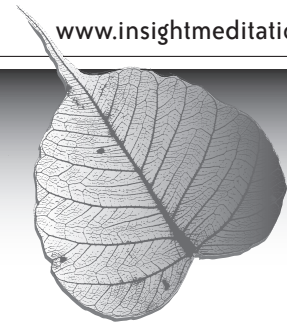


Insight



JANUARY, FEBRUARY, MARCH 2008

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 1

The Hindrance of Sloth and Torpor

Sloth and torpor follow sensual desire and aversion in the list of the five hindrances. Accustomed to the stimulation of constant desire and aversion, some people become tired or deflated when these stimuli are absent. After meditation has calmed the mental activity of wanting and averting, sloth and torpor may be the hindrance that needs to be overcome. Doing so renews a healthy state of energy and alertness.

The five hindrances are key psychological forces that obscure the natural luminosity and healthy functioning of the mind. Because they hinder attention, it is important for people practicing mindfulness to become wise about them.

Sloth and torpor are forces in the mind that drain vitality and limit effort. Sloth manifests as a physical absence of vitality. The body may feel heavy, lethargic, weary, or weak. It may be difficult to keep the body erect when meditating. Torpor is a mental lack of energy. The mind may be dull, cloudy, or weary. It easily drifts in thought. Being caught in sloth or torpor can resemble slogging through deep mud. When this hindrance is strong, there is not even enough mindfulness to know we've fallen in.

Discouragement, frustration, boredom, indifference, giving up, hopelessness, and resistance are some of the psychological causes of sloth and torpor. Mental and physical tiredness may resemble sloth and torpor, but differ in not arising from a psychological attitude.

The presence of sloth and torpor does not mean that energy is not available. It means we are not accessing it. With a change in conditions, energy may reappear in a moment. This can be seen clearly in young children who switch from being "tired" (while shopping, for instance) to being energetic (about an offer of ice cream, for instance) in a matter of seconds. The energy level depends on whether they evaluate the situation as boring or exciting.

Mindfulness practice can help us understand how our evaluations and reactions lead to lethargy. We might notice the role resistance plays in the sinking of energy. Shutting down energetically can be a strategy to prevent something from happening or from having to experience it. Occasionally, falling asleep in meditation can be a deep, almost unconscious form of resistance.

Sloth and torpor may arise from evaluating something as boring. But nothing is inherently boring; boredom is a judgment—an

activity of the mind. It commonly arises from self-identity. People who feel highly energized when their self-image is being enhanced or diminished may deem an experience boring if it does nothing for their self-image.

Other evaluations that drain energy are discouragement, self-pity, and ideas of futility. These can come with well-honed defeatist stories about how "I can't do it," "It's too hard," or "It's too dangerous." Learning to mindfully watch our thoughts instead of actively participating in them can effectively stop them from draining our energy.

A more subtle cause of sloth and torpor can be complacency. This can occur when we are lulled by comfort or misguided acceptance. Complacency may arise when meditation feels easy and comfortable. With the warm, fuzzy feeling that everything is okay, the mind can even drift off into sleep.

Weariness can be closely entwined with sloth and torpor. Chronic excitement and tension, especially when expressed through the muscles, can leave a person deeply exhausted. Because the tension masks the weariness, people may not realize how deeply fatigued they are until they go on a meditation retreat. For such people, it can take a few days on retreat to recover sufficient energy for the practice.

When sloth and torpor appear in meditation, it is important to find ways to practice with the condition, not struggle against it. It is especially important not to abandon a meditation session because of sloth and torpor. Our energy level and effort naturally rise and fall, and this hindrance can be expected to appear sooner or later.

If sloth and torpor is mild, it may be overcome by arousing more energy. Options include brisk walking meditation; sitting up with a more erect, energized posture; opening the eyes; washing the face with cold water; avoiding being too warm while meditating; and increasing the frequency of mental noting.

Another approach is investigation. It can be fascinating to

Continued inside

Cultivate the meditation on sympathetic joy! For by cultivating it, dullness will disappear.

—The Buddha

SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

RESIDENTIAL RETREAT REPORT

Since February, I have been the volunteer coordinator for IMC's residential retreats. It takes a lot of teamwork from those who schedule and book the retreat venues, the registrars, retreat managers, teachers, cooks, bookkeepers, and others who help with the details required to offer and run these retreats. I really appreciate how helpful, generous and patient everyone is!

This year, IMC offered seven retreats. For 2008, we are scheduled to offer seven more.

