

Tibetan Buddhist Perspectives on Living and Dying

**Study Group in the Himalayas of
Northern India**

September 21 – October 5, 2019

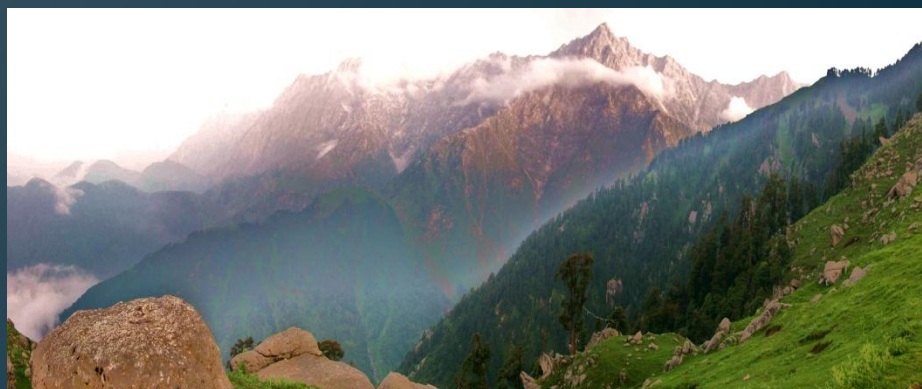


**A group trip designed for Hospice Professionals but open to anyone interested.
Offered by the Louisiana Mississippi Hospice and Palliative Care Organization
(LMHPCO)**

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Trip Overview

- This small-group adventure to visit Tibetan Refugee settlements in Northern India will provide a foundational exploration of the Tibetan Buddhist understanding of Living and Dying. The core concepts of Tibetan mind science, philosophy and culture will be explored through readings, lectures, site visits, and discussions. We will meet with a wide array of teachers and lay persons living this ancient tradition which has so much in common with Hospice philosophy. Meditation , mindfulness and yoga will also be available .
- Tibetan wisdom teaches that the purpose of life is ultimately to be happy and consists of philosophy, science, and healing practices that create and maintain both a healthy body and mind. It is a holistic approach to maintaining one's mental and physical health rather than only treating disease. By applying these practices to self-care, one becomes more aware of how thoughts and behaviors influence overall health and happiness.
- CEUs available



Main Destination: Dharamsala, Himachal Pradesh, India

Home of the 14th Dalai Lama and Center of the Tibetan community in exile



Destination Delhi

Tour several sites with an overview of cultural sensitivities and religious diversity in India. We will visit Mother Theresa's Home for the Dying Destitute and the Mahatma Gandhi Memorial



Destination Taj Mahal, Agra



- Optional day trip from Delhi
- UNESCO World Heritage Site and voted one of the world's seven wonders, it's the most well-known symbol of India's history
- 7 million visitors per year!
- An optional Delhi Market tour will be available for those who have visited the Taj Mahal previously

Global Perspectives on Happy Living and Peaceful Dying



Destination Bir

- Bir is a Tibetan Settlement nestled amid tea plantations in the foothills of the Himalayas where we will be staying in a monastery guest house.
- The group will get an inside look at monastic life and have the opportunity to join some 250 monks in some of their daily rituals and meditation sessions. This is the home monastery of our main guide Venerable Tsering Phuntsok.
- Because of our connection with Tsering our group will have views of monastic life rarely experienced by outside guests.



Destination Mandi and Tso Pema

- Mandi is an ancient Hindu market town on the banks of the majestic and holy Beas river. Famous for its tailoring and fabric Markets.
- Tso Pema (also known as Rewalsar) is a major pilgrimage destination for Tibetans, and the site of “Lotus Lake” sacred to Tibetans, Hindus, and Sikhs



Himalayan Trek

- Scenic Dhauladhar Range of the Himalayan Mountains
- Rest, relaxation and contemplation on the lodge veranda overlooking majestic Himalaya Peaks or go for a trek
- Optional hike to Triund 9,275 feet in elevation
- Meditative experiences with or without the hike!



