

April 2017

NEWSLETTER

International Meditation Centre

IN THE TRADITION OF SAYAGYI U BA KHIN AND MOTHER SAYAMAGYI



That which has a nature of arising, of appearing, of being compounded, and of decay and dissolution, how can the wish that it should not disintegrate and disappear be realised, even if it is the body of the Buddha? There can be no such possibility.

(Mahā Parinibbāna Sutta 207)

COURSE SCHEDULE 2017 – 2018

Course dates are correct at the time of publishing this Newsletter. Please check www.internationalmeditationcentre.org for the most up-to-date schedule before applying for a course or making any travel arrangements.

IMC United Kingdom

Courses taught by Mr Roger Bischoff:

April	7 – 17, 2017
May	12 – 22, 2017
June	9 – 19, 2017
July	21 – 31, 2017
August	18 – 28, 2017
September	22 – October 2, 2017
October	20 – 30, 2017
November	24 – December 4, 2017
December	22 – January 1, 2018
January	19 – 29, 2018
March	<i>Date to be confirmed</i>
April	6 – 16, 2018

IMC Australia (NSW)

April	7 – 17, 2017	Dr Mark Peterson
May	26 – June 5, 2017	Dr Mark Peterson
July	7 – 17, 2017	Mr Michael Fraser
September	22 – October 2, 2017	Mr Richard Walsh
November	24 – December 4, 2017	Mr Richard Walsh

IMC Australia (WA)

April	14 – 24, 2017	Mr Douglas Solomon
August	18 – 28, 2017	Mr Gregory Solomon
November	24 – December 4, 2017	Mr Gregory Solomon

COURSE SCHEDULE 2017 – 2018 continued

IMC Austria

April	28 – May 8, 2017	Mr Franz Neuner
July	7 – 17, 2017	Mr Franz Zelsacher
August	4 – 14, 2017 <i>in Italian and English</i>	Mr Renzo Fedele
October	27 – November 6, 2017	Mr Hubert Knaus
December	29 – January 8, 2018	Mr Franz Neuner
February	9 – 19, 2018	Mr Franz Zelsacher
May	18 – 28, 2018	Mr Franz Neuner
July	13 – 23, 2018	Mr Franz Zelsacher

IMC USA

May	12 – 22, 2017	Mr Michael Kosman
June	9 – 19, 2017	Mr Michael Kosman
July	14 – 24, 2017	Mr Craig Storti
August	18 – 28, 2017	Mr Michael Kosman
October	6 – 16, 2017	Mr Craig Storti
December	8 – 18, 2017	Mr Craig Storti

Germany

Weekend Courses:

April	28 – May 1, 2017	Mr Horst Jughard
September	29 – October 3, 2017	Mr Horst Jughard

Italy

August	4 – 14, 2017 <i>at IMC Austria</i>	Mr Renzo Fedele
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Japan

April	28 – May 8, 2017	Mr James Emery (<i>in Osaka</i>)
August	11 – 21, 2017	Mr James Emery (<i>in Tohoku</i>)

Weekend Courses:

July	15 – 17, 2017	Mr James Emery (<i>in Osaka</i>)
November	3 – 5, 2017	Mr James Emery (<i>in Osaka</i>)
February	10 – 12, 2018	Mr James Emery (<i>in Osaka</i>)

COURSE SCHEDULE 2017 – 2018 continued

Netherlands

February 2 – 12, 2018 Mr Matthijs Schouten

Russia

June 23 – July 3, 2017 Mr Roger Bischoff

November 3 – 13, 2017 Mr Roger Bischoff

Switzerland

April 12 – 22, 2017 Mr Eugen Jung

March 29 – April 8, 2018 Mr Eugen Jung

Weekend Course:

September 1 – 4, 2017 Mr Eugen Jung

Ukraine

April 28 – May 8, 2017 Mr Roger Bischoff (*in Kyiv*)

September 1 – 11, 2017 Mr Roger Bischoff (*in Kyiv*)

Weekend Course:

October 6 – 10, 2017 Mr Roger Bischoff
(*in Dnepropetrovsk*)

SPECIAL DAYS 2017 – 2018

April 13-16, 2017 Water Festival

April 17, 2017 Burmese New Year

May 10, 2017 Buddha Day (Full Moon of Kason)

June 9, 2017 Mahāsamāya Day (Full Moon of Nayon)

July 8, 2017 Dhammacakka Day (Full Moon of Waso)

October 5, 2017 Abhidhamma Day (Full Moon of Thadingyut)

October 12, 2017 Anniversary of the Teachers' arrival in the West

November 3, 2017 Festival of Lights (Full Moon of Tasaung Mon)

December 4, 2017 Saya Thetgyi's Demise Day

January 19, 2018 Sayagyi U Ba Khin's Demise Day

January 28, 2018 Mother Sayamagyi's Demise Day

THE SUPREME FORM OF FORBEARANCE

Kassapamandiya Jātaka

Once a bhikkhu came to pay respects to the Buddha only the day after he had arrived at the monastery, explaining that this disrespect was because of difficulty with his elderly father. In reply, the Buddha told this story from the past.