IMC residential retreats, like all teachings at IMC, are offered freely as a gift to the participants. To do so, IMC's residential retreat fund must have the funds to pay for a retreat before it can be offered. On average 70% of these funds come from donations from retreat participants. The balance has come from community members, from a benefit event by Joseph Goldstein, a grant from Newman's Own Organics, and from IMC's general fund.

When retreats are full (25 or more meditation participants) it costs IMC approximately \$100 per participant for weekend retreats, \$150 for the Memorial Day retreat at Jikoji, approximately \$300 per participant for one week retreats and approximately \$525 per participant for the two-week retreat. These costs are for food and rent of the retreat venue and do not include any payment to the cook(s) or meditation teacher(s).

In the spirit of dana, at the end of each retreat, participants have the opportunity to make donations to the cook(s), teacher(s), and to IMC's residential retreat fund for future retreats.

It is the strongly held belief of our IMC Board and community members that the opportunity to meditate in a retreat environment is a precious gift to our practice. We also believe that offering the retreats in a field of generosity (as dana) adds profound teachings and support for the retreat practice. With enough funding, we will be delighted to continue offering our existing retreats and hope to increase the number of retreats we can offer. We are grateful for all contributions, financial and otherwise, which support our ability to offer meditation retreats.

— Kim McLaughlin, IMC Retreat Coordinator

RETREAT HIGHLIGHT: METTA WITH BHANTE SUJIVA

IMC is honored to offer a weeklong metta, or lovingkindness, retreat from April 27 – May 4 with Bhante Sujiva. It will be held at Hidden Villa in Los Altos Hills, and offers a unique opportunity to practice with an accomplished teacher. Here is how a friend describes him:

The Venerable Sujiva, or Bhante, as we call him, was a skinny Chinese-Malaysian kid with round horn-rimmed glasses, just out of college with a degree in agricultural science, when he decided to try vipassana meditation. So taken by the teachings, he soon moved to Burma to ordain and practice vipassana full-time with the great U Pandita. That was in 1975, and he never looked back.

In addition to his vipassana practice, Bhante has become proficient in the Brahmavihara meditations and the practice of jhana. He has memorized the entire Tipitaka (Pali canon) in Pali. He speaks Burmese and English in addition to his native tongue. Bhante is the author of a number of books on vipassana and metta meditations, as well as poetry and prose. A homeless monk for many years, he gives talks and retreats all over the world. He is a true friend to many people, devoted to his practice and theirs. Registration for this metta retreat opens on December 27.

IMC RETREAT CENTER UPDATE

Our search committee continues actively seeking a suitable property to become IMC's residential retreat facility. Fueling the search is our vision of the many ways that a retreat center will strengthen IMC's ability to offer opportunities for touching the depths of Buddhist practice. Anyone interested in our plans for a retreat center can learn more at insightretreatcenter.org.

We are now expanding our search by looking for non-profit organizations that own property and might be interested in selling all or part of their land. Property sales of this sort are rarely listed with a realtor. Instead, non-profits use their network of connections with other non-profits to identify buyers. To that end, we're asking sangha members with connections to non-profits to consider whether any of them owns property and might like to sell. We would also be interested in churches, schools, or building sites. Please contact Carol Collins, ccollinsc@verizon.net, 408/354-5893.

IMC RENOVATION UPDATE

We will soon embark on the next phase of building renovations. The scope of work will include:

- Social hall: A handicapped ramp up to the front deck, relocating the main entrance door to the center of the front wall, acoustical treatment to the ceiling, expanding the kitchen pass-through countertop, built-in storage cabinets, new shoe and zafu racks, and replacing the windows with insulated double-glazing.
- Meditation hall: Replacing the folding door with an acoustical folding door and replacing the carpet underlayment to eliminate the "squeaky floor".
- Building: Seismic retrofit of the foundation

The Building Committee has taken care to work with green building materials. We hope to start the work between February and August 2008, during a quiet time in IMC's schedule. Some of our programs may need to be cancelled for a week or so during the renovation. For more information, please contact the project manager, Steve Johnson: sjohnsonsprint65@earthlink.net.

WORDS FROM A VOLUNTEER

I regularly offer vegetarian cooking classes at IMC. They started around September 2006, when I offered vegetarian sushi at the monthly potluck, and Dianne Tatro asked if I would show a few friends how to make it. During the first class, the students asked me to teach them more vegetarian cooking. In subsequent classes we have explored how to make wild mushroom pasta with white wine sauce reduction; an aromatic tofu and spinach dish with miso sauce, lemon grass, and kaffir lime; and yellow and green curry pastes, which were then used in other recipes. Although most of these are Asian foods, I am also familiar with French, Italian, American, and Mexican dishes that are wholesome for vegetarians, although I am not myself a vegetarian. I also enjoyed taking people on an educational tour of an Asian market.