Tours and Sites Schedule

- S Sept 21 - Evening arrival in Delhi
- S Sept 22 - Delhi: Optional day trip to the Taj Mahal or a Delhi Market Tour
- M Sept 23 - Delhi: Hindu Burning Ghats on the Yamuna River, Mother Theresa's home for the Dying & Destitute, Mashnu Katila (Delhi's Tibetan Refugee settlement) - Overnight Train
- T Sept 24 - (Domestic Flight Option) Dalai Lama's Temple and the Tibet Museum
- W Sept 25 - Dharamsala: LHA's Social Service Center and the Tibetan Medicine Institute.
- T Sept 26 - Dharamsala: Lectures with Buddhist teachers and tour the home for Tibetan Elders
- F Sept 27 - Bir: Norbulinka Institute (Preservation of Tibetan Arts), Palyul Nyingmapa Monastery
- S Sept 28 - Bir: Walking Tour of the local tea plantations and small Indian farming villages
- S Sept 29 - Bir: Visit to Tibetan Children's Village (TCV)
- M Sept 30 - Mandi: Visit to local markets and ancient Hindu temples
- T Oct 1 - Tso Pema: Tibetan Prayer Flag hanging ceremony
- W Oct 2 - Gallu: Mountain lodge overlooking the Majestic Himalayan Peaks
- T Oct 3 - Day of Relaxation and contemplation or trekking in the Himalayas or both
- F Oct 4 - Final Day in Dharamsala with over-night bus or domestic flight option to Delhi
- S Oct 5 - Delhi: R & R at Ashok Country Resort or Delhi adventures, evening departure for USA

*Please note, due to the nature of travel in India, the itinerary will remain flexible

Lecture Topics

1. Basics of Tibetan Buddhism
2. The Nature of Suffering
3. Rebirth and reincarnation
4. The Law of Karma
5. Transitory Nature of Reality, Impermanence, and Interdependence
6. Development of Bodhicitta, Compassion, and Enlightenment
7. Mindfulness techniques for self-care and assisting others with anxiety, depression and pain.
8. Social services in the Tibetan refugee community



Recommended Readings

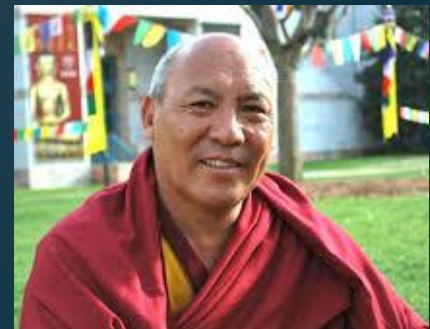
- Tibetan Book of Living and Dying by Sogyal Rinpoche
- How to Meditate, by Kathleen McDonald
- The Art of Happiness, by The Dalai Lama
- The Book of Joy, by The Dalai Lama and Arch Bishop Desmond Tutu



[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

Guest Lecturers

- **Ama Adhe:** Tibetan Elder and author of The `Voice That Remembers`. She spent over 25 years of her life in a Chinese torture camp. Her life's mission since that time has been to tell her story to aid in global awareness of the Tibetan situation.
- **Samdhong Rinpoche:** Previous prime minister of the Tibetan government-in-exile, and close associate of 14th Dalai Lama Tenzin Gyatso. He is regarded as one of the leading Tibetan scholars of Buddhism and is also an authority on the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi.
- **Geshe Lakdor Rinpoche:** Translator and religious assistant to His Holiness the Dalai Lama since 1989. He is now the Director of the Library of Tibetan Works and Archives and head of Science Education Project.



Onsite Coordinator:

Neil E. Guidry, ACSW
Co-Founder and President,
Association (LHA)
www.lhainfo.org

Neil has lived and worked with the Tibetan community in northern India for six months every year since the establishment of LHA in 1997. He has helped to coordinate over 50 volunteer/cultural exchange groups from Louisiana to the Himalayas while working on projects with the exiled Tibetan community. At home in Louisiana he organizes fundraisers to support LHA projects and has taught Global Social Work and Buddhist Studies at Tulane for 12 years. He acts as advisor and consultant to LHA Charitable Trust in Dharamsala which will be the Tibetan host organization during our time there.



Cultural Advisor, Guide and Translator:

Venerable Tsering Phuntsok



Venerable Tsering Phuntsok is one of 250 monks of the Palyul Nyingma Buddhist Monastery in India. He specializes in Sacred Lama Dance and Ritual Ceremonies. He speaks fluent Tibetan, English, Hindi and Nepali. His happy demeanor paired with a vast knowledge of the cultures and traditions of the area make Tsering the perfect guide. Tsering has assisted with over 50 groups of this kind. He has a wonderful way of being able to keep everyone smiling!



Pre-Trip Coordinator: (registration and preparation)

Jocelyn Pinkerton, LCSW



Jocelyn has been involved with the Louisiana Himalaya Association (LHA) since 2006. She first volunteered in India in 2008, and has returned several times since then. She is currently an adjunct professor at the Tulane School of Social Work. She specializes in incorporating mindfulness into social work practice. She is also social worker for the city of New Orleans. Jocelyn coordinates similar trips to India for several other groups. Her expertise in organizational skills will help assure that we are all properly prepared for the trip.

