

# Who is Lama Marut?

## Why did *Angeleno Magazine* call Lama Marut the “Go-to Guru?”

“Lama Marut's bio can sound intimidating, but he's witty and fun and one of the best teachers I've ever had. It is rare to get Tibetan Buddhism from a pure lineage...This lineage contains teachings which have been passed down, teacher to student, since the time of the Buddha.”

**Lindsay Crouse,  
Academy Award  
Nominated Actress**



The son and grandson of Baptist ministers, a Ph.D. of Comparative Religions, motorcycle enthusiast, a former surfer, and a fully ordained Buddhist monk, Venerable Sumati Marut (a.k.a. Brian K. Smith) is a life-long teacher whose easy humor and down-to-earth style make even the most complex spiritual ideas understandable. With his unique combination of earthiness and erudition, commitment and light-heartedness, he attracts large audiences of all ages and backgrounds.

Venerable Marut teaches Buddhism and Yoga philosophy, spirituality, and meditation all over the world. He is a founding Board member of the Yoga Studies Institute (YSI) and acts as the Spiritual Director of the Asian Classics Institutes of Los Angeles (ACI-LA), Cape Ann, Massachusetts (ACI-CA), and Reno, Nevada (ACI-Reno).

Venerable Marut's personal understanding of our modern western lifestyle unites with his extensive scriptural knowledge of authentic South Asian traditions to create spiritual teachings relevant to all, providing advice on how to live happily in the modern world. Additionally, his quarterly newsletters, blog, live video teachings, weekly audio and video podcasts, and daily tweets make his teachings easily accessible to people across the globe. The path to enlightenment has never been so welcoming.

***“Are you ready yet? Are you desperate enough to really want to incite happiness in your life?” - Lama Marut***

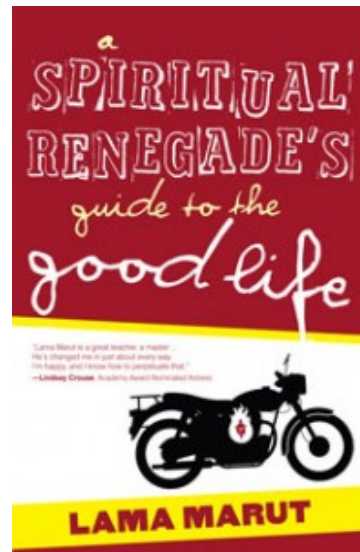
## Lama Marut's New Book on How to Be a Spiritual Renegade

“A true spiritual practice is for desperados. It's for rebels and insurrectionists willing to pit themselves against a life defined by perpetual dissatisfaction, egoism, and greed. It's for those who know life is short and who are tired of wasting day after day in low-level unhappiness as they wait for the next high-level version. “

**Lama Marut,  
on being a  
Spiritual Renegade**



Lama Marut's new book **A Spiritual Renegade's Guide to the Good Life** (Beyond Words Press) offers a radical, edgy, counter-cultural alternative to both the dead-end of modern consumer capitalist ideology and the toothless, self-absorbed navel-gazing of many contemporary spiritual self-help books. It is a hard-core, no-nonsense, but also very practical guidebook directed at the general audience, filled with “how to” advice for those who are desperate enough to take up arms and make a revolutionary inner change in their lives.

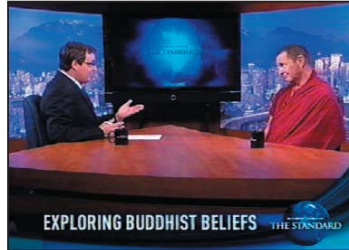


**A Spiritual Renegade's Guide to the Good Life** challenges and motivates readers to take back control of and responsibility for their own lives – to stop feeling like helpless victims and to cease blaming others for their own unhappiness. This book is not for the faint-hearted but for the big-hearted! Bringing together the ancient insights of Buddhist philosophy with the recent discoveries of post-modern theory, the book is organized into sections on how to radically change both the past and the future, as well as how to live happily in the here and now regardless of external circumstances.

More than just another simplistic “positive thinking” guide, distinct from the naïve and self-centered volumes on the so-called “law of attraction,” and not a technical treatise on Buddhist doctrine, **A Spiritual Renegade's Guide to the Good Life** offers a sophisticated but workable option for readers looking for the real methods for achieving the true purpose of one's life.

