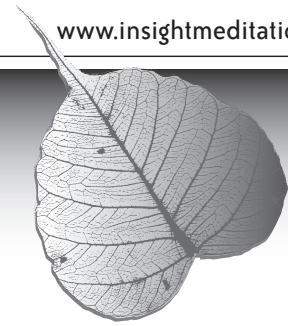


Insight



APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2010

VOLUME 13, NUMBER 2

Friendship on the Path

It can be easy to think Buddhist practice is individualistic and solitary. Teachings on being mindful of oneself and taking responsibility for one's actions can seem to emphasize a focus on oneself. The practice of sitting in meditation with one's eyes closed can also suggest that Buddhism is about separating oneself from society. While certainly an important part of the practice is personal and inwardly focused, this is only a part of what Buddhist practice is about. A much more significant part of the practice is interpersonal; it concerns the rich world of our relationships with others. In fact, the interpersonal teachings and practices of Buddhism create the context and the foundation for the inner, personal practices such as meditation.

Though many people don't start Buddhist practice this way, traditionally it is said to begin with creating healthy relationships with others. This part of the path is usually called training in *sila* or virtue. *Sila* is concerned with all aspects of our everyday behavior, especially in the ways that our actions involve relating with others. It is about having all our relationships be helpful and supportive for others as well as for ourselves. In some descriptions of the Buddhist path, *sila* begins with the practice of generosity. Done wisely, practicing generosity creates a healthy relationship between the giver and receiver. As this is at the beginning of the Buddhist path, it underscores that our social interactions are an important part of Buddhism.

The practice of living by the precepts, as one aspect of *sila*, is also about our interpersonal relationships. It is the practice of training to develop caring, compassionate relationships with others rather than harmful ones, generous ones rather than greedy ones, honest ones rather than dishonest ones.

The Buddhist emphasis on cultivating loving kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity includes developing caring and empathic attitudes toward others. With practice, these attitudes become the orientation for everything we do and the very motivation for doing the more solitary practices.

An important part of the interpersonal aspect of Buddhist practice is having spiritual friendships. The Buddha emphasized this when he said that the precursor for the Eight Fold Path is having good spiritual friends (*kalyana mitta*). These are

the people with whom we share the practice and who support us in the practice. While it includes our peers on the path, the term *kalyana mitta* is also a common expression for a Buddhist teacher in our Theravada Buddhist tradition. For us, a teacher is more a friend than a guru, more a supporter than an authority figure.

The idea that good friendships are the precursor for the path of practice was particularly important in the pre-literate times of the Buddha. Since there were no books that would introduce people to the teachings and practice, the introduction always came in person, through a "good spiritual friend." In our times, the easy availability of books on Buddhism makes it possible for people to begin their practice without personal contact with another person. While this is certainly a useful development, it is easy to lose sight of the important context that direct human relationships create in learning about the Buddhist teachings and practice.

It can be very helpful to have examples of other people's practice. Undoubtedly, some people can learn to play a musical instrument through instructions in a book. But to watch how others play the instrument can enhance their learning. In the same way, seeing people demonstrate how Buddhist teachings can be practiced and expressed can provide important lessons for how we can practice.

Friends on the path also provide support and encouragement. Without practice friends, one can feel isolated and even a bit odd in one's community for being the only person who meditates, or doesn't gossip, or doesn't drink alcohol. Knowing others who practice and who share the same values can sometimes make the difference between practicing and not practicing.

Good friends are important sources of feedback. This can happen gradually as we see ourselves mirrored by others. Our mindlessness can be seen more clearly if we are around mindful people. Our lack of ethical behavior can be highlighted by being with more ethical people. Our conceit about our understanding or our practice can become clear when we are with people who hold themselves lightly or who show no support or interest in our conceit.

Continued inside

SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

PRACTICE EVENINGS WITH NUNS FROM ALOKA VIHARA

On the third Friday of each month from 7:30 to 9pm (see Schedule for dates), nuns from the new Aloka Vihara monastery in San Francisco will be coming to IMC to lead an evening of practice including sitting, chanting, dharma talks, and time for questions about the dharma and our practice. This monastery was established very recently, at the end of 2009, and is an offshoot of the Amaravati and Chithurst monasteries in England. All are in the lineage of Ajahn Chah, of the Thai Forest tradition of Theravada Buddhism, and thus share similar roots with IMC, which derives principally from the Theravada teachings of Burma and Thailand.

