

## The Pragmatism of Five Precepts

Gil Fronsdal

Buddhist spiritual practice falls into three general categories, known in Pali as *sila*, *samadhi*, and *pañña*. These terms can be translated into English as 'precepts,' 'meditation,' and 'wisdom,' respectively, and they function like the three legs of a tripod. Thus it is essential to cultivate all three. The precepts are concerned with avoiding harmful actions of body and speech; meditation focuses on cultivating beneficial states of mind (or heart); and wisdom is understanding what is beneficial, both for self and for others. These three aspects of practice influence each other. For example, practicing the precepts of body and speech also develops both the mind and wisdom. Meditation and wisdom infuse the precepts with goodness and clear understanding. Practicing both the precepts and meditation provides us with a foundation on which to develop wisdom to its full potential.

No single English word is an adequate translation of *sila*. The primary meaning of this Buddhist word is 'conduct' or 'practice.' The word is also used to refer to a person's character or nature, making it clear that our conduct has deep roots in the mind and heart. Both as conduct and character, *sila* is the bedrock upon which the rest of our spiritual practice is built. Sooner or later, anyone who begins to develop mindfulness practice will discover that without the foundation of ethical behavior, further development of mindfulness is difficult.

While *sila* is usually translated as 'virtue' or 'ethics,' we need to be careful not to confuse it with Western ideas associated with these two words. A traditional foundation of Western ethics is a set of commandments and values handed down by a divine being. As commandments they should be strictly obeyed, and as values they include ideas about good and evil, virtue and sin. This approach to ethics easily leads to guilt, an emotion that's pervasive in the West but which is considered unnecessary and counterproductive in Buddhism.

Buddhism understands virtue and ethics pragmatically, based not on abstract ideas of good and bad, but rather on the observation that some actions lead to suffering and some actions lead to happiness and freedom. A Buddhist asks, "Does this action lead to increased suffering or increased happiness for myself and others?" This approach is more conducive to wise investigation and avoids following a set of 'shoulds,' which can lead to debilitating guilt.

As guidelines for virtue and ethical behavior, the Buddha taught precepts for us to follow. For lay people, there are five

basic precepts: 1) to abstain from killing, 2) to abstain from stealing, 3) to abstain from sexual misconduct, 4) to abstain from lying, and 5) to abstain from intoxicants such as drugs or alcohol.

Buddhism refers to these five in different ways, giving us different perspectives with which to understand them. Sometimes they are called the five 'trainings' (*sikkha*), sometimes the five 'practices' or 'precepts' (*sila*), and sometimes simply and broadly the five 'items' or 'things' (*dhamma*). The expression 'the five things' might strike us as odd, but perhaps it helps to free us from moralistic ideas about what these 'things' are and how they function.

There are many valuable ways of understanding these 'five things.' The first is as rules of behavior voluntarily taken on as a discipline for avoiding harm and to support spiritual training. Following them promotes the development of meditation, wisdom, and compassion.

Also known as 'training steps' (*sikkhapada*), the precepts are understood as trainings in restraint. We agree to hold back on certain impulses. So, for example, instead of following an inclination to kill a mosquito or steal pencils from work, we refrain and, instead, bring mindfulness to the discomfort we are impulsively reacting to. Rather than focusing on whether the actions are bad or immoral, we use these restraints as mirrors to study ourselves, to understand our reactions and motivations, and to reflect on the consequences of our actions.

As trainings, when we choose to abide by the five precepts, the traditional wording for this commitment is "I undertake the training step not to..." From the point of view of training, if we sincerely try to adhere to the precepts but fail, the task is to try again (perhaps after making amends for any harm done).

Following the five trainings offers a powerful form of protection. Certainly they protect us from bringing much suffering and difficulty to ourselves. And importantly, they also protect others from the harm we might cause if we did not practice the five precepts.

Buddhism also sees the precepts as rooted in principles of virtue. The fundamental principles that underlie all five precepts are compassion, not causing harm, and generosity. We follow the precepts out of compassion, out of caring for the suffering of others, and from a vision of what will be beneficial for them. The motivation of compassion also includes compassion for ourselves.



