

Tales From Thailand #4, 2018



Hundreds of retreatants, ninety percent of them women, climb up here to the roof on Saturdays and holidays, at the end of a long slow-walking meditation. The entire roof is a tribute to a Mongolian/Tibetan deity named Green Tara. My teacher, Maechee Sansanee, installed this naked-breasted goddess ten years ago. In Thailand, an extremely conservative group of monks hold the reins, as in most

of Asia. Or as in most of the world's religions, perhaps I could say?

Maechee says that women don't need political power... they simply need to have faith in themselves, in the Buddha-dharma, to keep "jai yen"/a cool heart and serve society.

This formula certainly seems to work for her. Over New Year's, she was invited to the celebration in Myanmar, where 18,000 monks met to chant in the sacred temple. Khun Mae/Maechee Sansanee was the ONLY woman invited to participate. Although by rank she must walk behind the littlest monk, many



are waiting for her blessing and/or to take her photograph.

She is a subtle revolution, opening the door for the next generation. Khun Mae is often the Thai government's representative at world-wide events, such as UNESCO gatherings.

Nothing ever stands still here at Sattira Dhammasathan. Something is always under either construction or de-construction. Khun Mae may whimsically decide to use a space for a new project. I've seen a few of my cob creations vanish over the years - a wonderful Buddhist opportunity for me to release attachments, of course.

Right now, there are two huge ongoing projects: Labor-crews from Issan are working day and night on a five-story building, containing ninety-five apartment units. Here is what I wrote for our S.D.S. website about it:



*Our newly emerging **Mindfulness Hospital for Dharma Healing** has the intention to help people live meaningful lives, with a minimum of suffering. They don't need to be Buddhist. Families can come visit together and study dynamics of communication and parenting, or alternative healing methods if someone is sick. Pregnant mothers and their partners can consciously and peacefully study their own minds and how this conditions the unborn child, with full support of the community. We can also*

live consciously even if we have a terminal illness, and die a peaceful non-combative death. Consciousness is possible from birth to death.

The new roof-top (photo above) is scheduled to have a garden full of herbal healing plants and trees...and a cob-space to enjoy the shade. Four volunteer architects designed four different spaces to fit the needs of handicapped, elderly, single retreatants and family living.

Next door to that will be the new concert stadium, designed to accommodate 1400 participants for our ever-expanding events.



Crowning the stadium will be an 80' flowing conical Tibetan style stupa, made of colorful over-lapping cloths... The sides will resemble giant ocean tides and fish' gills. These architects don't get paid, but they do get to see their out-of-the-box

designs come to life. I can certainly relate to that!

Staff has begun working on the 40' high cloth stupa, using a little Singer sewing machine.

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What are these women doing?

They are steaming their face and lungs with Thai basil tea.

That is the fourth regime in our daily healing program.

Starting before dawn, we blenderize a special healing vegetable and drink it... ..

then a very mild yoga class under the sacred, ancient Bodhi tree.

Everyone receives the equipment and learns the ancient arts of neti (nasal cleansing), coconut water eye rinse, squeezing chlorophyll from a local tree leaf ...we massage the leaves for about five



minutes until the liquid is dark green and mucilaginous. Then we add water and drink it all day.

We are prescribed a variety of fasts - either fruit, salad, or coconut water for the five day program. I requested the latter, for the first two days.

The attendees at Dhammachat Bambat/ Nature Cure come from all over Thailand.



Most of them have either cancer, diabetes, heart conditions or some serious condition. Many have been prescribed terminal by their physicians.

All of the staff are volunteers who have experienced their own healing through this program. They share their testimonials every afternoon.

As Mei Oo (right), the director, tells it:

My doctor told me to make my will, and that it might be preferable to die during the program...because my seizures were constant and uncontrollable; I was addicted to narcotics and had migraine headaches all the time.

I had terrible healing crises the first four days, and then began to feel better. When I went home, my entire family (children, husband, parents) closed down the kitchen and joined me in the nature cure and fruit fast for six months. I experienced perfect health by the end of that. My family's various symptoms all disappeared as well! The Japanese director of that program then told me: Okay, you have to study with me now, and share this with the world.

The program now occurs every two months at S.D.S. They limit the participation to forty people, in order to focus individual attention, and allow the entire group to bond, which we certainly do!



above, Mei Oo is interviewing a little boy who could not walk before the Nature Cure program.

Khun Mae Sansanee developed gastro-intestinal cancer eight months ago, with a large grapefruit-sized tumor. She received a combination of allopathic medication to shrink the tumor and also focused on the Nature Cure program. The tumor has now shrunk to the size of a prune

and with the next check-up it will be gone....,

she tells the press, laughing. She attributes her cure to the power of meditation and Dhammachat Bambat, as described above. So the program is now roaringly popular.

Mei Oo is quite skillful at interweaving humorous skits and dialogues with the very serious topic of healing. We all know that some of our comrades might go home and die, with their metastatic cancer...or they might recover.

I am honored to share pranayama, song, or dance as the pinch-hitter when Mei Oo needs a break from her seventeen-hour/day program. I'm simply "on call". There were some wonderful participants who could translate for me this year. Well, I'll have to assume they did a wonderful job! My Thai still sucks.

Oh, did I mention that the Nature Cure also includes a nightly enema? We receive explicit directions in every technique and no topic is taboo among this group. Like the people at Cancer Village, these are some of the happiest people I have ever met, steeped in "ease." They will stay in close connection for months, via the Thai version of Facebook, known as Line. Apparently it exists in America, too, since one of my students in Arkansas wrote me yesterday.

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Some of you are no doubt wondering, my dear readers:

Have you forgotten about your mission: finding little Coy?

Nope. Not at all. In fact, I'm writing this from the rural orphanage where I met Coy. That will be the topic in my next Tales....

But for now, I can tell you Spirit has blocked my every venue thus far. I tried to come when the director, MC Jutipak, would be here....but she's in Taiwan. And no one else remembers Coy, from four years ago.

I tried to visit the nearby psychic monk who might be able to divine information from a photo of Coy. But he is currently in India.

I will try again in a month, to find these two. Meanwhile, I don't harbor a shred of doubt that everything (everything) is in perfect order.



To the left is a monument to the recently deceased King of Thailand. He was beloved, in a way that no other monarch will ever be revered, I believe. Over five hundred women shaved their heads and went on retreat at SDS in early December, to pay homage to his cremation.

SDS published a delightful video which had 25 million hits (!) around the world about the king, called "The Fairy Tale King." I recommend the English version to you, if you need a good cry.

The U.S. Library of Congress wrote us last week, asking if they could use our documents in their historical footage about Thailand. I assured them they could.

The video: If you want to google it, dears...

"King in fairy tales" Version English 【OFFICIAL MV】 | Sathira-Dhammasathan พระราชาในนิทานภาษาอังกฤษ

It was created by a man from S.D.S. who didn't know what to tell his five-year-old daughter when she asked him,

Daddy, why is everyone so sad?

Good bye, friends.

Thanks for accompanying me on this amazing journey.