Included in Trip Cost (\$1875)**

Coordinators, guides, translators and guest lecturers

Conference rooms for lectures, meetings, yoga and meditation classes

One group meal per day

All nights lodging while in India (Double Occupancy)

- Delhi (2 nights): Ashok Country Resort <http://www.ashokcountryresort.com/>
- Night Train (1 night) *Domestic Flight option without lodging
- Dharamsala (3 nights): LHA Charitable Trust Guest House "Ahimsa House"
- Bir (2 nights): Nyingmapa Guest House
- Mandi (2 nights): Raj Mahal Palace <https://www.rajmahalpalace.com/>
- Gallu (1 night): Himalayan Mountain Lodge
- Night Bus (1 night) *Domestic Flight option without lodging

Overland Transportation while in India

- Overnight train bus tickets from Dharamsala – Delhi and back
- Auto transport provided with professional licensed drivers in Toyota or Chevy SUVs
- Local Taxis or Auto Rickshaws may be used for short distance transport.

NOT INCLUDED IN TRIP COST

Roundtrip airfare USA-Delhi: ~ \$1000 – \$1500

Transportation to and from Delhi airport: ~ \$40

Optional Domestic Flights: ~ \$150

The group will be traveling by overnight train from Delhi to Dharamsala and back by bus. For those wanting a more direct route there are domestic flights available

India Visa: ~ \$100 (we have directions on how to apply)

Travel Insurance: ~ \$100

Two meals per day: ~ \$5 per meal

Souvenir shopping



*If anyone would like to arrive early or stay longer please note that accommodation and site seeing ventures can be arranged directly through Ashok Country Resort. Any extra days and excursions are not included in the cost of the group trip and are fully independent undertakings. If you are planning for more time in India we recommend it be on the back side of the trip once you have had the group experience and have acclimated to ways of the country.

Flights, Travel Insurance, and Vaccinations

- **Flights:** We will hold your spot on the tour as soon as we receive your deposit. But please do not purchase an airline ticket until you have received confirmation from us. At that time we will share more information on flights.
- **Travel Insurance:** It is required that you purchase independent travel insurance, which provides protection against trip cancellation/delay, lost or stolen luggage, and international medical emergencies.
- **Vaccinations:** You should make an appointment with your doctor or a travel doctor with ample time before traveling. You should tell your healthcare professional that we are spending the majority of our time in the state of Himachal Pradesh. More information can be found by looking at the CDC recommendations:
<https://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/destinations/traveler/none/india>

Travel to India: Step by Step!

Step one – Register - Please note that this group will have a max of 12 participants and will be on a first come first served basis

[REGISTER now to secure your spot](#)

Step two – Group Member will receive contact from our pre-trip coordinator Jocelyn Pinkerton who will be available for questions and assistance throughout your preparations :

Step three – you will receive

- Group Flight information (optional)

- India Visa application information

- Packing and general health recommendations

Step four – Individually apply for India Visa and purchase flight and travel insurance. Visit travel clinic for vaccines and medical recommendations.

Step five – Submit scanned copies of Passport, India Visa, Flight Ticket, and Travel Insurance.

Step six - Submit the balance due on registration site

Step seven – India !

"A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single footstep."

- Please note that parts of this trip may be somewhat more physically challenging than you may be interested in, other less challenging options can easily be made with advance notice. Please tell us about any health concerns we should know about.
- Know that this is not an ordinary tourist sightseeing group - this will be a very intimate experiential learning and sharing time integrated within a well-established community situation.
- Our on-site coordinator, Neil Guidry has organized over 50 India groups prior to this one and is looking forward to introducing us to the Tibetan community with whom he has lived and worked for the past 21 years.
- We have a list of previous group participants from different cities around the US that would be happy to have a phone conversation about their India experience. If you would like to talk with previous group members let us know.
- Please check out www.lhainfo.org and www.lhasocialwork.org for more info about the programs and projects our group will be in contact within India.
- Direct any further questions to mindfulindiatrips@gmail.com and we will be happy to reply by email or a phone call.

Louisiana Mississippi Hospice and Palliative Care Organization



LMHPCO is an educational corporation focused on improving hospice care and palliative services throughout Mississippi and Louisiana through quality professional education, research, public awareness, and advocacy.

Continuing Education Credits for social workers, nurses, and chaplains

10 CEUs are FREE for LMHPCO members (an additional cost of \$200 for non-members)

For more information and to learn about membership, visit LMHPCO.org

[REGISTER now to secure your spot](#)