### UNHINDERED THROUGH SELF-INITIATED PRACTICE

Are you looking for a way to strengthen your mindfulness in relation to the hindrances? Gil Fronsdal's book, *Unhindered*, may be just the resource for you.

The hindrances—sensual desire, ill will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt—can arise in our meditation and in daily life. Without our careful attention, they can derail us on our path to freedom. By practicing mindfulness, we can sharpen our awareness of the hindrances, look underneath them to discover thoughts and emotions, and strive with wise effort as we continue along the path.

The small book, *Unhindered*, provides an effective guide to our working with the hindrances in an experiential way. It consists of short essays followed by extensive reflection questions and suggested practices.

As in many aspects of our practice, initiative is a perfect starting point. My own experience includes mentoring a couple of practitioners using Gil's book to ground our discussions. I found that anticipating our conversations prompted me to pay careful attention to the material. It was also very helpful to articulate my reflections, with the result that I moved ahead in my understanding of the topic as well as my intentions. Listening to another person and being listened to in an appreciative environment led to enjoyable and encouraging connections. I learned new views and creative approaches.

There are various ways to engage in a self-initiated study of mindfulness and the hindrances. One way is to invite a friend to share the process. Engaging with the material together supports each person's exploration of how the hindrances arise in life and can provide inspiration for working with them effectively.

Another approach would be to study the material within a self-initiated group that could commit to six or seven sessions, getting together in your homes or a local coffee shop. Personal and cultural diversity within a self-initiated group can enrich the experience further. Groups of "spiritual friends" (*kalyana mitta*) meeting at regular intervals to discuss each essay, and how the reflections and practices have gone for each individual during the time between sessions, can help you enjoy the practice. To get to know others at IMC with whom you could form such a group, consider coming to one of the Sunday teas or potlucks, or the informal lunch after an upcoming half-day retreat. These gatherings provide an opportunity to introduce yourselves and find others with whom to explore the teachings.

As Gil wrote in *Unhindered*, "Through developing one's mindfulness, the hindrances begin to lose their power" (p. 97). In sharing study and practice, we can accompany one another on the path to freedom from suffering.

—Judy Cannon

### IMC'S NEWLY INSTALLED SOLAR PANELS

At the end of September 2018, new solar panels were installed on IMC's roof. By the end of October they had generated 600 kWh of electricity and reduced our monthly CO2 production by over 820 pounds. [SunWork.org](http://SunWork.org), a nonprofit organization that, like Habitat for Humanity, uses volunteers as well as trained staff, did the installation. We were thrilled with the ease of installation and operation. We know that solar energy, in this case from rooftop solar voltaic cells, is a clean and sustainable renewable energy source. We are pleased to recognize that motivated individuals and organizations, recognizing the environmental challenges society faces, can make an impact in the direction of reducing greenhouse gas emissions. By installing solar panels at IMC we provide a statement of our values in reducing the reliance on fossil fuels and non-renewable energy sources. We hope to bring to people's consciousness the importance of where our energy comes from and how we use it.

We have much gratitude and appreciation to Anne Schmitt, Elaine Salinger and the IMC Earthcare Team for all their care and work on this project!

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### JOINING IMC'S AND IRC'S LEGACY COMMUNITY

WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20, 6:30 TO 8:30PM

IMC and IRC are unique because of our reliance on dana—donations freely given that have made the existence of our centers possible. In response to growing interest in supporting IMC and IRC far into the future, we are hosting this gathering to discuss ways of including IMC/IRC in estate plans, as well as other means of long-term support. Whether you are already a part of IMC's legacy community or would like more information, please join IMC community leaders, as well as IMC's volunteer planned-giving attorney, for an evening of fellowship, sharing, and information. We will begin with a brief sit, then have a general presentation on ways to benefit IMC as part of your estate planning, followed by sharing and a question and answer period.