I am glad for the opportunity to volunteer and enjoy sharing cooking skills with my fellow sangha friends. I see this as my way of contributing to our community. I returned all dana proceeds after expenses back to the sangha as my donation.

Cooking skills have given me enormous benefits. In connection with my Buddhist practice, cooking has heightened my sensitivity to smell, sound, taste, touch, hearing, and feeling, which improves my mindfulness practice. I have become aware of how food affects my body and mind—how nourishment, eating light, eating mindfully, eating healthy and fresh food, and eating with sensitivity affect my well-being. I cook as an artist, using my senses to develop the meal, rather than using an engineering approach to recipes. Cooking also improves my concentration. I felt deep gratitude for the plentiful and rich variety of fruit, vegetables, spices, and meat that is available in the Bay Area.

On the practical side, cooking skills have helped me save money and serve wholesome, safe, and healthy food to my busy family. And of course, cooking is a wonderful means to bring friends to my home for a gathering.

—Surja Tjahaja

Editor's note: If you would like to write a short article about how your volunteer activities support your dharma practice, please contact Kim Allen, kimall@mindspring.com, 408/998-5491.

2007 TAX DEDUCTIBLE DONATIONS

Monetary donations to IMC are fully tax-deductible. Around the end of January 2008, sangha members who donated more than \$200 in total by check and/or credit card will receive a letter acknowledging this total as tax-deductible. Sangha members who contributed using Paypal have already received an acknowledgment by email for each donation larger than \$100. Your generosity is greatly appreciated; IMC is entirely funded by donations.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BARREL

An opportunity to practice generosity—please bring your donations of canned goods and other non-perishable food items to IMC; remove from their paper bags and place them inside the Second Harvest food barrel, located in the community hall.

The Hindrance of Sloth and Torpor, *cont'd. from front page*

actually feel the subjective experience of sloth and torpor. This includes exploring where and how the physical feelings of heaviness or dullness show themselves. One can become curious about how they manifest in the mind.

Investigating this hindrance can also include understanding how particular thoughts, beliefs, and evaluations feed into sloth and torpor. Sometimes it is possible to change what the mind is thinking about so as to awaken more energy. A traditional Buddhist approach is to reflect on death and dying. Done the right way, this can arouse healthy energy and motivation, freeing the mind from preoccupation with insignificant things.

Chronic sloth and torpor may represent a lack of meaning or purpose in life. In this case, the antidote might involve taking time for deep inner reflection or thoughtful conversations with wise friends.

When sloth and torpor are present and energy is weak, we do the best we can. When they are absent, energy will naturally be stronger. Rather than berating yourself when you are tired or praising yourself when you are alert, just keep practicing. Certainly it will help reveal the precious beauty of your own mind.

—Gil Fronsdal

(4th of 6 essays on the Five Hindrances)

MINDFUL OF THE SATI CENTER

The Sati Center for Buddhist Studies is an organization distinct from Insight Meditation Center, although the two share many friends. Sati Center supports the study of Buddhist teachings by exploring foundational texts, philosophies and applications in contemporary society. We believe that study, dialog and inquiry work together to deepen and inform practice, and to aid in awakening, which is the goal of practice. With this goal in mind, we bring scholars, monastics and dedicated practitioners together for classes, seminars and conferences.

Our volunteer board includes Gil Fronsdal, President; Steve Gasner, Treasurer; Richard Shankman, Secretary; and members Tony Bernhard, Carolyn Dille, Kathy Grayson and Lori Wong. We work with the assistance of many volunteers (from both Sati and IMC) who help to manage and record our events. IMC is the host for many Sati Center classes and programs, which we offer through dana. We feel that both organizations and the many who attend these classes and programs benefit from this close association and sharing of resources.

PARENTING AND TEACHING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

An Evening of Reflection on Parenting & Teaching as Mindfulness Practice, with Lesley Grant, Sunday, January 27, 7 to 8:30 pm. This event will include a short sit followed by a talk, experiential reflection, and discussion for parents and teachers. It will be led by Lesley Grant, who is combining Waldorf-inspired educational methods with mindfulness practice and Buddhist dharma in a co-operative early childhood program for parents and children. See the Schedule for details.