These evenings provide an opportunity to learn some traditional Buddhist chants, such as the three refuges and five precepts, both in English and Pali (the language of the Buddhist texts). This style of chanting employs a simple three-tone system. The result is just slightly musical and makes a lovely and joyful way to participate in one of the oldest ways of affirming and transmitting the teachings.

For more information on the nuns and their San Francisco monastery, see the website of their supporting group, Saranaloka Foundation at www.saranaloka.org.

RIDE SHARING PROGRAM

IMC is testing a program to help coordinate ride sharing to IMC events. We are using a service called GoLoco.org which helps match drivers and passengers.

This is a great way to find and connect with sangha members in your area, save gas, and contribute to good community relations in our Redwood City neighborhood by reducing congestion and parking usage.

For full details go to our website and select COMMUNITY/RIDE SHARING.

JOIN OUR NEW COMMUNITY SITE

We are pleased to announce the new IMC Community website. It was created in response to many in the IMC/AudioDharma worldwide community, for a place to connect, take refuge, and help each other with various aspects of dharma practice. This site replaces the old insight-forum mailing list. Some of the features currently offered are:

- A **FORUM** for online discussions on dharma related subjects
- **INTEREST GROUPS** such as books and cinema, or geographical area
- Start your own **BLOG** to share aspects of your practice
- **LIVE CHAT** with other members

We have been excited by the response the Community site has received so far. We welcome you to join by visiting the IMC website and clicking 'COMMUNITY' or by going directly to insightmeditationcenter.ning.com.

NEW ANNOUNCEMENTS EMAIL LIST

We are replacing the insight-announce email list with a new system:

- We now send a single weekly email, on Tuesdays, summarizing upcoming IMC events for the week. There may also be additional periodic announcements.
- To sign up to receive these email announcements, go to the IMC website and click the 'Email' link, or go to www.insightmeditationcenter.org/email. (Members of the insight-announce list have been automatically subscribed to the new list).
- Dharma Friends has a new Google group to keep Sangha members informed of upcoming Dharma Friends events. Click 'Dharma Friends' on the IMC website, and follow the instructions to subscribe to e-mail updates. Even without subscribing, you will be able to view detailed event information and check for last-minute changes such as rain cancellations.

We hope these changes will result in less clutter in your mailbox and make the behind-the-scenes work of maintaining our calendar easier for our volunteers.

IMC RETREATS: SUPPORTING OTHERS IN THEIR PRACTICE

IMC is happy to organize a number of residential retreats each year, all offered at no cost to participants. This year we will offer 6 retreats ranging from a weekend to two weeks. For these residential retreats, we rent either Hidden Villa or Jikoji (two rustic centers in the peninsula foothills). The response has been wonderful—retreats are typically full, and there is more demand for retreats than we can meet with our funds.

Retreats are funded by our Residential Retreat Fund. The typical cost is \$50 per person per day for room and board. When people donate to this fund, they support other people going on retreat. You may contribute to this vital aspect of our center's offerings by noting "residential retreat fund" on a check or online donation to IMC.

It is profound to carry on this system of supporting each other in retreat practice; may it continue in the upcoming 2010 retreats.

IMC RETREATS: THE INTENSIVE DAYLONG

For those who wish to experience a slice of a residential retreat without spending the night, we will offer our annual Intensive Daylong Retreat at IMC on June 12 from 6am to 9pm, taught by Gil Fronsda. This is a great opportunity for a full day of immersion in silent Dharma Practice. Developing a continuity of awareness for an extended period is a foundation for maturing insight. You're also welcome to drop in for part of the day. Interviews with Gil will be available. Bring breakfast and lunch, dinner will be provided.

FROM THE CUSHION: THE WILDERNESS OF DYING

It's Wednesday, my favorite day of the week when, unafraid, I step into the unknown, into the wilderness of dying. During the three years I've attended IMC's group for fellow travelers with life-threatening illnesses, relishing the opportunity to meet people who are more fully engaged with life than any I've met. In a society where identity is often associated with social standing, material wealth, and good health, I am blessed to traverse the landscape of dying with spiritual friends who teach me what I need to know when tempted to withdraw out of fear and frustration.