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### AUDIO DHARMA VIDEO

In 2018 we began to video record some of the Dharma Talks given at IMC, and hosted on YouTube. When one becomes available there is a **VIDEO** button associated with the talk in the Audio Dharma list of talks. All the video recordings can be reached from the **VIDEO** link on the left menu on AudioDharma's homepage.

We are very grateful to Joe Metzger, Myles Cowherd and Oori Silberstein for making it possible to video record these talks.

## The Pragmatism of Five Precepts, cont'd. from front page

So that the precepts do not become a rigid ideal, we practice them together with the principle of non-harming. We can keep in check any tendency to create harm through narrow-minded, callous, or rigid use of the precepts by asking ourselves, "Is my application of the precepts causing harm or stress to myself or others?" If it is, this does not mean we abandon the precepts, it means we search for ways to adhere to them that are nourishing and inspiring.

Living by the precepts is itself an act of generosity; we give a wonderful gift of protection and joy to ourselves and to others. Indeed, one pragmatic reason to follow the precepts as rules of restraint is to have joy and the 'bliss of blamelessness.' Many people come to Buddhist practice because they feel a lack of joy and happiness in their lives. One of the best ways to cultivate and appreciate joy is to live a blame-free life.

Another way of approaching the precepts is as qualities of personal character. The Buddha described someone who was spiritually well developed as endowed with the five precepts. He said that when one reaches a certain level of awakening, it is simply not possible to consciously and intentionally break the precepts. Following the precepts is a direct by-product of having discovered freedom. In a sense, one's character has been ethically transformed so that it is free of intentions or desires to cause harm.

These 'five things' can be understood as trainings to improve the quality of our inner life, as principles to guide our actions, and as a description of how an awakened person behaves. The world needs more people with the intention, sensitivity, and purity of heart represented by the five precepts.

May the precepts be a source of joy for everyone.



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## PLANNED GIVING

A charitable bequest is a simple and flexible way that you can leave a gift to support the future of IMC and IRC for generations to come. It's easy to make a bequest by including *Insight Meditation Center of the Midpeninsula* as a beneficiary:

- in your will or living trust
- in your retirement plan or bank account
- in your life insurance policy

The Legacy Circle was created to recognize those who include IMC/IRC in their estate and financial plans by making a bequest. Members of the Legacy Circle are invited to an annual luncheon with the IMC/IRC Teachers.

For more information, visit the **DONATE** page on either the IMC or IRC website. For questions, or to arrange a consultation with a volunteer attorney, email [legacy@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:legacy@insightmeditationcenter.org).

## GIL'S NEW BOOK

### *Steps to Liberation: The Buddha's Eightfold Path*

This book brings together the essays used in IMC's Eightfold Path Course. For each of the eight factors in the Path, reflections and practices are provided to support a practical understanding of the relevance and importance of each step. This book is a good primer for one of the most important sets of Buddhist teachings and practices. It is also a good study guide and book group resource. Available by print-on-demand from Amazon.

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## FOUR FOUNDATIONS OF MINDFULNESS

### MONDAY EVENING DHARMA TALK SERIES WITH GIL FRONSDAL

For the months of January, February, and March, when he is present to teach on Monday evenings, Gil will give a talk on the Buddha's Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. These are the ancient teachings on mindfulness which is the source for the modern interest in mindfulness practice.



## BUDDHIST ECO-CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM

### SUMMER 2019 ~ SUMMER 2020 WITH GIL FRONSDAL, KIRSTEN RUDESTAM AND SUSIE HARRINGTON

A one year introduction to the wisdom and skill needed to be a Buddhist Eco-Chaplain, i.e., those who use Buddhist practice, values, and compassionate care to deepen, heal, celebrate, and transform our relationship to the natural world. This program will offer experience-based activities and contemplative practices that deepen individuals' own relationships with the natural world, as well as provide them with skills to be spiritual caregivers, helping others (re)connect with nature and face contemporary environmental crises with wisdom and compassion. More info at [Sati.org](http://Sati.org).