At that time, the Bodhisatta was born into a brahmin family and grew up in a town in Kāsi. When his mother died, he performed the funeral rites. At the end of the six-week period of mourning, he gave away all the money that was in the house. Wishing to live as an ascetic, he put on bark garments, and, taking his father and younger brother with him, he went to the Himalayas, where the three of them lived on roots and wild fruit. During the months when the rain was incessant in the Himalayas, it was impossible to dig up roots or to gather fruit, so, like most ascetics living in that region, they came down and stayed with villagers.

At the end of the rainy season, the young ascetic, the Bodhisatta, began the trek back to the Himalayas with his father and brother. As the sun was going down, they were not far from the hut, so he said, “You can come on slowly. I will go ahead and get the hermitage in order.”

His younger brother pulled their father by the arm along the path and butted him with his head to make him go forward, but the old man protested, “I do not like the way you are taking me home!” he cried. He turned around and walked all the way back to the village and started over again. The young ascetic lit a torch and set out to find them. After he had brought them safely to the hermitage, he gave his father a bath and made him comfortable.

“Father,” he said, as he gently massaged the old man’s feet, “young boys are just like earthen vessels and can be broken in a moment. Once broken, they cannot be mended again! When youth become abusive, older folk should bear with them patiently! Forbearance is wiser than foolish reaction.” The old man accepted his son’s admonition and began practising self-restraint.

Based on *Jataka Tales of the Buddha*, Kawasaki trans. Vol. II, p. 476

The Bodhisatta, in the life when he was called Sarabhanga, said:

One may bear with patience the rudeness of one’s superior through fear; or the abusive language from those who are equal to ward off danger of rivalry. (Both cases are not superior types of patience.) But the wise say that to put up with the rude language coming from one’s inferiors, with no special reason to do so, is the supreme form of forbearance.

From Jataka 522, quoted in *Great Chronicle of Buddhas*, Vol I, Part 1, p.254.

MOTHER SAYAMAGYI DAW MYA THWIN
MAHA SADDHAMMA JOTIKA DHAJA
(1925 – 2017)

Mother Sayamagyi was the leading disciple of Sayagyi U Ba Khin. She fulfilled his mission to spread the pure Buddha Dhamma in the West. Mother Sayamagyi passed away on 28 January 2017, aged 91.

Born on 12 March 1925 in Moulmein, Myanmar, Daw Mya Thwin took her first meditation course with Sayagyi U Ba Khin in April 1953 at the International Meditation Centre, Yangon, Myanmar. At the time, her husband, U Chit Tin, encouraged her to try meditation under the guidance of Sayagyi U Ba Khin. Although initially not keen on the idea of meditating, she eventually agreed.

As Sayamagyi often said herself, she did not find the course easy and had to endure intense suffering. Such were her attainments that by the end of the course, Sayagyi U Ba Khin invited her to stay on at the centre to continue to meditate with him. Within a month Sayamagyi was assisting Sayagyi in teaching courses and did so right up until his demise on 19 January 1971.

From early on, Sayamagyi made a strong determination to devote her life to serving Sayagyi and his Dhamma mission. She did everything at the Centre – from sweeping and polishing the Dhamma Hall floors by hand, to looking after the students and making sure all the food was delicious and everyone was well fed – whilst at the same time she was assisting Sayagyi in teaching the Dhamma. Sayamagyi used to say that no matter what she did or how hard she worked, she could never repay the debt of gratitude she owed Sayagyi for teaching her the Dhamma.

After Sayagyi U Ba Khin's demise, Sayamagyi was asked to continue teaching at IMC Yangon as the principal teacher. In 1978, after the continued requests of many foreign students who visited IMC Yangon, Mother Sayamagyi and Sayagyi U Chit Tin left their home country to fulfil Sayagyi's wish of spreading the Dhamma to the West.

Over the next 38 years, thanks to Sayamagyi's great Pāramīs, she managed to establish five International Meditation Centres (in the UK, the USA, Austria, and two in Australia) all with a Dhamma Yaung Chi Ceti (Light of the Dhamma Pagoda) modelled on the one at IMC Yangon, as designed by Sayagyi U Ba Khin. As well as founding these Centres, Sayamagyi established many trusts and associations, travelled around the world to teach courses and led pilgrimages to Myanmar, India, Nepal and Sri Lanka.

