

## MODULE OUTLINE

### Module 2 of Year 1

## **Ethical Frameworks in Buddhism and Psychotherapy: The Nature & Nurture of Good Conduct**

Saturday & Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> & 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2022

Seminar Leaders: Francine Bartlett and Venerable Sujato

### A. MODULE AIMS

This second module introduces the main ethical frameworks used in Buddhism and the modern therapeutic traditions. The nature and function of ethics in Buddhism from both a theoretical and practical perspective are looked at. Ethics in its prescriptive sense of preventing harmful actions and in the developmental sense of building character are considered. The addition of in-depth discussion on practical application and the meaningful inclusion of ethical principles in everyday life and personal development offers important learning. Other facets discussed include the relevance and possible applications in clinical work and social action in view of relevant research in contemporary neuroscience on the subject of the brain and ethical behaviour.

We continue to deepen our meditation experience with periods of guidance and silence.

### B. LEARNING OUTCOMES

- Understanding the place of ethics (sīla) in Buddhism, Buddhist and clinical practice.
- An overview of the five precepts and other ethical perspectives of early Buddhism, and their applications in personal and professional practice.
- A deepening understanding of right view, particularly in relation to ethical conduct as an integral part of the eightfold path, and with reference to the neurological basis of ethical behaviour.
- Identifying the pitfalls of wrong view, the shadow aspects of ethics encountered on the spiritual journey.
- Recognising and understanding the nature of 'ethical dilemmas' in both personal and clinical practice
- An introduction to Engaged Buddhism and the ethics of social action.

### C. CONTENT

The main content of the module will include:

- Ethics as a part of the eight-fold path; the roots of the wholesome (skillful) and unwholesome (unskillful); harmlessness, and the 5 precepts.
- Buddhist ethics in relation to the ethical tradition of western philosophy.
- Ethical practice in enabling an 'holding environment', boundaries, professional integrity and managing ethical dilemmas

- The shadow side of ethics — denial, guilt, regret, blame and shame
- The neurobiological dimension of ethics as theorized in contemporary neuroscience
- Reflections on our ethical responsibility for social action when faced with global warming, inequality, and other severe crises. By advocating personal solutions for social problems, are we in fact the problem?

#### D. TEACHING METHODS

Seminar, experiential exercises, small and large group discussions and meditations and case discussions.

#### E. ASSIGNMENTS

Students to complete a written essay at the end of the weekend entitled **Personal Reflections on Ethics**, which may cover some or all of the following areas:

- Theoretical aspects of weekend presentations and discussions
- The experiential exercises and meditations explained, practiced and discussed
- How this module helped me personally and with my clinical practice

This essay consisting of 1,000 to 1,500 words is to be submitted to the seminar leader, Bhante Sujato [sujato@gmail.com](mailto:sujato@gmail.com) Francine Bartlett at [francinebart@gmail.com](mailto:francinebart@gmail.com) and Director of Training, Deborah Chisholm at [dot@aabcap.org](mailto:dot@aabcap.org) within four weeks following the weekend seminar.

#### F. ASSESSMENT CRITERIA AND PROCEDURE

Contributions during seminar and group discussions and written essay demonstrating:

- General understanding of Buddhist Ethics and its place in the eightfold path
- An understanding of 'right view' in relation to ethics
- Ability to discuss particulars of the five precepts
- An understanding of how Buddhist ethics might translate into clinical practice and life
- An ability to discuss the relevance of recognising the emergence and function of the shadow material (both personal and in clinical practice).

Grading: Level of competency: Competent / Not-Yet-Competent.

G. **ESSENTIAL READINGS:** Please find all essential readings and suttas in the AABCAP online class space.

#### H. RECOMMENDED READINGS

#### Articles:

1. Bodhi, B. (1999). *The Noble Eightfold Path – The Way to the End of Suffering. Intro & chapters 1-4.*  
<http://www.accesstoinsight.org/lib/authors/bodhi/waytoend.html>
2. King Keenan, E. (2010). Navigating the Ethical Terrain of Spiritually Focused Psychotherapy Goals: Multiple Worldviews, Affective Triggers, and Personal Practices, *Smith College Studies in Social Work*, 80:2-3, 228-247, DOI: 10.1080/00377311003754179

#### Books:

1. Carroll, M. & Shaw, E. (2013). *Ethical Maturity in the Helping Professions: Making Difficult Life and Work Decisions*. London, UK: Jessica Kingsley Publishers
2. Harvey, P. (2000). *An Introduction to Buddhist Ethics - Foundations, Values and Issues*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
3. Plamintr, S. (1994). *Getting to Know Buddhism* pp. 133-154 Bangkok, Thailand: Buddhadhamma Foundation
4. Sills, F., (2008). *Being and Becoming: Psychodynamics, Buddhism, and the Origins of Selfhood*. Berkley, CA: North Atlantic Books.
5. Yalom, I.D. (2002). *The Gift of Therapy*, London, UK: Piatkus Books  
Chapters 63, *Don't be Afraid of Touching your Patients* & 64, *Never be Sexual with Patients*, pp187-194.

### I. PROFILE OF SEMINAR LEADERS

#### **Bhante Sujato**

Venerable Sujato was ordained in the forest tradition lineage of Ajahn Chah. Since 1994 he has been practicing meditation in forest monasteries in Thailand, Malaysia and Australia. He specialises in historical research into the fundamental teachings found across the Buddhist traditions. His books include *Sects and Sectarianism, A History Of Mindfulness, A Swift Pair of Messengers, Beginnings, White Bones Red Rot Black Snakes*, and *Dreams of Bhadda*. He was the founder of Santi Forest Monastery, and was instrumental in supporting the establishment of the lineage of fully ordained bhikkhunis in the Forest Tradition. Bhante Sujato founded SuttaCentral, a web based resource of early Buddhist texts, translations, and parallels. In the past three years he has completed a new English translation of the four Pali Nikayas.

#### **Francine Bartlett**

Francine is an Accredited Mental Health Social Worker and, though working across the lifespan and all forms of what Leunig calls “life ache”, she specializes in child and family work. She has worked in Government, non-government, private, community & volunteer

settings and supervises people in all these forms of service. Francine stumbled upon Goenkaji and Vipassana meditation in India in 1974. Her lifelong curiosity about spirituality has led her to explore a range of teachings over time. A life lesson seems to be finding a way to walk a path of inner spiritual development and outward social action. Francine has 3 children who were great teachers and 10 grandchildren from whom she continues to learn and gain inspiration.