**A Spiritual Renegade's Guide to the Good Life** is currently in press with Beyond Words and will be released on June 5, 2012.

# Lama Marut in the Media



"There's nothing wrong with the precepts of Buddhism. The precepts of Buddhism as the Buddha taught it are exactly the same now as they were 2500 years ago. But the cultural expression of Buddhism has to be updated and has to be Westernized if it's going to take root here. How well will Buddhism be able to adapt to modern Western culture without losing the core? Sometimes my teacher says, 'We have to morph it, but we can't lose the core.'"

**Lama Marut,  
interviewed on  
Canadian TV program**

## Television Interviews:

- ◇ *Life and Style with Zara*, Vancouver
- ◇ *The Standard*, Vancouver
- ◇ *Sacramento & Co*, Sacramento, California

## Internet Radio:

- ◇ Drishti Point Radio, <http://drishtipoint.ca/podcast/lamamarut.mp3>
- ◇ The Student Operated Press, [www.thesoip.org](http://www.thesoip.org)

## Print:

- ◇ *New York Times Magazine*, "Listen to God...Or His Interpreters: Advice from Five Spiritual Specialists"
- ◇ *LA Yoga*, "Bringing Bliss to LA"
- ◇ *Angeleno Magazine* names Lama Marut the "Go-to Guru"
- ◇ *The Weekly Review*, Melbourne, "The Buddhist and the Black Hole"
- ◇ *Globe and Mail*, Toronto, "Doing the Downward Dog – in Sanskrit"
- ◇ *Newsreview.com*, Reno, Nevada, "Be Happy"
- ◇ *Tucson Weekly*, "Faces of Buddhism"
- ◇ *Arizona Daily Star*, "Ex-professor Found Joy, and He'll Share It with You"
- ◇ *Gloucester Daily Times*, "Buddhist Monk Teaches Courses in Rockport Next Week"
- ◇ *Gloucester Daily Times*, "Actress Brings Third Annual Buddhist Retreat to Rockport"

# Lama Marut on the Web

## Audio and Video Podcasts

---

Gone are the days of trekking through the Himalayas to hear the wisdom of your Teacher. Lama Marut offers a wealth of full-length audio teachings and short audio and video podcasts for download onto your computer or iPod.

There are currently **OVER 400 LAMA MARUT AUDIO AND VIDEO** podcasts on iTunes and new teachings are added weekly. Hundreds of Lama Marut's teachings are also available for download on the ACI-LA website ([aci-la.org](http://aci-la.org)).

Over the past six years, an estimated 2 million hours of Lama Marut's audio and video of teachings have been downloaded, and each month 100,000 more downloads bring Lama Marut's message to people around the world.

## YouTube, Vimeo and Blip.tv

---

Nearly 200 videos of Lama Marut's teachings are available on these video hosting services which, altogether, have been viewed nearly 70,000 times. About 10,000 hours of Lama Marut video has been watched by viewers of YouTube alone!



<http://www.youtube.com/user/lamamarut>



<http://vimeo.com/lamamarut>



<http://blip.tv/SumatiMarut>

## Twitter and Facebook

---

Lama Marut posts daily inspirational tweets to his 2,500 followers on Twitter. These tweets are also reposted and vigorously debated by his thousands of Facebook friends.

## Awakening Journal

---

The online Awakening Journal, to which Lama Marut contributes the main article, is published quarterly and sent to 2,500 subscribers.

<http://www.awakeningjournal.org>



"An authoritative voice on how to lead a meaningful life, Lama Marut's embrace of the World Wide Web starts where the online noise ends, music amongst the cacophony of 21st century digital communication. And for that, I, for one, am very thankful. "

**Darin McFadyen,  
Music Producer,  
Dharma Teacher and  
Student of Lama Marut**

# Interviewing Lama Marut

To schedule an interview with Lama Marut, please contact Jennie Meyer at [jabsmeyer@gmail.com](mailto:jabsmeyer@gmail.com) or 413.210.1250.