"People say that what we are seeking is a meaning for life," writes Joseph Campbell; "I don't think that's what we're really seeking. I think what we're seeking is an experience of being alive." And part of not taking terminal illness as a personal affront is becoming deeply enmeshed in relationship with others doing their best to accept the mystery of dying. In doing so, I move into the flow of life. I learn not to be philosophical about others' suffering. I learn not to avoid any aspect of experience.

Death is everywhere: in the passing of my four blind cats over the past few years, in eating animal flesh, in crushing insects with every step in these woods. On occasion I've arrived at group to learn another member has passed. It affects me: imagining friends twitching in pain, gasping for breath. It moves me: memories of potlucks shared, our shoreline walk weeks ago to view marsh birds, the slanting rays of rising sun on still water. In trance I consider the harmony that dead and living share.

In this liminal hour as darkness lifts, I can choose to abandon small self and flow in Big Mind. Though my oncologists believe it is a waste of money, I supplement breakfast with multivitamins and minerals. I choose something pretty to wear to group. I pet my last two cats unable to see out the window to the buttery sun. Whatever has transpired during the past week is given up. What drives me into solitude most days draws me today to drive down the mountain to IMC where raw feelings of vulnerability may be expressed, perhaps gallows humor, perhaps the benefits of meditation. There will be the calling of something deeper or higher, the trusting and surrender to the wind of Presence itself.

—Ann Emerson

IMC offers facilitated support groups for those with life-threatening illnesses or chronic health challenges. For more information, look under Programs->Support Groups at www.insightmeditationcenter.org.

STEPPING THROUGH THE DOOR

A JOURNEY YEAR OF SELF-EXPLORATION (7TH & 8TH GRADERS)

A program to provide dharma-based support for the transition from youth to adolescence, laying a strong foundation for the teenage years. Monthly meetings from September, 2010 through May, 2011.

If there is enough interest we will have two groups, one for girls and one for boys; participants should commit for the entire year. So that we can know what the interest is, please contact Lauren Silver, silverlauren@gmail.com with your child's name, gender, and current grade.

Friendship on the Path, *cont'd. from front page*

Feedback can also occur explicitly. By developing friendships we can create the trust and goodwill that allows for frank discussions about our behavior, our practice, and our understanding. It is quite common for others to see things about ourselves that we don't see. Having these things pointed out can be extremely helpful. The longer the friendship, the better our friend knows us and so the more likely the feedback is well informed.

Dharma friendships are also wonderful places to have Dharma discussions. To explore the teachings and our experiences in practice through conversations with others can deepen our understanding in many ways. It can bring us new perspectives, questions and areas for further investigation. To have these discussions with people who know us well adds to the value of these conversations.

Often enough it is not easy to create good spiritual friendships. It requires both patience and deliberate effort. Probably the single most helpful way to create friendships is to be friendly. Try to cultivate some authentic acceptance, warmth, interest, and caring for others. Become a good listener, and when asked, be willing to reveal yourself to others. Spiritual friendships grow with honesty. If we pretend to be "spiritual" or if we hide what we are really feeling or thinking, real friendship can't grow. If we share how we are practicing, including both our successes and our shortcomings, then people will have a better chance of getting to know who we are.

It is interesting that the near enemy of friendship is flattery. In Buddhism, a near enemy of an ideal is that which looks like the ideal but actually detracts from it. A flatterer can seem like a friend but actually is undermining the possibility of a real friendship. Honesty nourishes friendship, undeserved praise does not.

Friends create an important context for any individual's Buddhist practice. Hopefully, friendship shows that we don't just practice for ourselves. We also practice with and for our friends, community and others. Friendships also teach us that the fruits of practice are not something we keep for ourselves. They are something that we share. We can be good friends to others. As we become freer we are thereby granting greater freedom to others, at least in terms of liberating them from having to contend with our greed, hatred, and prejudices. Mindfulness, love, and the path of practice can be the channels through which we have meaningful relationships with others. And meaningful relationships, in turn, support us on the path to greater mindfulness, love and awakening. It is my hope that we all cultivate friendships that support us in our practice.

—Gil Fronsdal



Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

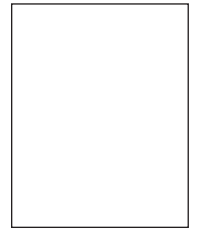
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www.insightmeditationcenter.org

Email: insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com

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RETREAT CENTER SEARCH UPDATE

Our retreat site search continues for either rural or urban properties. We recently toured a truly magnificent property surrounded by open space land, rolling hills, a home and easy access, unfortunately the asking price is more than IMC can pay at this time.