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Sayamagyi also conducted many ordination courses in Yangon, Bodh Gaya, the UK, Australia and Austria, where men and boys could ordain as Bhikkus and Sāmaṇeras. These were occasions of great merit for those who ordained and those who had the opportunity to serve – all thanks to Mother Sayamagyi. The Burmese Bhikkus who were invited to the West to preside over these ordinations expressed their gratitude to Sayamagyi for giving them the opportunity to perform auspicious true Buddha Sāsana work in the West. They commented that such opportunities are extremely rare and cannot easily be achieved. They were particularly impressed by the discipline and practice of Sayamagyi’s students, which reflected her leading example.

Sayamagyi always stressed the importance of maintaining the practice of the Dhamma. She used to say that even when she went about doing household chores like chopping vegetables or ironing, she would stop for a few moments and try to feel Anicca.

In 1994, owing to her efforts to spread and support the Buddha Dhamma, both in Myanmar and abroad, Mother Sayamagyi was given the highest honour granted to a lay person in Myanmar – the title Mahā Saddhamma Jotika Dhaja.

Mother Sayamagyi showed tremendous loving kindness, compassion and patience to all of us. She worked tirelessly for over sixty years to support Sayagyi U Ba Khin’s Dhamma mission. In doing so, she has changed the lives of so many. The debt of gratitude we owe Mother Sayamagyi is immeasurable. Throughout her life, Sayamagyi was always determined and put forth great effort, day-in and day-out, even in her final years.

We are now without Mother Sayamagyi’s physical presence but, as the revered Sayadaw U Pavara from Myanmar said in a recent Dhamma talk, “Although Sayamagyi has left her physical body behind, she will always be with us. As long as you carry on following the path Sayamagyi showed you and practise the Dhamma she taught you, with true faith, you should never consider Sayamagyi has passed away.”

May the Pure Buddha Dhamma long endure!

Sādhu! Sādhu! Sādhu!

International Meditation Centre

IN THE TRADITION OF SAYAGYI U BA KHIN AND MOTHER SAYAMAGYI

To locate websites for all countries, see www.internationalmeditationcentre.org

- IMC UK Splatts House, Heddington, Calne, SN11 0PE, UK
T: +44 1380 850 238, E: imcuk@internationalmeditationcentre.org
- IMC NSW PO Box 3059, Bonnells Bay, NSW 2264, Australia
T: +61 2 4970 5433, F: +61 2 4970 5749, E: 10days@imensw.com
- IMC WA 1525 Jacoby Street, Mundaring, WA 6073, Australia
T: +61 8 9295 2644, F: +61 8 9295 3435, E: imcperth@iinet.net.au
- IMC Austria St Michael 6, 9130 Poggendorf, Austria
T: +43 4224 2820, F: +43 4224 2820 32, E: mail@imc-austria.com
- IMC USA 4920 Rose Drive, Westminster MD 21158, USA
T: +1 410 346 7889, E: info@internationalmeditationcenter.org
- Canada IMC Canada, 4 Old York Crescent, Kitchener, Ontario, N2B 3G3
T: +1 519 896 0533, E: pattip.lp@gmail.com
- Germany Sayagyi U Ba Khin Gesellschaft, In der Wann 39, 35037 Marburg
T: +49 6421 34 660, E: h.jughard@web.de
- Italy Mr Renzo Fedele, Via Euganea 94, 35033 Bressio PD
T: +39 049 9900 752, E: renzo1fed@yahoo.it
- Japan Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Trust,
2-2-22 Minato-Machi #209, Naniwa-ku, Osaka City 556-0017
T/F: +81 6 6649 2105, E: emery@waltz.plala.or.jp
- Netherlands Sayagyi U Ba Khin Stichting, Centrumlaan 10, 6869 VE Heveadorp
T: +31 26 33 32 554, E: secretaris@ubakhin.net
- Belgium Address/Email as for Netherlands T/F: +32 2 351 4559
- Singapore Sayagyi U Ba Khin Memorial Association,
522 East Coast Road, #12-03 Ocean Park, Singapore 458966
T: +65 66693608, E: limsongteng@gmail.com
- Switzerland Sayagyi U Ba Khin Gesellschaft,
c/o Eugen Jung, Abendstrasse 30/119, 3018 Bern
T: +41 31 991 6141, E: eugen.jung@hispeed.ch
- New Zealand Mr Peter Bridges, 9A Cecil Rd, Milford, Auckland, 0620
T: +64 21 917 392, E: peter.bridges@xtra.co.nz
- Ukraine Mr Oleksandr Nosov, Glushkova ave, h. 45, app. 37, Kiev 03187
T: +380 63 154 2077, E: alexandre8n@gmail.com
- USA Mr Joe McCormack, 23 Via Capistrano, Tiburon, CA 94920, USA
(West Coast) T: +1 415 789 0153, F: +1 415 789 0193, E: mccormack23@comcast.net