



# Three Jewels

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## Links to Buddhist Websites

[Blue Lotus Temple](#)  
[Ten Directions Zen Community](#)  
[Woodstock Zen Group](#)  
[Dharma.org](#)  
[Human Potential Foundation](#)

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## See the Reality

~ Bhante Sujatha

Some people don't like to practice too hard because they do not like to see the reality of life. Sometimes seeing the reality is like a poke in the chest with a burning stick. We must accept that there is pain and suffering, otherwise we only bring more suffering upon ourselves. Once there was a man who was shot by a poison arrow. All of his friends came to him ready to rush him to the hospital, but this man did not want to go right away. First, he wanted to know who shot the arrow, what direction it came from, and what kind of poison was used. From this story, we see that people want to think of any other thing instead of seeing the pain and suffering. However, we must see it before we can move beyond it.

During Buddha's time, there was a rich man with a beautiful daughter. The daughter wanted to be a nun, but her parents didn't approve. They eventually forced her to marry. After she got married, she confessed to her husband that she really wanted to be a nun. Finally, her husband gave his permission for her to leave the home and become a nun. After a short time living in the monastery, she found out that she was pregnant. The other nuns heard the news, and they suspected that she had had an affair after entering the monastery, so they kicked her out. This nun went to the Buddha for advice on what to do. The Buddha made a committee together with the King and disciples to review the situation and recommend any disciplinary action. The committee decided that the baby was conceived during the marriage, and finally the nun gave birth to the child.

While visiting the Temple, the King heard the baby crying. When the King finally found the nun with her baby, he asked that she let him take the baby and raise him in the palace as his own son. The nun did not want to give up her son, but eventually she did, and the baby was raised as a prince. After some years, the young prince became a Monk. One day the nun was on the street begging for food, and she recognized the Monk, also begging, on the other side of the street as her son. The son was now an enlightened Monk. She ran over to him, so happy to see her son again. She was waiting such a long time for this moment to arrive. However, when she met her son in the street, he only asked her, "How many years did you practice, and still you have this attachment?" The nun went to consult with the Buddha after this. He explained to her that she should not be waiting for her son. She should just practice. The nun followed the Buddha's advice, practicing and letting go of her attachments, finally becoming enlightened.

The Buddha taught that attachment creates suffering and fear. We don't have time to play around. Think about how short of a time we have to improve our love and our kindness to ourselves. Being a human being is a great opportunity, but we get lost because we do not have the proper guidance. This is why it is so important to have a community of noble friends. A noble friend will never let you down.

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## To Find Home, Learn to Settle

~ Kelly Johnston

A recent discussion from Thursday night meditation focused on non-attachment, and specifically the idea of non-attachment in Buddhism; a topic that has been both the easiest and, in some respects, most difficult for me to understand and practice. When I think of non-attachment, I am reminded of the one thing that I cannot seem to let go. Through my practice, I have come to understand more about how I cling to this thing, and have also had a revelation about my attachment: that I am clinging to nothing more than an *idea*, and a false one at that. From the title of my article, you may have guessed that the one little picture, curiously painted by an artist wearing rose-colored glasses, that I cannot seem to part with completely is my *idea* of "Home."

In one of my favorite movies, "Garden State", the twenty-something character Andrew explains my struggle quite well.

He says, "You know that point in your life when you realize the house you grew up in isn't really your home anymore? All of a sudden, even though you have someplace where you put your [stuff], that idea of home is gone. You'll see one day when you move out. Just sort of happens one day and it's gone. You feel like you can never get it back. It's like you feel homesick for a place that doesn't even exist. Maybe it's like this rite of passage, you know? You won't ever have that feeling again until you create a new idea of home for yourself... Maybe that's all that family really is; a group of people that miss the same imaginary place."

The *idea of home* means many things to me. It's more than a place to keep my stuff, more than a family, more than memories. For me, *Home* is a feeling. Home *feels* like food and sleep, laughing and crying, the opposite of alone, holidays, friends, smells good, my best day and worst day, a witness to my life. Twice in the past two years, major changes have occurred in my life causing me to lose that feeling I called Home. Without my *witness*, the backdrop to all that is me, I was more than a bit lost. When I think of non-attachment, I wonder what I am without my attachments, without these ideas, and what am I really missing so much? Without all of these things, who am I?

Several months ago while flipping through a book, I read about this very simple meditation: Imagine you are a small pebble floating in a stream. For awhile you float gently with the current. Then, begin to think to yourself the word "settle." As you think about this idea, you eventually stop drifting and come to rest on the bottom of the stream. The current washes gently over you, but does not carry you away. Repeat to yourself, "Settle." I started to practice this meditation several times a day. What I found when I finally "settled" within myself was something I thought only existed outside of me and independent of me. I found that I am already Home, and wherever I am can *feel* like Home. I just need to stop getting carried away by the current of life. If I do not attach to my idea of Home, I cannot lose it. There is nothing to let go of, nothing to carry, nothing to keep, and nothing to lose. This is the essence of non-attachment. With this practice we have everything we need all the time. We can be at Home within our own mind and body under any conditions.