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## PARKING AT IMC

We want to be good neighbors, therefore we ask that people attending IMC events do not park on the 100 block of Birch Street (the block IMC is on that is a one-way street). There is an exception for those who are not able to walk more than a short distance.

It is also important that you not park in The Abigail parking lot across the street from IMC; your car may get towed.

Abundant street parking is found within a 3-minute walk of IMC. These can be found on El Camino, Brewster, Broadway, and Hopkins near the intersection with Fulton. Parking further from IMC will not only help our neighbors, it will provide more accessible parking for people for whom walking is a challenge. Everyone's help with this is greatly appreciated. Thank you!

# Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

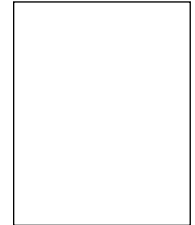
Redwood City, CA 94062

www.insightmeditationcenter.org

Email: insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com

650/599-3456

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## WAYS TO DONATE

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

**CHECK:** via mail, or in person at the donation box at IMC.

**ONLINE:** Visit the **DONATE** page on IMC's website.

**AMAZON SMILE:** A simple automatic way to support IMC/IRC when you shop through Amazon, at no cost to you. Go to [insightretreatcenter.org/smile](http://insightretreatcenter.org/smile) or enter through IMC's

**RECOMMENDED BOOKS** page.

**DONATE YOUR CAR:** Make a tax-deductible donation of a vehicle you no longer want, working or not. CARS will handle pick-up and all paperwork. IRC gets 75% of the sale price. Tell them you want to donate to Insight Retreat Center. Call 855-500-RIDE to schedule your pick-up appointment or answer any questions.

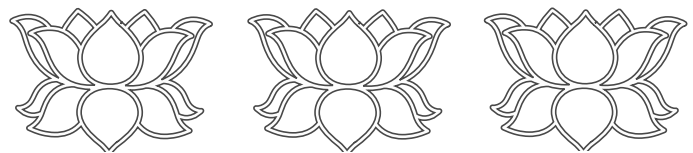
**EBAY GIVING WORKS:** Recycle your unwanted possessions and support IRC at the same time - it's tax-deductible. Go to: [insightretreatcenter.org/e-giving](http://insightretreatcenter.org/e-giving)

**E-SCRIP:** Register your grocery club card and credit/debit cards with E-scrip and the participating merchants will donate a small percentage of your purchases to IMC/IRC. You keep all your credit card rewards. Register at [www.escrip.com](http://www.escrip.com); Group ID is 238528.

**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.

## HELP IRC WHILE BUYING OR SELLING A HOME

IMC sangha member Carol Collins is a retired longtime local real estate broker with Realtor connections throughout the state. If you are thinking of buying or selling a home she can refer you to a conscientious, highly qualified Realtor who will, in turn, make a donation in your name to IRC. Carol can serve as your consultant at no charge throughout the buying or selling process. She has performed this service for sangha members in the Bay Area and Santa Cruz. Contact Carol at [carolcollins888@gmail.com](mailto:carolcollins888@gmail.com), or 408/348-1385.



### • GENERAL INFORMATION:

[insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com](mailto:insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com) or 650/599-3456.

• **NEWSLETTER QUESTIONS:** Contact the editor at [imc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:imc.newsletter@gmail.com).

• **CONNECT:** To sign up for our UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS emails, go to the IMC website and click on the CONNECT link.



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

## January ~ March 2019

FOR IMC EVENTS PLEASE DO NOT PARK ON BIRCH STREET BETWEEN BREWSTER AND HOPKINS (IMC'S BLOCK)  
UNLESS THERE IS A PHYSICAL NEED TO PARK CLOSE BY.

### 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 sitting followed by a talk and time for questions.

#### MARTES EN LA TARDE DHARMA EN ESPAÑOL

Con Andrea Castillo, 7:30 a 9pm. Meditación y pláticas de Dharma en Español.

#### WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

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

- 9:30am – Sitting • 10:15am – Walking Meditation
- 11am – Sitting • 11:45am – Dharmette (brief talk)
- 12pm – Temple cleaning

#### WEDNESDAY EVENING HAPPY HOUR: LOVING-KINDNESS PRACTICE

With Diana Clark and Nikki Mirghafori, 6 to 7pm. Guided meditation, teaching and discussion on loving-kindness.

#### THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Andrea Fella or guest teachers, 7:30 to 9pm. A sitting, a talk and time for questions.

#### SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

With Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers, 8:30 to 10:45am.

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

**Sunday Community Tea**—2nd Sunday of month at 11am.

**Vegetarian Potluck Brunch**—Last Sunday of month at 11am.

### MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

#### BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- First Monday evening of month, 6:15 to 7:15pm.
- First Thursday morning of month, 10:45 to 11:45am.
- Every Thursday evening, 6:15 to 7:15pm.

#### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- 5 Tuesday Afternoons, 1:30 to 3pm, February 5 – March 5 with bruni dávila

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

#### BEGINNER'S Q & A

- Wednesday, April 10, 7:30 to 9pm, with Ying Chen and bruni dávila

An opportunity to get answers to your questions about the basics of Insight meditation including mindfulness of breathing, the body, emotions, thinking, and application of mindfulness in daily life. No pre-registration necessary.

### DEEPENING MEDITATION SERIES

#### INTRODUCTION TO CONCENTRATION FOR MEDITATION

- 5 Wednesday evenings, 7:30 to 9pm, January 9 – February 6 with Gil Fronsdal

Concentration is an essential element for mindfulness practice as well as an important support in remaining focused and relaxed in daily life. This series will introduce the basic teachings and practices of concentration.

#### UNHINDERED: PRACTICING WITH CHALLENGES IN MEDITATION

- 6 Wednesday evenings 7:30 to 9pm, February 27 – April 3 with Diana Clark and Tanya Wiser.

Teachings, instructions, and discussion focused on using mindfulness to practice with the five hindrances, common mental challenges to meditation.

#### INTRODUCTION TO METTA

- 4 Wednesday afternoons, 1:30 to 3pm, March 27 – April 17, with Diana Clark

Metta, or 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 complement to mindfulness meditation. The four week series will systematically present the classic instruction for cultivating metta.

#### INSIGHT TEACHINGS FOR EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS

- 5 Wednesday Evenings, 7:30 to 9pm, April 17 – May 15, with Diana Clark

This course is intended to support practitioners who have been on a number of meditation retreats and who wish to further examine some of the Buddha's liberation teachings. We will discuss the role of insight in insight meditation as well as engage in an exploration of the liberating potential of insights into feeling tone, the aggregates, the sense bases, impermanence and conditionality—all central teachings of the Buddha. The course will include instructions, guided meditations and small group discussions.

### ONE DAY RETREATS

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On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- January 12, 8:30am to 5pm, **Mindfulness Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- February 9, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Mindfulness of the Body Daylong** with Diana Clark
- February 16, 9am to 4:30pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- February 23, 9:30am to 12:15pm, **Half-Day Retreat** with Kim Allen (usual Wed. morning schedule)
- March 9, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Daylong** with Max Erdstein
- March 16, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness of Mind Daylong** with Andrea Fella
- 23 de marzo, 9am a 4pm, **Retiro en español** con los Maestros: Andrea Castillo y Francisco Morillo Gable
- March 30, 9am to 4:30pm, **Daylong** with Matthew Brensilver
- April 6, 9:30am to 12:15pm, **Half-Day Retreat** with Liz Powell (usual Wed. morning schedule)
- April 20, 8:30am to 5pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal

### RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

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#### AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

For more information go to [www.insightretreatcenter.org/retreats](http://www.insightretreatcenter.org/retreats).

