

Center For American Buddhist Practice, San Diego, CA

## **Meditation, Class and Sutra Study – Introduction and FAQ**

### **Schedule:**

- **Meditation** - Every Tuesday at 6:00pm to 7:00pm (Please bring your own cushion/zafu to sit on)
- **Practical Buddhism Class** – 7pm to 8pm 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesdays of each month (for beginners and intermediate)
- **Sutra Study** – 7pm to 8pm 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of each month (for more advanced students)
- **Special Event** – 7pm to 8pm on any month with a 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday
- **Social** – Tuesdays classes meet at a local coffee house after classes (have some coffee, tea and to meet other practitioners.)

### **About the Center:**

The San Diego Center for American Buddhist Practice was started to fill a need in the San Diego Community. Often many Asian Temples in San Diego will, from time to time, have a good monastic that speaks and teaches in English and will attract a fair following of Westerners. But usually these monastics and teachers only stay a short while and are rotated out, leaving the follower without a good place to practice. Several years ago the founders of CABP found themselves in a position where the monastics and teachers at their temple had been rotated out and the temple became a place where they could no longer hold classes and practice. After a couple of false starts we started up a Buddhist Sutra Study class again in 2008.

The purpose of CABP is to support the larger Buddhist Community. It was common and still is that many Western Buddhist practitioners do not usually care if the Buddhism is Mahayana, Theravada, Tibetan etc. as long as the teachers are good and community had something to offer. We hope to continue on in that vein. We get excited when a good monastic shows up at a local temple. We encourage people to explore the rich community we have in San Diego, but we are also here to keep classes going and help spread the Dharma as we can.

### **Our Classes:**

Our classes are free and supported by donations only. The classes cost us \$30 per class to rent our space and we have miscellaneous marketing expenses (usually just printing fliers and an ongoing ad in the Vision magazine). All of donation money goes to this, any extra would allow us to start more classes. If you have any questions about where the money goes please ask Jonathan or Grace, we'd be happy to share our books with you. No teachers or people are paid out of the donation money.

### **About the Sutra Study:**

Everyone is welcome to this class, but it is geared for those people already well versed in Buddhist concepts and terminology. If you are new to this, we ask that you attend some of the practical Buddhism classes first before moving on to the sutra study.

For those new to Buddhist Sutras, a Sutra is basically just a Sanskrit word for book or text. The Buddhist Sutras are the main texts that record the teachings of Shakyamuni Buddha. Unlike other religions, there is no one book in Buddhism. The Pali Cannon (the accepted Sutras of the southern tradition) is roughly the size of a good multi-volume encyclopedia. The Mahayana Cannon (the northern tradition) is much larger and when Chinese emperors used to commission an official printing, they would also build a chariot just to carry it around. The Tibetan Cannon is even bigger.

For the Sutra study, we almost always pick Sutras that have multiple translations readily available. This allows us to compare the translations to get a better sense of the original text. We go slow. Usually a paragraph or stanza at a time. We will have people read from the different translations so everyone can hear them. Then we just give some time to comment or ask questions, etc. The purpose is to use the sutra to spark a conversation about the Buddhist topic and relate them to our own lives and practice.