We'd appreciate your help in this search. For rural property, we are focusing on the La Honda area, as it has appropriate zoning, large land areas, and is still somewhat affordable. If you have any connections within this area or hear of a possible retreat site, please call Carol Collins at 408/354-2578.

For urban property, please be on the lookout for the sale of properties such as nursing homes, schools, churches, industrial sites or other commercial properties.

'PASSING IT ON' AVAILABLE IN BOOK FORM

Passing It On, a collection of writing and art by IMC practitioners, is now available in a print paperback with full-color cover at \$11 each from <https://www.createspace.com/3411350>. For every copy purchased from this site, Insight Meditation Center earns a \$2.91 royalty.

In the tradition of *dana*, *Passing It On* is also offered freely for reading or download on our website.

- For **GENERAL INFORMATION** about IMC contact either insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com or 650/599-3456.
- For **OTHER INQUIRIES** contact imc.laison@gmail.com
- **NEWSLETTER QUESTIONS**—contact the editor at imc.newsletter@gmail.com



• MAILING LIST OPTIONS AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To be added or removed from the Mailing List, or to update address, phone, or e-mail—contact imc.mailinglist@gmail.com

• UPCOMING EVENTS & ANNOUNCEMENTS EMAIL LIST

To sign up for our email announcements go to the IMC website and click the 'EMAIL' link, or go to www.insightmeditationcenter.org/email

• IMC COMMUNITY SITE

For Discussion and Interest Groups. To join, click the 'COMMUNITY' link on our website, or go to insightmeditationcenter.ning.com

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April thru June 2010

WEEKLY MEDITATION AND TALKS

MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers. 7:30 to 9pm. A 45-minute sitting and a 45-minute dharma talk.

TUESDAY MORNING SITTING AND TALK

With Andrea Fella or guest teachers. 9:30 to 11am. A 30-minute sitting is followed by a talk and time for questions.

WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

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.

- 9:30 am – Sitting • 10:15am – Walking
- 11:00 am – Sitting • 11:45am – Dharmette (Brief Talk)

THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Andrea Fella or guest teachers, 7:30 to 9pm. Especially suited for new meditators. 30-minute sitting; talk and time for questions.

SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

With Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers.

- 1st Sitting – 8:30am • Walking Meditation – 9:10am
- 2nd Sitting – 9:25am • Talk – 10 to 10:45am
- **Sunday Community Tea**—2nd Sunday of each month at 11am.
- **Vegetarian Potluck Brunch**—Last Sunday each month at 11am. Contact Di or Dave Tatro 650/595-4260. All are welcome.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- Every Thursday evening 6:15 to 7:15pm
- 1st Monday evening each month, 6:15 to 7:15pm
- 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 & the application of mindfulness in daily life. No pre-registration necessary.

- 5 Wednesday Evenings – March 24 to April 21, 7:30 to 9pm, with Andrea Fella
- 5 Wednesday Evenings – June 13 to July 14, 7:30 to 9pm, with Ines Freedman
- 6 Wednesday Evenings – October 6 to November 10, 7:30 to 9pm, with Gil Fronsdal

MONASTIC EVENINGS WITH SARANALOKA NUNS

Third Friday of the month, Apr 16, May 21, Jun 18, 7 to 9pm

On the Monastic Evenings one or more Theravada nuns will be offering traditional Buddhist chanting, silent or guided meditation, and sharing the Dharma from the heart.

ONE-DAY MEDITATION RETREATS

- Saturday, April 3, 9am to 4:30pm **Forgiveness Daylong** with Daniel Bowling & Maria Straatmann
- Friday, April 23, 9:30am to 3:30pm **Dharma Practice Day: The Seven Factors of Awakening—Concentration**
- Saturday, April 24, 9am to 4:30pm **Meditation and Creativity Daylong** with Carolyn Dille
- Saturday, May 15, 9am to 4:30pm **Daylong Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal
- Friday, May 21, 9:30am to 3:30pm **Dharma Practice Day: The Seven Factors of Awakening—Equanimity**
- Friday, June 4, 9:30am to 3:30pm **Dharma Practice Day: The Seven Factors of Awakening—Incorporation**
- Saturday, June 12, 6am to 9pm **Intensive Daylong Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal
- Saturday, June 26, 9am to 4:30pm **Whole Body Breathing Daylong Retreat** with Andrea Fella
- Saturday, July 17, 9:30am to 3:30pm **Dharma Practice Day: Metta and the Metta Suta** with Gil Fronsdal

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

IMC SPONSORED RETREATS

There is no cost for these retreats. Donations welcome. For info www.insightmeditationcenter.org/programs/retreats/ or 650/599-3456. Registration opens 4 months prior to event.

