

Guest Lecture - by Dr Warren Lee Todd

The Flickering Mind: The Bodhisattva Ideal in Śāntideva

This lecture, entitled “The Flickering Mind: The Bodhisattva Ideal in Śāntideva”, is about self and selflessness. It will discuss the notions of emptiness and objectless consciousness. It will introduce Peter Harvey’s ideas on the discernment of an arahat. It will then contrast this with the notion of voluntary delusion in Śāntideva. It will be argued that a bodhisattva needs to flicker between ultimate and relative seeing in order to respond to the suffering of others. It will propose a system of domains whereby one can visualize when the self is being deployed and when the self is being denied. It will highlight how one may need to read a text from different perspectives depending on which domain is under discussion.

Warren Lee Todd

Warren Todd grew up in the UK as neither a Buddhist nor a Christian. He first studied Buddhism as just another philosophy, and his first meeting with Buddhism was when the Dalai Lama visited Germany in 1998. Warren Todd decided to study Buddhism in earnest, and moved to Kathmandu. He studied Tibetan Buddhism under Chogye Trichen Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, and others. He continued to attend the teachings of the Dalai Lama both in India and in Europe. He had moved to Japan to study the Zen flute, and while there decided to study Buddhism academically with Prof. Peter Harvey, gaining his MA through Sunderland University (via distance). He later studied Western Philosophy and Theology at London University. He received a scholarship to study for a PhD at Lancaster University under Prof. Ram-Prasad Chakravarthi on the question of self. One result of that encounter was his book *The Ethics of Śāṅkara and Śāntideva - A Selfless Response to an Illusory World*. HH the Dalai Lama wrote the Foreword for the book. In 2008, Prof. Peter Harvey asked Warren to start teaching on the MA on which he was once a student. This MA has since moved to the University of South Wales, where Warren continues to be the Visiting Lecturer in Buddhist Traditions and Buddhist Philosophy. He has recently joined the International PhD program in Buddhist Studies at Mahidol University, and is currently helping students with Mahāyāna philosophy and academic writing.