## LAMA MARUT'S "SPIRITUAL RENEGADE TOUR" Summer 2012

<b>May 11-12:</b>	Melbourne
<b>May 22-24:</b>	Los Angeles
<b>May 25-28:</b>	Santa Barbara
<b>May 30-31:</b>	Reno / Tahoe
<b>Jun 1-3:</b>	Sacramento
<b>Jun 4-10:</b>	Los Angeles
<b>Jun 12-17:</b>	NYC
<b>Jun 19-21:</b>	Cape Ann, Massachusetts
<b>Jun 22-24:</b>	Wanderlust Yoga/Music Festival (Vermont)
<b>Jun 26-27:</b>	Philadelphia
<b>Jun 28-Jul 1:</b>	Detroit
<b>Jul 2-5:</b>	Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
<b>Jul 6-8:</b>	Vancouver
<b>Jul 13-15:</b>	Nashville
<b>Jul 30-Aug 5:</b>	<b>Great Retreat Teachings</b> Diamond Mountain, Arizona
<b>Aug 6-12:</b>	<b>The Summer Retreat Teachings</b> Byfield, Massachusetts
<b>Aug 13-14:</b>	Boston
<b>Aug 24-Sep 2:</b>	<b>Classics of Yoga Retreat Teachings</b> Lake Tahoe
<b>Sep 6-9:</b>	<b>Retreat Teachings</b> Los Angeles

"If you want advice on how to dig yourself out of a black hole, you need a man with a spade on the inside. Lama Marut is just the bloke. He's the favourite sports coach you had when you were five: big like a bear (in a reassuring way), direct, and fun."

**The Weekly Review,  
Melbourne**



# What to ask Lama Marut

"I can think of few teachers of spirituality more capable of offering the profound and rich traditions of Buddhism and the visionary voices of yoga. When you meet Lama Marut you encounter greatness, a place where the heart and mind are one, and the company you keep presents a rare presence that can change your life."

**Douglas R. Brooks,**  
**Professor of**  
**Religious Studies,**  
**University of Rochester**



## **On Being a Spiritual Renegade**

---

- ◇ What is a "spiritual renegade" and why do I need to be one?
- ◇ How did you become a "spiritual renegade?"
- ◇ Why won't consumer capitalism bring us the happiness we're looking for?
- ◇ In what ways are we looking for happiness in all the wrong places?
- ◇ Is there an alternative to a life of perpetual dissatisfaction?

## **On Happiness**

---

- ◇ What is "happiness" and why is it important to strive for it?
- ◇ Isn't happiness a trivial goal?
- ◇ Isn't happiness a selfish goal?

## **On Changing the Past & Controlling the Future**

---

- ◇ What can and can't we change about the past?
- ◇ Why are forgiveness of those who hurt us and gratitude for all that's happened to us crucial for our present happiness?
- ◇ How can we control and predict what will happen to us in the future?
- ◇ What is the relationship between living a good life in the present and trust in the future?
- ◇ How does karma really work?

## **On Living Happily in the Present**

---

- ◇ What are the three ways to explain why things happen the way they do?
- ◇ How can we maintain our happiness regardless of what is happening?
- ◇ Why can't we change the present in the present?
- ◇ How can we transform problems into opportunities?
- ◇ How can I eliminate irritating people from my life?
- ◇ What does it mean to "relax and work hard" and how is it different from "work hard to relax"?
- ◇ At what point is life "good enough to be perfect?"

## **On Western Buddhism**

---

- ◇ How do we adapt Buddhism to Western culture?
- ◇ Is Buddhism relevant to a modern, Western way of life?
- ◇ What is the true goal of Buddhism and Yoga?

# NEW YORK

## Listen to God... Or his interpreters: advice from five spiritual specialists.

### EMBRACE CABDRIVERS AS GOD'S CREATURES.

People in New York actually have more opportunities to develop consciousness than people in most other places because of the constant possibility for adversity. Behold the divine in everything, even when you're annoyed. When I first moved to New York, I was amazed by cabdrivers. They don't seem to realize what those yellow and white lines on the road are for! But that gave me many opportunities to work on this principle, to see them as divine human beings. Our initial human reaction, if someone is inconveniencing us, is to be angry. But you cancel out the energy of that anger and return to a state of peace simply by blessing that person, by thinking of them as a divine being, as a child of God. Or, if you don't think in those terms, just as an important part of the universe. —**Jim Gaither, Senior Minister, Unity Center, midtown Manhattan**