2010 Retreats Los Altos Hills (at Hidden Villa)

- May 2–9 with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella
- September 19–October 3 w/Gil Fronsdal. For senior students.
- October 17–24 with Gil Fronsdal and Heather Martin

2010 Retreats Los Gatos (at Jikoji Retreat Center)

- Memorial Weekend, May 28–31 with Andrea Fella.
- August 4–8 with Andrea Fella & Pam Weiss.
- September 3–5 Retreat for Beginners with Carla Brennan and Ines Freedman

OTHER RETREATS WITH GIL FRONSDAL OR ANDREA FELLA

Spirit Rock Retreats www.spiritrock.org

- July 2–11, Insight Retreat with Mary Orr and Gil Fronsdal & Noah Levine, at Boulder Creek.
- August 4–8, Family Retreat with Gil Fronsdal, Betsy Rose and Heather Sundberg
- November 11–18 Emptiness: A Meditation and Study Retreat with Gil Fronsdal, Guy Armstrong and Sally Clough Armstrong
- December 26–January 2, New Year's Insight Meditation Retreat with Gil Fronsdal, John Travis, Sharda Rogell, Adrienne Ross and Janice Clarfield (yoga)

SCHEDULE pg. 2

Cloud Mountain Retreat Center www.cloudmountain.org

- July 16–21, Vipassana & Metta with A. Fella, and G. Scharf.

Insight Meditation Society www.dharma.org/ims/retreats.php

- October 23–December 4, Three-Month Retreat, Part 2 with Joseph Goldstein, Rebecca Bradshaw, Annie Nugent, Greg Scharf & Andrea Fella

SPECIAL EVENTS

DHARMA PRACTICE SERIES: THE SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING

WITH GIL FRONSDAL. Fridays, 9:30am to 3:30pm. Each of these

Dharma Practice days will focus on one of the 7 Factors of Awakening through teachings, meditation, and discussion.

Everyone is welcome. Bring lunch.

The dates for this event are:

- April 23, 2010: Concentration
- May 21, 2010: Equanimity
- June 4, 2010: Develop & Incorporate

YOUNG ADULTS (AGES 20 – 35) SITTING GROUP

Third Sundays of the month, 7 to 8:30pm

Contact IMC.iGeneration@gmail.com

FORGIVENESS DAYLONG

WITH DANIEL BOWLING AND MARIA STRAATMANN. Saturday, April 3, 9am to 4:30pm. Forgiveness is something we do for ourselves; it is the act of not shutting someone out of our hearts. But how do we forgive the unforgivable? Forgiveness is a way to let go of the pain, anger and fear we carry from harm that was done to us or by us. The day will be devoted to Buddhist practices on forgiveness through meditation, discussion and reflection.

Daniel Bowling is a mediator; teaches negotiation & mediation and has written on conflict resolution. He co-founded Kripalu Yoga Center. A Harvard Law graduate, he has practiced yoga & meditation since 1976, and started teaching in 1983.

Maria Straatmann, a scientist / businesswoman, has been a student of Vipassana meditation since 1996, a graduate of the Sati Center Buddhist Chaplaincy Program and End of Life Counselor training; volunteers with Zen Hospice Project. Maria is IMC Program Director, on IMC's Chaplaincy Council and is a Spirit Rock Buddhist Ritual Minister.

A RETREAT FOR MEDITATION AND CREATIVITY

WITH CAROLYN DILLE. Saturday, April 24, 9am to 4:30pm

This day is for all who wish to nurture creative engagement in their lives, and in their writing and visual arts practices. We'll explore movement and stillness to cultivate the development of mindfulness and the flow of creative expression. Please bring materials for writing and drawing, and a lunch.