Insight Meditation Center

1205 Hopkins Ave.

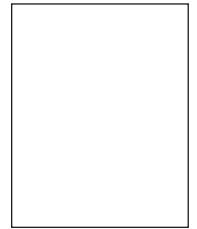
Redwood City, CA 94062

Website: www.insightmeditationcenter.org

Email: info@insightmeditationcenter.org

650/599-3456

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



Printed on
Recycled Paper

SUPPORT GROUP: CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES

A new support group is beginning at IMC for persons experiencing chronic health challenges. It will meet initially for five Wednesdays, January 30 - February 27. As with our two ongoing support groups (for life-threatening illnesses and caregivers), meetings will include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics, but the primary purpose of the group will be to provide an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with persons facing a similar situation. The new group will be facilitated by Mick Bennett, who also facilitates the life-threatening illness group. Rob Rossel will facilitate the caregivers group. All three groups are listed in the Schedule. Before attending any group for the first time, please contact that group's facilitator: Mick Bennett, hmbennett@sbcglobal.net 650/368-2518; or Rob Rossel, 650/559-1562, rosselrob@aol.com.

HELPING IMC WHILE SELLING A HOME

Sangha member Carol Collins is a long-time local real estate broker, now retired. If you are thinking of selling a home or investment property, Carol can refer you to an ethical realtor. She will negotiate a reduced brokerage fee and the realtor will make a substantial donation to the retreat fund. She can also refer you to a realtor if you are buying, and is generally available as your consultant (at no charge) through the process. Please contact Carol at 408/354-5893, ccollinsc@verizon.net.

COHOUSING STUDY GROUP

The IMC Cohousing Study Group is exploring the creation of a local, practice-based cohousing community. Join us on third Sundays, Jan 20, Feb 17 and Mar 16, 11:15am to 12:30pm, followed by a brown bag/potluck lunch. We will hear status reports from the semi-rural and urban development groups, and discuss topics like sustainable design, the development process, community enrichment, and activities the Study Group might undertake. Basic Coho information is in the Cohousing binder (IMC literature table), and details are in *The Cohousing Handbook* by C. and K. ScottHanson (reference copy in the library, or \$20 at Study Group meetings). Join us and access our Google Group. Sound interesting? Come January 20! Stay for lunch and conversation.



To sign up for either or both of our Email Lists, go to www.insightmeditationcenter.org and click "Subscribe".

MAILING LIST OPTIONS AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To be added or removed from the Mailing List and/or Directory, or to update address, phone, or e-mail—contact Cindy Heyer cyn@coastside.net 650/712-0231.

NEWSLETTER questions—contact Kim Allen, kimall@mindspring.com 408/998-5491.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

January thru March 2008

WEEKLY MEDITATION & TALKS

MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

7:30 to 9pm. A 45-minute sitting is followed by a 45-minute dharma talk.

WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

9:30am to 12:15pm, led by Gil Fronsdal & occasional guest teachers. See below under 'Non-Residential Retreats' for details.

THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

7:30 to 9pm. Especially suited for new meditators. A 30-minute sitting is followed by a talk and time for questions.

SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

- 1st Sitting - 8:30am • Walking Meditation - 9:10am
- 2nd Sitting - 9:25am • Talk - 10 to 10:45am

Vegetarian Potluck Brunch — Last Sunday each month at 11am.

All are welcome. Contact Di or Dave Tatro 650/595-4260.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- Every Thursday evening 6:15 to 7:15pm, prior to the 7:30pm sitting and talk.
- 1st Monday evening each month, 6:15 to 7:15pm, prior to the 7:30pm sitting and talk.
- 1st Thursday morning each month, 10:30 to 11:30am.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

The basic instructions in Insight Meditation will be taught sequentially, starting with mindfulness of breathing, followed by mindfulness of the body, emotions, thinking and the application of mindfulness in daily life. No pre-registration.

- 6 Wednesday Evenings, January 9 – February 13, 7:30 to 9pm, with Gil Fronsdal
- 5 Tuesday Mornings, June 10 – July 8, 9:30 to 11:00am, with Andrea Fella
- 5 Tuesday Evenings, June 10 – July 8, 7:30 to 9pm, with Andrea Fella

NON- RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

WEEKLY WEDNESDAY HALF-DAY RETREATS

9:30am to 12:15pm. Sitting and walking meditation, led by Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers. Bring lunch, informal discussion afterwards. You may attend any part of the morning.