### THINK COSMICALLY, ACT LOCALLY.

Inner peace needs to be a daily spiritual practice. Reflect for five minutes daily on what a blessed life one's leading. Think about the advantages in life and what one is doing with them. Contemplate that one is mortal, and that this kind of life will not last forever. Watch one's ethics all day long. There is really no substitute for keeping a journal for checking in on one's ethics. Every day, do something for someone else, something not just selfish. Keep track of that in the book when you do. Try to engage in some spiritual study or test. It doesn't really matter what tradition it's from; it should just focus on how to be less selfish and more compassionate and kind to others. Everything that we see in another person—positive or negative—is coming from us, not them. Stop blaming others for being pains in the asses. The only way you'll get an irritating person in your life is by being irritating. Do unto others as you'd have them do unto you. That was Jesus, but the Buddha says the same stuff. —**Venerable Sumati Marut (Brian K. Smith), Three Jewels Community Center (Buddhist), East Village**

### SAVE YOURSELF, THEN THE WORLD.

We didn't experience a peaceful life in 2006. There was too much religious life, it's important to free ourselves from outside influences achieve inner peace, we need to be away from all those influence and international arena, and we forget that problems we face today. There must be peace people shouldn't only be influenced by material p

uch war. In pursuing a re-economics. In order to very influenced by the politi-

**Lama Marut interviewed in NEW YORK  
MAG's, "New York Guides":  
<http://nymag.com/guides/innerpeace/26571/>**

### USE THE BRAIN THE GOOD LORD GAVE YOU.

Peace occurs naturally when your values and your activities are in agreement. Your activities should be designed around your purpose, and your purpose is an extension of the gifts, talents, and abilities that God has given to each individual. Use well what God has entrusted to your care. And don't think just money. Think of spiritual knowledge, family, friends, children, a spouse, experiences, aptitude. Everybody has some God-given gift. When what you're doing with your life is in agreement with God's value for your life, inner peace comes naturally. —**Pastor A. R. Bernard, Christian Cultural Center, East New York, Brooklyn**

### DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE APOCALYPSE.

How to find inner peace in an overly complex and anxiety-ridden world? It's day-to-day, moment-to-moment faith that God is around us. For example, we had that gas smell on Monday. I was running around the corner to the deli in the morning when it was at its worst, and I was thinking, New York, damn, 2001, the towers. You know, that whole CNN litany. And I came around the corner and saw the sermon for next week is "Panic or Pray." And I'm still running to the deli, and I thought, Oh yeah. I began humming this song I love called "We've Come This Far by Faith." I do have these moments, you know, smelling a gas smell and cussing. But God is in the next moment. —**The Reverend P. Kimberleigh Jordan, Marble Collegiate Church, Midtown Manhattan**

# Angeleno

MODERN LUXURY™

## BEST OF THE CITY '08!

101  
NEW  
FABULOUS  
THINGS  
TO  
DO

STYLE  
HOME  
CULTURE  
FOOD  
AND MORE!

ANGELINO AND VILLAGE HAVE MADE US ANGRY IN 2008

### GO-TO GURU

The Venerable Sumati Marut (or, as his friends call him, Brian Smith) is an ordained Tibetan Buddhist monk who teaches free group classes across the far Westside, but whose most fervent followers may be the spiritually striving women of the Pacific Palisades, including actresses Lindsay Crouse and Mary McDonald. Check his website ([www.lamamarut.org](http://www.lamamarut.org)) for regularly scheduled sessions of guided meditation and clarity achievement.

**+ PLUS**

CAN SCIENTOLOGY SAVE HOLLYWOOD?

TROPHY LIFE:

JET-SETTER DIANA JENKINS

VALENTINE'S GIFTS FOR STALKERS

IN THE LAP DANCE OF LUXURY:

THE NEW SEX SHOPS

AND ALL THE BEST PARTIES...



It's a relief to know that this ochre-and-orange-robed monk was once hospitalised for depression. If you want advice on how to dig yourself out of a black hole, you need a man with a spade on the inside.

Lama Marut, formerly Brian K. Smith, is just the bloke. He's the favourite sports coach you had when you were five: big like a bear (in a reassuring way), direct, fun and with an American accent that curls around his forthright southern charm. In September, at the Breathing Space studio in Prahran, he delivered a lively and provocative talk on "Depression: The Real Causes and Real Cures".

For the millions of Australians who emerge time and again from the muck to consider their options – anti-depressants, big bucks on talk therapy, self-help books, diet and exercise – a wise guy like Lama Marut has some straight answers for fearless seekers.

Get all the help you need, he says, work out what the "real conditions" are around your depression, such as a dead-end job ("why don't we work as hard on our spiritual lives?") or the inherited doldrums gene. But ultimately you need to ask the big questions to find the cure. Why am I here? What's my purpose in life?