Carolyn is a poet and writer who facilitates creativity retreats and workshops. She works with groups and individuals. She has been practicing Buddhist and other meditative forms for over 30 years and teaches dharma in the Vipassana Insight and Soto Zen traditions.

HALF-DAY RETREAT: MEDITATION AND YOGA WITH TERRY LESSER

Saturday, May 1, 9am to 12:30pm. In this mini-retreat, we will awaken our bodies, minds and hearts to the present moment. We will integrate yoga, breathwork, meditation, *metta* (loving kindness), and relaxation and let these practices inform and deepen

one another. The morning is appropriate for beginners and those with more experience. Our aim is not perfect poses or perfect meditation, but to connect deeply with ourselves and allow the emergence of our innate wisdom, capabilities, joy, tranquility and compassion. Please bring a large towel and yoga sticky mat and sitting cushion if you have them. If you don't, mats and cushions will be available for you to use.

Terry has been teaching yoga at the Insight Meditation Center (IMC) for over ten years. She trained in Iyengar style yoga and is a graduate of the Spirit Rock Community Dharma Leader Program. She also teaches yoga and meditation at the California Yoga Center in Palo Alto. Her teaching is gentle, supportive, and sensitive to individual students' abilities.

HEALER WITHIN – WISDOM HEALING QIGONG

WITH MASTER MINGTONG GU. Sunday, May 9, 12:30 to 4:30pm

Wisdom Healing Qigong – activating life energy for self-healing and the healing of others.

Through gentle movement, visualization, sound and conscious intention, Qigong is an experiential way to address the underlying causes of life's challenges, using the totality of the body and its connection with emotion, mind and spirit. We will share the skill and practice of transmitting chi for curing the incurable and healing others without depleting your own chi. It will enhance your well-being, spiritual awareness and creativity.

Master Mingtong Gu, an internationally recognized teacher and healer, received his training from a variety of Grandmasters in China, Tibet and at the world's largest Qigong hospital. Receiving an MA in Math and Fine Arts in the US, Master Gu has also studied Taichi, Yoga and Buddhist Meditation. He is the founder of the Chi Healing Center and Wisdom Healing Foundation and has taught Qigong to thousands of people in the USA, China and Europe.

INTRODUCTION TO LOVING-KINDNESS MEDITATION

WITH GIL FRONSDAL. Wednesdays May 12 – June 2, 7:30 to 9pm

Loving-kindness meditation involves developing goodwill toward oneself and others. It is an important Buddhist practice in its own right, and it is a valuable compliment to mindfulness meditation. The practice brings many benefits, including greater self-understanding, goodwill, and inner stability. The four week series will systematically present the classic instruction for cultivating loving-kindness.

DAYLONG RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Saturday, May 15, 9am to 4:30pm. This is a daylong retreat with alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, particularly in mindfulness of the body and a dharma talk. It is recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. No interviews. Bring lunch.

VESAK – BUDDHA'S BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

WITH GIL FRONSDAL. Sunday, May 23, 10 to 10:45am

During the first part of the Sunday morning Dharma Talk, we will have a Vesak celebration to honor the Buddha's birthday. Families with children are encouraged to attend. Come with cut flowers at 10am to decorate the pagoda (in the IMC parking lot); at 10:30am: Procession into the meditation hall for Buddha's Birthday celebration.

SCHEDULE pg. 3

TEA WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Sunday, May 23, 11:15am to 12pm. Time for an informal discussion, an opportunity to ask questions of Gil.

INTENSIVE DAYLONG RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Saturday, June 12, 6am to 9pm. This is a great opportunity for a full day of immersion in silent Dharma Practice. Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. The simplicity, silence and support of retreats contribute to letting go of many of the distractions that get in the way of clear seeing. Retreats also are a wonderful environment for developing a continuity of awareness for an extended period. Interviews with Gil will be available. The sign up sheet will be placed on the table next to the Dana box near the entrance. You are welcome to come for the entire day or drop in for any part of the retreat. If you come for only part of the retreat, please enter the meditation hall only at the beginning of a scheduled sitting. If you come while a sit is in progress, sit in one of the chairs in the outer hall. Bring breakfast and lunch. Light supper provided.

WHOLE BODY BREATHING DAYLONG RETREAT

WITH ANDREA FELLA. Saturday, June 26, 9am to 4:30pm. We will explore mindfulness of breathing by connecting with the experience of breathing through the whole body. This style of practice encourages a relaxed focus on the experience of the breath.

