consolidate what they have learned and strengthen their meditation skills developed over the course of the program.

**** *
**** *
**** *

The Mind - Cultivate Positive Energy

Observe the mind and how it affects our world. Learn to transform harmful thoughts to create a positive and helpful attitude. This helps us to cultivate a positive relationship with all our experiences.

How to Meditate – Enhance Concentration and Calm our Mind

Learn the purpose of meditation and experience first hand the various techniques of Shamata Meditation – calming meditation. Participants will learn how to deal with obstacles to successful meditation as well as the physical and psychological preparation necessary for meditation.

Interdependent Arising – Examine How All Things Are Connected and Conditional

Study one of the fundamental insights of Buddha: everything exists in relation to other things. All things exist in a conditional state and in a continual process of change. This is a fundamental building block for developing greater insight, awareness and inner transformation.

Karma - Review the Law of Actions and Consequences

Introduce oneself to the non-theistic, rational, ethical system in which you learn how *intention* - in one's physical actions, in how one speaks, and in what one thinks - always leaves imprints that lead to consequences at a later time. Learn the facts about the law of cause and effect. Know how to reduce harmful acts and increase helpful acts. Find out ways to deal with life most effectively and take control of one's future.

Death and Rebirth - Explore the Real Nature of Cyclical Existence

Understand the process of death and rebirth; what dies and what is reborn. Learn to recognize and fulfill your highest purpose in this life, and develop the skills to help yourself and others at death.

The Mind of Ignorance and Insight – Empower Yourself by Knowing Yourself

Discover the way to free ourselves into the open dimension of Enlightenment from the root of our fear and frustration. Empower yourself with practical skills to deal with and to eradicate disturbing emotions.

Mental Purification – Uncover Attachments and Learn to Let Go

Learn how to let go of the attachments that lead to unhappiness. We all have the potential to cause suffering - for ourselves and others. Engage in a critical assessment of how 'attachment' acts as an obstacle to happiness, and engage in profound meditation practices, such as "exchanging self with others", that transform the energy of attachment into the root of happiness.

The Path – Follow an Accelerated, Systematic Process to Achieve Enlightenment

Get an outline of the entire Tibetan Buddhist path to awakening. Study the life story of the Buddha and discover the step-by-step path to enlightenment according to Gampopa's *Thargyan* (Ornament of the Precious Liberation).

The Spiritual Teacher – Learn the Importance of Finding the Right Teacher

Understand the need for an authentic teacher on the spiritual path, the qualities of teacher and student, and how to relate to a teacher for greatest benefit.

Taking Refuge – Give Yourself the Gift of Commitment to Practice

Learn what it means to take refuge in the Three Jewels and the benefits that flow from this. Understand how taking refuge helps to magnify your personal intention to achieve enlightenment.

Daily Practice – Establish Consistency and Skills to be Successful

Assemble the tools you need to develop a successful daily practice and receive the elements necessary to open the mind and develop wisdom through insight. Get some tips for making every action meaningful.

Compassion and Bodhicitta – Cultivate and Integrate These Essential Qualities

Discover practices that develop our innate qualities of compassion. Learn to apply these techniques to generate the mind of bodhicitta.

Meditation on Emptiness

As realization of emptiness is imperative for the attainment of liberation and enlightenment, learn analytical meditation, which helps break through the shell of our pre-existing concepts and create the right conditions for us to eventually experience emptiness. Familiarize with stabilizing meditation and resolve the nature of mind as taught by Mahamudra teachers.

Tantra – Receive an Introduction to this Special Form of Practice

Tantra is a core part of Tibetan Vajrayana practice. Learn what tantra is, how it works, and why it is such a powerful way to open one's mind. Get a broad overview of the four classes of tantra and learn to work with simple Kriya and/or Charya tantric methods. The 2-day *Nyung-ney* fasting-ritual practice will also be introduced.

Special Integrated Retreat – Consolidate and Integrate Everything You've Learned

As a part of the earlier sessions, participants will have spent time developing stability in the mind through Shamatha meditation, spent a week in retreat focusing on impermanence and an additional week in retreat meditating on compassion. This final session multiplies the benefits of all the previous sessions by guiding the practitioner through the practices of the hundred-thousand refuge prayers with prostrations, Vajrasattva mantra recitations, Mandala offerings, and guru yoga prayers. These are very potent and fundamental practices which will act as a powerful spring board for your practice at the end of the program.

When you understand mind,
You understand everything
- Nagarjuna