

# PEACEFUL PRACTICES

*Happiness starts in the mind*

BY AMY SCHNEIDER

JIGME RINPOCH AND LADY JANGCHUP PALMO

TODD COOPER

With the Dalai Lama visiting Eugene in May, there could be no better time to examine the peaceful practices that His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama, Tenzin Gyatso, recommends for living a happier, healthier inner life.

“I think the overall theme of his visit is the path of compassion and peace as a global remedy,” says Jigme Rinpoche, spiritual director and co-founder at Eugene Sakya Center. “Global does not mean an international theme — it means compassion as the foundation of every relationship in every moment of the day.”

Jigme Rinpoche and his family were influential in arranging the Dalai Lama’s visit to Eugene — his mother, Lady Jangchup Palmo, known as Amala (“honorific mother”), met with His Holiness on several occasions, asking him to come to Oregon. As a leader in Tibetan Buddhism, Rinpoche (a Tibetan honorific for “precious one”) says happiness starts in the mind. When people are self-centered and think only for their own gain, they compromise their own happiness.

“Buddha said that we are what we think,” Rinpoche says. “And all that we are rides with our thoughts. With our thoughts we make the world — so speak and act with a pure mind, and happiness follows.”

In Tibetan Buddhism, having a pure mind means thinking of others and setting aside selfish thoughts. The only way to achieve inner peace is to reorient the mind and “develop a sense of

universal responsibility.” Rinpoche says it takes courage to overcome the tendency to think only of the self, but selfishness has already brought about the current economic crisis and environmental destruction, and it’s imperative for everyone to take a close look at their mindset.

“The change must come from within,” Rinpoche says. “Instead of selfishly thinking, think of others. Instead of getting angry and upset, think of kindness. That’s the way.”

In a world that seeks gratification from material objects, the Dalai Lama teaches that happiness comes from mental peace. To achieve that peace, His Holiness says that we must turn to others instead of toward our own material desires.

“From my own limited experience I have found that the greatest degree of inner tranquility comes from the development of love and compassion,” the Dalai Lama says on his website. According to his teachings, it is this interconnectedness of humanity that can enrich the mind, the shared desire for love and understanding.

So for a healthier mind, start practicing compassion and peace for the Dalai Lama’s upcoming visit. According to Rinpoche, Eugene is already off to a good start: “We as a community must have earned positive karma to be able to see and to hear such a being. It is a moment to celebrate.” ■

Tickets to see the Dalai Lama at Matthew Knight Arena on May 10 have sold out, but go to [www.sakyausa.org](http://www.sakyausa.org) for related events, including a 5K Peace Run/Walk on May 5 at 10 am, starting at the Nobel Laureate Peace Park in Alton Baker Park.



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