DHARMA PRACTICE DAY: METTA AND THE METTA SUTA

WITH GIL FRONSDAL Saturday, July 17, 9:30am to 3:30pm

SUPPORT GROUPS

(A) Those Experiencing Life-Threatening Illnesses

Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3pm at IMC

(B) Those Experiencing Chronic Health Challenges

Wednesdays, 3:30 to 5:30pm at IMC.

Meetings include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics; the primary purpose of each group is to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation. Before attending either group for the first time, please contact Mick Bennett at 650/368-2518 or hmbennett@sbcglobal.net

YOGA

Suitable for all levels, including absolute beginners. Bring a large towel and sticky mat, if you have one. 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, May 1, 9am to 12:30pm

IMC YOUTH PROGRAMS

DHARMA SPROUTS AND DHARMA ROCKS programs will host a visitor for a special combined children's program on Sunday, May 9, 5:15 to 7:15pm. Your early RSVP will help our visitor prepare her program and materials. Naomi Rose, author of *Tibetan Tales for Little Buddhas* and *Tibetan Tales from the Top of the World* will bring us a program called 'A Taste of Tibet'. The first hour of the program, Naomi arrives in a Tibetan costume with a basketful of Tibetan treasures and stories to tell. For those who'd like to stay for the second hour, there will be an art project celebrating one of the arts of Tibet.

DHARMA SPROUTS: (K- 2ND GRADE)

Led by Liz Powell, Carla Rayacich and others. First Sunday of the month, 11:15am to 12pm. Second Sunday in April and July. Brief meditations and dharma practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate alongside their young children. Please contact Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend.

DHARMA ROCKS: (3RD – 8TH GRADE)

Led by Misha Merrill, Second Sunday of the month, 5:15 to 7:15pm. Includes fun, interactive, community-building games and crafts, pizza, and a half-hour of practice and dharma. Contact Hilary Borison, 650/575-2052 or hborison@sbcglobal.net.

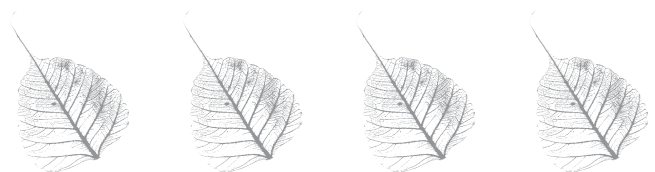
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A JOURNEY YEAR OF SELF-EXPLORATION (7TH & 8TH GRADERS)

A program to provide dharma-based support for the transition from youth to adolescence, laying a strong foundation for the teenage years. Monthly meetings from September, 2010 through May, 2011. If there is enough interest we will have two groups, one for girls and one for boys; participants should commit for the entire year. So that we can know what the interest is, please contact Lauren Silver, silverlauren@gmail.com with your child's name, gender, and current grade. Further information will be provided in the next few months.

DHARMA TEENS: (HIGH SCHOOL)

Led by Alicia McLucas. First Sunday of the month, 5 to 7pm. (Third Sunday in Sept) A safe and fun space where teens can learn to apply the practices and principles of mindfulness to support their self-discovery, empowerment, and fulfillment. It is also intended to be a trusting environment where teens can discuss among themselves and adult facilitators, issues that are important in their lives. Contact Alicia 650/361-8800



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.

SATI CENTER

These events are presented by the Sati Center: www.sati.org or 650/223-0311 for more information. Pre-registration not required.

UNION OF MINDFULNESS & CONCENTRATION DAYLONG

WITH THANISSARO BIKKHU. Saturday, April 17, 9am to 5pm

Right mindfulness and right concentration, together with right effort, form the concentration-aggregate of the noble eightfold path. Although these factors are often discussed separately, the Pali discourses show that the Buddha meant for them to form a unified practice. This course—through talks, readings, discussions, and meditation—will explore what these factors mean and how they can be brought together in a mutually supportive and nourishing way.

Thanissaro Bhikkhu (Geoffrey DeGraff) is an American monk of the Thai forest tradition. After graduating from Oberlin College in 1971 with a degree in European Intellectual History, he studied meditation under Ajaan Fuang Jotiko in Thailand, himself a student of the late Ajaan Lee, and ordained in 1976. In 1991 he traveled to the hills of San Diego county, where he helped establish the Metta Forest Monastery, where he is the abbot. He is a prolific writer and translator. Many of his works can be found online at www.accesstoinsight.org.