**Continued...**

## Blue Lotus Buddhist Temple

### Calendar of Events

Saturday, July 7, 2007

Bingo

Sunday, July 8, 2007

Beginners' Retreat

Saturday, July 14, 2007

Annual Precept-Taking  
Ceremony (10:00 AM)

Bhante Sujatha's Birthday  
Party to follow

Sunday, July 22, 2007

Day Retreat in  
William Bay

Saturday, July 28, 2007

Movie Night (6:30 PM)

Sunday, July 29, 2007

Moonlight Meditation

Saturday, August 4, 2007

Bingo

Sunday, August 12, 2007

Outdoor Retreat

Weekend of August 17-19, 2007

Retreat at Theosophical  
Society In Wheaton

What does this mean about the people that are part of my idea of Home? Does it mean I don't love my family or miss them now that we are living in different states and cities? This was one of my first questions about non-attachment. As Bhante Sujatha explained very well during the discussion I mentioned earlier, when we attach to a person, we *want* something from that person. We want their love, affection, attention, praise, etc. We might want that person to need us. Somewhere under all of these wants, we attach to other people in ways that tell us who we are. We think those relationships define us, but the truth is, they do not. If I told you that I had no living parents, would you tell me that I am not a daughter? If I have no biological children or siblings, can I not be a mom or a sister to someone?

In keeping with my movie theme, I will leave you with one simple thought from "Under the Tuscan Sun." The main character Frances has definitely lost her idea of Home. After finding out her husband has had an affair, and losing her house to him and his now-pregnant girlfriend, Frances spontaneously moves to Italy. While there, she is eventually able to detach from her idea of how life "should" be. She finds out that everything she wanted still came to her, but not in the way she had imagined. Until she fully let go of all of her attachments, her life felt totally empty. As each day passed she became more and more open, and what she saw in the end is that, **"Life is such a surprise."** If we are attached to what could have been and what should have been and what might be, we will never be open enough to welcome life's surprises. We will never know that we are already Home.

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## Who is keeping her?

One story is about two young monks who went for a walk. They met a very pretty young lady at the bank of a river. She needed to cross the river, but could not swim. She begged them to help her.

The first monk explained that he was a Buddhist Priest and said he could not touch her because it would not be good for his discipline.

The second monk said, "Yes, I can help you my dear sister. Please climb onto my shoulders and I will take you to the other side."

The first monk became very angry and upset. The three of them crossed the river, and the lady thanked the monk and went on her way. As the two young monks continued their walk the first monk was still angry. He told the second monk that what he did was wrong for a Buddhist monk to do. He was so angry that he even insulted him for his actions of helping the lady.

The second monk finally said, "As I helped that lady, I kept her on the bank. For me, she is still on the other side of the river. For you, you are still carrying her in your head."

This is another good example of our unnecessary attachment to issues.

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## Something to Think About...

Train yourself in doing good that lasts and brings happiness. Cultivate generosity, the life of peace, and a mind of boundless love.

Knowing that the other person is angry, one who remains mindful and calm acts for his own best interest and for the other's interest, too.

Samyutta Nikaya I, 162

**Blue Lotus Buddhist Temple**

**Calendar of Events**

Saturday, August 25, 2007  
Bikkhuni Ordination Ceremony

Sunday, August 26, 2007  
Sutra Discussion

Tuesday, August 28, 2007  
Moonlight Meditation

Saturday, September 1, 2007  
Bingo

Sunday, September 2, 2007  
Picnic with Zen Group

Wednesday, September 26, 2007  
Moonlight Meditation

Sunday, September 30, 2007  
Sutra Discussion

**News & Notes**

**Join us for Bingo!** The first Saturday of each month will be an afternoon of Bingo held downstairs in the Congregational Unitarian Church in Woodstock. Bring a friend or family member for an afternoon of fun. Bingo will be played between 1:00 PM and 3:00 PM, and refreshments and snacks will be available for a modest price. Come and enjoy while supporting the Blue Lotus Temple and Congregational Unitarian Church.

**Offering Blessings** and loving-kindness is something we do together during each meditation. We gather our good merits, and wish happiness and health to a friend or loved one. Knowing the positive energy just one person can generate, think about the power of the group as a whole. By coming together as a spiritual community, we can offer support to each other during difficult times. If you would like the Blue Lotus meditation group to send a blessing of loving-kindness to you or a family member or friend, please email [info@bluelotustemple.org](mailto:info@bluelotustemple.org) with your request. If you would like to include the person's name, relation to you and difficulty (e.g., illness or death in the family) we will include them with our blessing in the next meditation session.

**Ordination Ceremony.** On Saturday, August 25, 2007, at 10:00 AM in the Unitarian Church in Woodstock, Judy Franklin of the Blue Lotus Lake Geneva, Wisconsin Group will become a member of the Maha Sangha.

Please join Bhante Sujatha and the Theravada Buddhist Monastic Community for a memorable event and a landmark occasion as it is the first ordination of a Theravada Buddhist Nun in the Midwestern United States. Ordination of Buddhist Nuns into the Maha Sangha has only recently been again fully acknowledged and reestablished as legitimate practice by the Buddhist councils in Sri Lanka. This is a rare opportunity in both historical and cultural terms to experience a traditional monastic ordination. Don't miss your chance to learn and show support for the Maha Sangha and the Buddhist community.

**For his birthday,** Bhante Sujatha will be offering lunch to the Sangha on Saturday, July 14, following the Precept-Taking Ceremony. Please feel free to join us even if you are unable to attend the ceremony. Lunch will be served in the basement of the Unitarian Church in Woodstock. In lieu of birthday gifts to Bhante Sujatha, please make a small donation toward medical expenses for Chanika, a 15-year-old Sri Lankan girl in need of major surgery. Checks can be made payable to Blue Lotus Buddhist Temple.

**Wanted** - Volunteer accountant to assist with Temple bookkeeping. Please contact Bhante Sujatha or any Board member.