We're living a consumer capitalist nightmare, he says, so overstimulated and busy entertaining ourselves for fear of boredom that we've lost the capacity to be still and to contemplate.

His condensed wisdom and wit on the subject spans the acquisition of patience, the opposite of the "anger turned inward" that lies at the nub of depression, according to Lama Marut (and Freud), and the value of an "ego-ectomy".

"You pay therapists to make you feel better about yourself. Religion offers free the idea that you should feel worse about yourself. Spiritual life is about being ego-less ... if you want to be happy, stop worrying about your own happiness and start worrying about the happiness of others."

"Real causes" of depression, he says, include the isolation experienced through not appreciating that we are all connected; not following through on spoken intentions and commitments; revelling in other's misfortunes, and that old consumer-capital chestnut, envy, where the iPad-elated plunge into iPout envy (Prius envy, whatever) with ever-increasing obsolescence cycles.

In two entertaining hours with Lama Marut, how obvious the truth of the matter seems, and how simple applying the Buddhist antidote might be if only you didn't have that nagging depressive tendency to feel like a cheese wad for not getting all this in the first place and then becoming consumed by fear that you never will. While diet and talk therapy lifted my grimmest? turbulence, it is spirituality that dissipates my recurring storms.

"Buddhists say regret is the only useful negative emotion because it encourages change. Foster good, healthy regret, but not guilt, which is just beating yourself up. Maybe if I beat myself up enough, I won't have to change," he responds with that lopsided grin, like a bear trying to smile. He knows all our cheats.

To avoid depression, he recommends accepting responsibility for your own happiness. Adopt the law of karma (cause and effect) – "what comes around, goes around", "you reap what you sow" (see reading list at right). It empowers you to wield your free will through the understanding that your present actions create your future reality.

Handing your life over to a god "to micro-manage" or to the random hand of fate is one sure-fire way to feel?helpless.

Perhaps the easiest curative measure to cultivate is a daily practice of gratitude, he says. Give thanks for the man who fixed your blocked sewer, the farmer who grew your broccoli, the dog that adores your very being. "You are the recipient of so much good will," he urges, it helps to acknowledge it, continually.

Remember, too, your Buddha nature (you don't have to be Buddhist to have one): "You have infinite potential to change." When in the mire, know that "this too shall pass, you won't feel like this forever".

"Change is the reality. The way to be a happier person is to embrace change. Expect it. Don't resist it," he says.

Learn to be more giving. Start slow, and give what is easy to give. Learn to think about other people's welfare as much as your own, and then, perhaps one day, more than your own.

And, finally, cultivate the supreme wish: "that everyone be free of suffering and that I be free of suffering so that I can be free to help others".

## **Be happy** Sumati Marut

**By D. Brian Burghart**  
[brianb@newsreview.com](mailto:brianb@newsreview.com)

**Read 1 reader submitted comment**

This article was published on **08.12.10.**

**Happiness is hard to come by for many people.** Part of the reason for that is because people don't often have a strategy to achieve happiness. I was lucky enough to hear Venerable Sumati Marut discuss the idea on Thursday night at the new Diamond Heart yoga and meditation center. The concept that we can systematically work toward happiness strikes me as a fairly radical idea. I mean, isn't happiness just something that happens when we live right? The problem is that many of us don't know how not to live *wrong*.

Ven. Marut is the founder and spiritual leader of Asian Classics Institute, Reno, a non-profit organization dedicated to sharing the teachings of yoga and Mahayana Buddhism. He's an American monk ordained in the Tibetan Buddhist tradition with a doctorate and is a professor emeritus of comparative religions. He's also a spiritual leader for Diamond Heart.

The monk has a humorous, down-to-earth style of speaking, and the 70-plus people gathered in the small room hung on his every word for the two-hour lecture. His discussion was so wide ranging, there's no way I'm going to summarize it well in this little article. Suffice it to say, he comes to Reno with fair frequency, and I'd recommend catching him.



**Ven. Sumati Marut relaxes on a raised dais as he discusses how to achieve happiness. More information about the Yoga Studies Institutes and Ven. Sumati Marut can be found at [www.yogastudiesinstitute.org](http://www.yogastudiesinstitute.org). More information about Diamond Heart, 606 W. Plumb Lane, can be found at <http://aci-reno.org>.**

**PHOTO BY D. BRIAN BURGHART**