SUTTA STUDY – THE SUPREME NET

TAUGHT BY ANDREA FELLA, Friday, April 30, 9:30am to 1pm

During this class we will study the *Brahmajala Sutta*, the first discourse from the *Digha Nikaya*. In this profound discourse, the Buddha describes sixty-two speculative views about the nature of the self and the world. All these speculative views are shown to lead away from freedom; the Buddha points to the craving and agitation that underlie them. Finally, the Buddha teaches the way out of the net of speculative views through the development of wisdom. A translation of this sutta can be found online at: <http://www.knowbuddhism.info/2009/01/what-teaching-is-not-brahmajala-sutta.html>

THE HEART OF THE BUDDHA'S TEACHING

A DAY OF SUTTA STUDY ON THE BUDDHA'S FIRST THREE DISCOURSES

WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN, Friday, August 6, 9:30am to 3:30pm

The entirety of the Buddha's teaching is encapsulated in the first three discourses he delivered after his enlightenment.

In this day of study we will cover all three suttas in detail, exploring how they weave together to inform each other and create a complete description of Dharma teaching and practice.

DHARMA FRIENDS

Dharma Friends encourages spiritually-based friendships and a sense of community in our Sangha. If you are interested in joining the Dharma Friends Steering Committee, contact Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.

New! Dharma Friends Google Group for details and updates: <http://groups.google.com/group/imcdharmafriends> or click the DHARMA FRIENDS link on our website.

- **Dharma Friends Steering Committee Planning Meeting**— Sunday, May 2, 11:10am to 12:30pm. Plan events for Jul thru Sep

2010. IMC conference room. Anne Foster afoster@rawbw.com 650/591-1285. Come join us!

RECURRING DHARMA FRIENDS EVENTS

- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—Fridays: April 2, May 7, June 4, 5:30 to 7pm. IMC Social Hall. Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.
- **Dharma Friends Brunch**—(1st Sundays) April 4, May 2, June 6. Gather 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? Contact Jim Podolske James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov 650/968-6168.

RELATED SITTING GROUPS

For more information about associated sitting groups see our website: under COMMUNITY, click on OTHER RESOURCES and scroll down to ASSOCIATED/LOCAL GROUPS.

COASTSIDE VIPASSANA MEDITATION GROUP

Meets Wednesdays in Montara, 7 to 8:30pm.

www.coastsidevipassana.org

LA HONDA SITTING GROUP

Every Tuesday night, 6:15pm. Contact Cindy Crowe-Urgo at

brwthus@sbcglobal.net

MODESTO DROP-IN MEDITATION GROUP WITH LORI WONG

Tuesday evenings from 6:30 to 8:30pm Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church on 2172 Kiernan Rd, Modesto

<http://insightmeditationmodesto.wordpress.com/>

BERKELEY VIPASSANA GROUP WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN

Wednesdays 7:15 to 9:15pm at St. John's Presbyterian Church, 2727 College Ave; check for upcoming venue change at

www.richardshankman.org.

OAKLAND MONDAY DROP-IN MEDITATION GROUP

Instruction 5:15pm; meditation/discussion 5:30 to 6:30pm.

Unitarian Church, 14th/Castro. Rebecca Dixon 510/482-2032.

SAN JOSE SANGHA

1041 Morse Street, San Jose. Contact Berget, 408/255-2783

bbjelane@gmail.com, Website: sanjoseinsight.org

- Sitting Wednesdays—7:30 to 9pm; May 5, 19, 26, Refuge Series; 5/26 Vesak Celebration
- Beginning instruction first Wednesday of month 6:15 to 7:15pm; Qi Gong 3rd Wednesday at 6:45pm
- April 3, 9am to 2:30pm—Introductory Daylong
- May 8, 9:30am to 12:15pm—Half-Day of Practice
- June 5, 9:30am to 2:30pm—Daylong with Yoga.
- Creativity and Meditation Retreat with Yoga—August 13 – 15, with Carolyn Dille, Berget Jelane and Terry Lesser, Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Silent meditation, guided exercises, creative time on your own for writing, drawing, painting, music, etc. Suitable for any level of experience, including beginners. Contact terrylesser@gmail.com.