Dharma Mentoring Training Program:

Two-Year training in becoming a Dharma mentor, guide, and companion

In the Buddhist insight meditation movement, an important practice is being a *kalyana mitta*, or ‘Good Spiritual Friend.’ This is the practice of supporting others in their growth in the Dharma. One form of being a *kalyana mitta* is through what is commonly known in America as a ‘Spiritual Director,’ or in Buddhist terms, a ‘Dharma Mentor.’ This is a person who has matured enough in their own Dharma practice and understanding to mentor others who are also exploring the Dharma. A Dharma Mentor has been trained to meet individually with people to support their personal Dharma practice, study, and reflection. In offering spiritual direction, Dharma Mentors are not Dharma Teachers; they are spiritual friends facilitating another person’s engagement with the Dharma.

The Spiritual Direction Program is for someone with the intention to support others explicitly using the dharma as the guide and framework. The ideal candidate is someone who has benefitted from their own dharma practice and, out of gratitude wishes to share the Dharma with others. The program provides the opportunity to train in Dharma mentoring with other like-minded individuals.

The two-year Buddhist Spiritual Direction Program offers an in-depth, intensive training in Dharma mentorship with a focus on teachings inspired by the Pali Canon. The training includes:

1. Buddhist approaches to spiritual growth and spiritual mentorship.
2. Learning to support others in the Eightfold Path, the Ten Perfections, ethics, introductory level meditation, practicing in daily life and overcoming obstacles to practice.
3. Developing a clear articulation of one’s own understanding of the Dharma
4. Understanding mentoring as a personal Dharma practice for one’s own Dharma path.
5. Skills in being present to others, listening to others, and facilitating others in a process of self-discovery and personal reflection.
6. Issues of life transitions, family dynamics, attachment theory, transference and projection.
7. Learning how to mentor people experiencing grief and trauma, as well as those involved in recovery.
8. Introduction to basic Buddhist rituals.

Offered jointly by the Insight Meditation Center and the Sati institute for Buddhist Studies, the program in offered in 2 one-year modules. The first year lays the foundation for becoming a mentor, the second year includes a practicum of mentoring others. Participation in the second year is by invitation by the teachers; completing the first year does not guarantee participation in the second year.

Components of first year:

1. 10 day-long trainings spread over two years
2. Participating in IMC’s Eightfold Path Mentoring program, either in person or online. The first year as a mentee, the second year as a mentor.
3. Observation of IMC’s five-week Introduction to Meditation class. This will include discussion with instructor about the class.
4. Participating in one of IMC’s Daily Life Practice programs.
5. Mentoring meetings with faculty.
6. Eight personal reflection essays.
7. Reading 3 books and various articles
8. Participation in one seven-day retreat taught by Andrea Fella or Gil Fronsdal (during either the first or the second year).
9. Participation and observation of IMC and IRC programs, e.g., family program, IMC Board meeting, serving as a service leader for a retreat at IRC.

2014/2015 Dates; Mondays from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m.

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| - September 8 - October 6- November 3- December 1- January 12 | - February 9- March 16- April 13- May 11- June 8 |

Qualifications:

1. 60 days of silent meditation retreats of which half should be Insight retreats.
2. 6 years of ongoing Buddhist Practice.
3. An established relationship with a Vipassana teacher who can provide a letter of recommendation. Other Buddhist teachers will be considered on a case-by-case basis.
4. Familiarity with Buddhist teachings.

The program is offered freely. For people who want to receive academic credit toward Sati Institute’s Masters in Buddhist Studies Program there is tuition and a final research paper required. More info at the satiinstitute.org

Faculty:

 Core faculty: Andrea Fella and Gil Fronsdal

Application found here