- 9:30am - Sitting • 10:15am - Walking
- 11:00am - Sitting • 11:45am - Dharmette (Brief Talk)
- Noon to 12:15pm - Temple Cleaning

MONDAY HALF-DAY RETREATS WITH ANDREA FELLA

January 28, February 25, April 28, 9:30am to 12:15pm. See above, 'Wednesday Half-Day Retreats' for details.

DHARMA PRACTICE DAYS WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Meditation, teachings and discussions on the *Anapanasati Sutta*. Bring lunch. The following Fridays, from 9:30am to 3:30pm: January 25, February 29, March 2, April 25 and May 30.

ONE-DAY MEDITATION RETREATS

- Saturday, January 5, 9:30am to 1pm **Meditation & Yoga with Terry Lesser**
- Sunday, January 13, 2 to 5:30pm **Benefit for IMC and Book-Signing with Sylvia Boorstein**
- Saturday, January 19, 8:30am to 5pm **Daylong Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal (interviews available).
- Saturday, February 9, 9am to 4:30pm **Daylong Retreat Mindfulness of the Mind** with Gil Fronsdal.
- Saturday, February 16, 9:30am to 3:30pm **Daylong Retreat Intro to Mindfulness Meditation** with Ines Freedman.
- Saturday, March 15, 8:30am to 5pm **Daylong Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal (interviews available).

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

IMC-SPONSORED RETREATS:

There is no cost for IMC retreats. Donations welcome. Contact info@insightmeditationcenter.org 650/599-3456 unless otherwise noted.

- April 27 - May 4. **Metta Retreat with Bhante Sujiva**, Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Registration opens 12/27/07. Contact Curt Smith, 408/ 842-0988 curt_smith@mac.com.
- May 11 - 18 with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella. Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Registration opens 1/11/08. Contact Cindy Crowe-Urgo 650/747-0296 brwthus@sbcglobal.net.
- Memorial Weekend, May 23 - 26 with Gil Fronsdal. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Registration opens 1/23/08.
- July 2 - 6 with Andrea Fella and Pam Weiss. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Registration opens 3/2/08.
- August 15 - 17 with Andrea Fella and Richard Shankman. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Registration opens 4/15/08
- September 14 - 28 with Gil Fronsdal. Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Contact Laura Crabb, lauracrabb2@earthlink.net, 408/984-7033. Registration opens 5/1/08.
- October 19 - 26 with Gil Fronsdal and Steve Armstrong. Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Registration opens 6/19/08.

SPIRIT ROCK-SPONSORED RETREATS WITH GIL FRONSDAL

See www.spiritrock.org for info:

- August 8 - August 17, (9 nights) at Vajrapani above Santa Cruz, with Gil Fronsdal, John Travis, and Mary Grace Orr. Registration opens 4/1/08.

Please refrain from wearing scented products to our center, as there are those who have allergies, asthma, or chemical sensitivities.

SCHEDULE pg. 2

YOGA

Suitable for all levels, including absolute beginners. Bring a large towel and sticky mat, if you have one. Mats are also available in class. Taught by Terry Lesser.

MONDAY EVENING YOGA

6:30 to 7:15pm. Join us for Yoga before evening meditation.

THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

8 to 10:15am.

HALF-DAY RETREAT: MEDITATION AND YOGA

Saturday, January 5, 9:30am to 1pm with Terry Lesser. This is an opportunity to develop a continuity of awareness in movement and stillness, and to explore how the practices of yoga and meditation inform and deepen each other.

YOUTH AND CHILDREN (Family Program)

DHARMA ROCKS YOUTH PROGRAM (3RD - 8TH GRADE)

Second Sundays, January 13, February 10, and March 9, 5:15 to 7:15pm. Includes fun, interactive community building games & crafts, pizza, and a half-hour of practice and dharma. Teresa Rose, teresa_rose6@yahoo.com 650/619-5825

SPECIAL EVENTS

NEW YEAR'S EVE MEDITATION AND CELEBRATION

With Berget Jelane, Monday, December 31, 7:30pm to 12:15am. A quiet evening of meditation, walking, chanting, readings and refreshments. A ritual will see in the new year.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM SERIES

Gil Fronsdal will open the new year with a series of talks on the fundamentals of Buddhism, These topics will be part of the regular Monday evening sittings and talks in January, 7:30 to 9pm:

January 7: Core Teachings January 14: Core Practices
January 21: Core Attitudes January 28: Core Realizations

IMC BOARD MEETINGS

IMC board meetings are open to the sangha, all are welcome. Tuesdays, January 15, February 12, and March 11, 7 to 9pm.

