



Buddhist Prison Ministry News ***(for you wonderful Volunteers!)***

August 27th, 2022

I've thought of sending you all a little newslettery-note for awhile now. I am so very grateful to you. Without your help I probably would not have been able to continue the BPM project, let alone grow it! I am so very very honored that you have continued to be a part of this effort to bring Dharma into the prisons.

The theme of this little newsletter is **Energetic Protection** and deepening your own practice through responding to these packets. I want to share with you a few things that may or may not be helpful as you continue to work with the homework packets.

My excitement at sharing this wealth and depth of spiritual seeking and exploration with you felt to me like I had a garden of great food and could make gifts of the harvest to all my friends. When I first had the idea of asking for homework buddies, it was propelled by my contemplating the beauty of the Paramita of Generosity. In true Generosity, there is "The Absence of the Gift, The Giver, and The Receiver." What this means is one has recognized the emptiness of all phenomena. Further than that is that Bodhicitta, the Awakened Heart, is the energy behind the act. Well, let's just say that awareness comes in a different flavor when working with prisoners

Energetic Protection

When you open the pages of hand-written answers to the contemplation questions, it could be you are simply reading written words on the page, but given how empathetic and altruistic you all are, there are a lot of levels of energy you unfold into your space as you do this simple act. You might have noticed this! (I thank our volunteer AB for mentioning this.) You might also be aware, consciously or not, of the energy these were written in: a chaotic, oppressed atmosphere, a spiritual desperation, hunger, and more.

My suggestion is that before you open your homework packet, imagine yourself surrounded with a membrane of love, light, and protection that allows your intentions of the heart to come through but filters out any the more hungry, negative energy that can emit from anything emerging from a prison. Ground yourself firmly with feet on our planet and spine in alignment with the sky. Say the bodhicitta prayer, or any affirmation that aligns you with the Ground of your Being, and the Buddha-nature of all beings. Then you proceed.