DHARMA OF SERVICE AND VOLUNTEERING WITH GIL FRONSDAL

On the following Tuesdays, 7:30 to 9pm: 1/8, 2/5 and 3/4. A series of teachings, explorations and discussions on the Dharma practice of volunteering, for those who volunteer at IMC or are interested in volunteering. You may come to any part of the program.

METTA SERIES WITH SHAILA CATHERINE

Tuesday mornings 10am to 12pm, January 8 – February 12. Cultivate Lovingkindness through the use of guided meditations, structured reflections, and work directly with obstructions to the natural flow of our good will. Lovingkindness is a wonderful practice that heals the heart, meets the pains of life with sensitivity, and strengthens inner serenity that is essential for concentra-

tion. This course is offered as a six week series, with progressive lessons and sequential instruction.

Shaila Catherine has been practicing meditation since 1980, with seven years of accumulated silent retreat experience. She has taught since 1996 in the USA, India, Israel, England, and New Zealand.

For those preferring an evening class, Shaila is teaching the same 6-week course on Metta for Insight Meditation South Bay in Mountain View, Tuesdays 7:30 to 9pm, Jan 8 – Feb 12. See www.imsb.org for details.

MINI-RETREAT WITH SYLVIA BOORSTEIN: BENEFIT FOR IMC & BOOKSIGNING

Sunday, January 13, 2 to 5:30pm. The afternoon will focus on the three central, meditative elements of the Eightfold Path—Wise Effort, Wise Mindfulness, Wise Concentration—the ‘heart’ of the path. We’ll focus on tools for transforming struggle and confusion into clarity, acceptance, and benevolent purposeful response. The theme of the day will be cultivating happiness in the midst of our complex and demanding lives and we’ll celebrate the recent publication of Sylvia’s latest book, *Happiness Is An Inside Job: Practicing for a Joyful Life*.

Sylvia Boorstein has been teaching since 1985 and teaches both vipassana and metta meditation. She is a founding teacher of Spirit Rock Meditation Center and an author, psychotherapist, wife, mother and grandmother who is particularly interested in seeing daily life as practice. Her books include ‘It’s Easier Than You Think, the Buddhist Way to Happiness’, ‘That’s Funny, You Don’t Look Buddhist’ and ‘Pay Attention for Goodness’ Sake, Practicing the Perfections of the Heart’.

HOUSEHOLDER RETREAT: AN INTEGRATED PRACTICE RETREAT

Sunday – Saturday, January 20 – 26 with Andrea Fella.

Integrating practice into our daily lives can be difficult. Many of us need support for this challenging but rewarding aspect of practice. We will integrate formal practice and Dharma discussion with our daily life by surrounding our usual workweek and workdays with practice and discussion. We will begin with a half-day retreat with instructions and discussion on Sunday, and end with a daylong retreat on the following Saturday. During the week we will meet each morning and evening to inspire, encourage and support our daily life practice. You may participate in any part of the program.

- Sunday 1/20, 1:30 to 5pm
- Monday – Friday mornings 1/21–1/25, 7:30 to 9am
- Tuesday, Thursday & Friday evenings 1/22–1/25, 7:30 to 9pm (Thursday we will integrate with the usual sitting program)
- Saturday 1/26, 9am to 4:30pm, Daylong Retreat

PARENTING AND TEACHING FROM THE INSIDE OUT An Evening of Reflection on Parenting & Teaching as Mindfulness Practice, with Lesley Grant.

Sunday, January 27, 7 to 8:30pm. This event will include a short sit followed by a talk, experiential reflection, and discussion for parents and teachers. It will be led by Lesley Grant, who is combining Waldorf-inspired educational methods with mindfulness

SCHEDULE pg. 3

practice and Buddhist dharma in a co-operative early childhood program for parents and children.

Lesley Grant is a former Buddhist nun and has been both practicing dharma and teaching adults and children for the past 25 years. Her deep interest in dharma informs and inspires her mentoring.

DHARMA STUDY PROGRAM: ANAPANASATI

A 9 month program centered around the Friday Dharma Practice Days focused on the development of *Anapanasati*, Mindfulness of Breathing. The *Anapanasati Sutta* details the Buddha's instructions for using the breath as a focus for developing insight & understanding into the 4 Foundations of Mindfulness, the 7 Factors of Awakening and ultimately Liberation. A combination of meditation, teachings, and discussions. You may attend any part of the series.

On the following Fridays, 9:30am to 3:30pm, 2008: 1/25, 2/29, 3/21, 4/25, 5/30. Recommended Reading: *Mindfulness With Breathing: A Manual for Serious Beginners* by Ajahn Buddhadasa

INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION DAYLONG

Saturday, February 16, 9:30am to 3:30pm with Ines Freedman. Introducing the basic practice of mindfulness, with direction in mindfulness of the breath, body, emotions, thoughts, walking and eating. There will be sitting and walking meditation and discussion. Suitable for both beginners and those wanting to review the basics of practice. Bring lunch.

BEGINNERS PRACTICE GROUP

5 Wednesdays, February 20 – March 19, 7:30 to 9pm with Susan Ezequelle. For those who have taken a beginning meditation class and would like further support in building their practice. There will be a short sitting, teachings & discussion. For those practicing less than 6 months.

LESSONS FROM ZEN HOSPICE PROJECT WITH JENNIFER BLOCK

Saturday, March 1, 9:30am to 4:30pm.

Morning session: Being a Compassionate Companion

Participants are introduced to mindful and compassionate approaches to caring for loved ones and friends who are living with chronic and terminal illnesses.

Afternoon session: The Dharma of Bereavement

With mindful effort, each of us can transform the pain of loss into growth, healing, and inspiration for the future. This session offers mindful tools for coping with significant losses, such as the death of a loved one, an accumulation of transitions, or the loss of an ability or identity.

You may attend morning, afternoon or both.

Jennifer Block is the Public Education Director & Chaplain at Zen Hospice Project & serves as adjunct faculty for the Sati Center Buddhist Chaplaincy Training Program.

BUDDHIST PRECEPTS CLASS WITH ANDREA FELLA

5-Week series on the precepts, Thursdays: April 3, 10, 17, 24 and May 1, 7:30 to 9pm

TAKING REFUGE: CLASS AND CEREMONY WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Class: 4 Wednesdays, May 21 – June 11, 7:30 to 9pm.

Ceremony: Wednesday, June 18, 7:30 to 9pm.

For those who would like to formally take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we will have four classes exploring the meaning of "taking refuge." Then, on the evening of June 18, we will meet for a sitting, dharma talk, and refuge ceremony. Those who have been in the refuge ceremony before are encouraged to come again to provide support and inspiration.

THE SATI CENTER FOR BUDDHIST STUDIES

These events are presented by Sati Center: www.sati.org or 650/223-0311 for more information. Pre-registration preferred.

BUDDHIST ART AS BUDDHIST PRACTICE: DHARMA WHEELS,

MUDRAS AND POP ART WITH JOAN DEPAOLI

Saturday, January 12, 9am to 4:30pm. Everyone is familiar with the image of the Buddha sitting in meditation. It is an icon which reveals the aesthetic of the culture which gave rise to it—from India to Tibet; from Japan to Southeast Asia. We can now see the influence of the Dharma in the art of the west.

The day will be devoted to reviewing how visual art has been used both to commemorate the Dharma and to facilitate its practice since the time of the Buddha. The presentation will include dozens of slides, and there will be special attention given to the Dharma's substantial influence in contemporary modern art.

Joan DePaoli is an artist, art historian, author and lecturer, and is also a curator who, since 1970, has presented exhibitions of Buddhist art in both Thailand and the United States.

SUTTA STUDY PROGRAM WITH GIL FRONSDAL

One Friday a month from October 5 – July 11, 2008 (2 dates in June). A ten month course studying the *Majjhima Nikaya*, or Middle Length Discourses, one of the oldest records of the Buddha's original teachings. Fridays, 9:30am to 3:30pm: 1/11, 2/1, 3/7, 4/4, 5/2, 6/6, 6/27.

A related *Majjhima* Study Group led by Tony Bernhard to further discuss the suttas meets at IMC on the following dates: 12/21/07; 2008: 1/4, 3/28, 4/18, 5/23, 6/20.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

Saturday, April 5, 9am to 4:30pm with Tony Bernhard and Carolyn Dille. This class will lead beginning and experienced students through the tenets of Buddhism. The aim is to provide students with a basic overview and grounding in Buddhist teachings that will help deepen their meditation practice. Topics include: the life of the Buddha, core teachings, history and development of the different schools, the Pali Canon, and traditional meditation practices.

WEEKEND PROGRAM WITH BHANTE GUNARATANA

Saturday and Sunday, July 12 and 13. Details TBA.

SCHEDULE PG. 4

SUPPORT GROUPS

(A) THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES

5 Wednesdays, January 30 – February 27, 3:30 to 5pm

(B) THOSE EXPERIENCING LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES

Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3pm

(C) CAREGIVERS Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3pm

Meetings of all three groups will include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics, but the primary purpose of each group will be to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation.

Before attending any group for the first time, please contact that group's facilitator: (A&B) Mick Bennett at 650/368-2518 or hmbennett@sbcglobal.net; (C) Rob Rossel at 650/559-1562 or rosselrob@aol.com.

DHARMA FRIENDS

Dharma Friends encourages spiritually-based friendships and a sense of community in our sangha. All sangha members are welcome to our events and may bring friends. If you are interested in joining the Dharma Friends Steering Committee, contact Anne Foster afoster@rawbw.com 650/591-1285.

- **Dharma Friends Steering Committee Planning Meeting**—Feb 10, Sunday, 11:15am to 12:30pm in the IMC conference room. Plan events for April – June. Anne Foster afoster@rawbw.com 650/591-1285.
- **Hike at Hidden Villa**—March 9 (3.7 miles) Note DST time change. Carpool from IMC at 11:30am. Dwight 510/818-1784, zydeholic@yahoo.com.

Recurring Dharma Friends Events:

- **North Bay Fiction Book Group**—Once/Month, Sundays, 6:30 to 8:30pm. Meet at the home of a member. Rainbow, rainbowspirit@earthlink.net.
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—Third Sundays at IMC, 11:15 to 1pm after Temple Cleaning. For details, ask Cindy 650/712-0231, cyn@coastside.net.
- **Dharma Friend's Brunch**—1st Sundays. Meet at IMC by the kitchen at 11:15am to choose a local restaurant for brunch. Dwight zydeholic@yahoo.com.
- **Cinema Sanity**—Occasional weekend evenings. Know of a movie with a Dharma message you'd like to see with some dharma friends? Jim Podolske James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov 650/968-6168.
- **Co-Housing Study Group**—3rd Sundays at IMC, 11:15am meeting and brown bag lunch. (1/29, 2/17, 3/16) For details see related article, this issue. marciafein@pacbell.net.

- **Socially Engaged Buddhism/BPF Discussion Group**—Once/month, Wednesdays (1/9, 2/6, 3/5), 7:30 to 9pm. Meet at the home of a member. Marianna taraihito@yahoo.com 650/367-7325.
- **Spanish Speaking Study Group**—Once/month, Foster City. Audrey guerin.audrey@gmail.com, 650/574-4753.

RELATED SITTING GROUPS

COASTSIDE VIPASSANA MEDITATION GROUP

Meets Wednesdays in Montara, 7 to 8:30pm. For information and location, www.coastsidevipassana.org.

INSIGHT MEDITATION SOUTH BAY WITH SHAILA CATHERINE

2094 Grant Rd., Mtn View. Weekly Sitting & Talk—Tuesdays, 7:30 to 9pm. www.imsb.org, e-mail: doug.forehand@sun.com.

LGBT SITTING AND DISCUSSION GROUP — PALO ALTO

Once a month, Saturdays, 10:30am to 1pm. Meets at members' home. For date and location: Drew Oman drewoman@gmail.com.

OAKLAND DROP-IN MEDITATION GROUP

Mondays. Instruction 5:15pm; meditation/discussion 5:30 to 6:30pm. Unitarian Church, 14th/Castro. Rebecca Dixon 510/482-2032.

PALO ALTO: DROP-IN MINDFULNESS GROUP

Wednesdays 2 to 3pm, at Avenidas (Garden Room), 450 Bryant St., Palo Alto. Contact Julie Forbes 650/323-2601

SAN JOSE SANGHA

1041 Morse Street, San Jose. Contact Berget, 408/255-2783 bbjelane@gmail.com. Website: www.geocities.com/sjsangha
Offered on a dana basis.

- **Wednesday Evening Sitting & Teaching**, 7:30 to 9pm
- **Half Day Sitting**—Saturday, Jan 19, 9:30am to 12:15pm
- **Introductory Class**—6 Monday nights March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7; 7:30 to 9pm.
- Saturday, April 5, 9am to 2:30pm. Includes basic meditation instructions and basic Buddhist practice understandings.
- Saturday, March 1, 2008; 9:30 to 4:30pm. **The Sacred Act of Death and Dying**: a day of practice with the Buddhist teachings on death and dying.

DANA—All teachings at IMC are offered freely according to the Buddhist tradition of *dana*. Our center and its teachers are supported entirely by your generosity. Thank you.