- March 10–17, 1-Week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal, bruni dávila and Jozen Gibson
- March 29–April 5, 1-Week **Mindfulness of Breathing Study and Meditation Retreat** with Bhikkhu Analayo assisted by Max Erdstein
- April 12–21, 2-Week **Mindfulness and Wisdom Retreat** with Andrea Fella and Alexis Santos
- April 28–May 5, 1-Week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Ines Freedman

### SERIES PROGRAMS

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#### EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

TAUGHT BY CHRIS CLIFFORD, BRUNI DÁVILA AND LIZ POWELL WITH OTHER SENIOR IMC STUDENTS

- Sundays, 1 to 3:30pm: Jan 6, Feb 3, Mar 3, Apr 7, May 5
- Saturday, Jun 29, 9:30am to 4:30pm: Concluding Daylong Retreat at IRC

#### SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING SERIES

WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI. **SAT JAN 19; FRI FEB 22, MAR 29, & APR 19, 9:30am to 3:30pm.** A seven-month program exploring aspects of mindfulness supporting meditation, daily life and the path of liberation. Includes a combination of teachings, meditation practices, and discussions. You may attend any part of the series.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

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#### MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 8:30AM TO 5PM.** Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. For those who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation and a Dharma talk. Brief interviews will be available. Bring lunch.

#### FINDING BALANCE: BEING, DOING & THE FIVE FACULTIES

WITH BRUNI DÁVILA AND LIZ POWELL. **SATURDAY, JANUARY 26, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM** We will cultivate five abilities that help us to meet the demands of the inner and outer world. Sitting meditation and daily life practices that develop confidence, energy, awareness, concentration, and discernment will be explored. Join us in finding balance both on and off the cushion. Suitable for all levels of practice. Bring lunch.

#### MINDFULNESS OF THE BODY DAYLONG WITH DIANA CLARK

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM.** Despite the name, “mind-fulness,” meditation is not about the cerebral mind overcoming the physical body. Instead, mindfulness practice includes deeply connecting with the body and learning to reap the support and wisdom it offers. Join us as we explore mindfulness of the body as an integral part of mindfulness practice. The day will be primarily in silence and include short dharma talks and guided meditations. Bring lunch.

#### MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 16, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** Practicing mindfulness meditation on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and a Dharma talk. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

#### BE PART OF THE IMC AND IRC LEGACY COMMUNITY

**WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 20. 6:30 TO 8:30PM.** Everyone is welcome to a presentation on ways of including IMC/IRC in estate plans, as well as other means of long-term support. Whether you are already a part of IMC’s legacy community or would like more information, please join IMC community leaders, as well as IMC’s volunteer planned-giving attorney, for an evening of fellowship, sharing, and information.

#### MARANASATI: AWAKENING TO LIFE THROUGH CONTEMPLATING DEATH WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI

**SATURDAY, MARCH 2, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.** Rather than ignoring, fearing, or running away from this natural truth of our human lives, we can harness the power of this most powerful contemplation to inform our precious human life in order to live more fully and allow a deep letting go, freedom, and fearlessness in preparation for our actual moment of death. Exploration through dharma talks, guided meditation, and small and large group dialogue.

### DAYLONG WITH MAX ERDSTEIN

**SATURDAY, MARCH 9, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.** With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and a Dharma talk. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

### MINDFULNESS OF MIND WITH ANDREA FELLA

**SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.** We will explore a relaxed open awareness with an emphasis on exploring qualities of mind, and the attitude towards one's experience. Such an open awareness practice, inspired by the teachings of U Tejaniya, supports both the formal meditation of sitting and walking, as well as awareness of our normal daily activities. With alternating periods of sitting and walking, instructions and discussion. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

### RETIRO EN ESPAÑOL DE UN DÍA CON LOS MAESTROS

**ANDREA CASTILLO Y FRANCISCO MORILLO GABLE**  
**SÁBADO 23 DE MARZO, 9AM A 4PM.** El día incluirá meditación, pláticas, movimiento meditativo y ejercicios participativos para investigar algún aspecto del dharma. Favor traer tu comida para el medio día

### DAYLONG WITH MATTHEW BRENSILVER

**SATURDAY, MARCH 30, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** A day of sitting and walking practice, brief practice discussions, and a Dharma Talk.

### MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, APRIL 20, 8:30AM TO 5PM.** With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation. At the end of the day there will be a Dharma talk. Brief interviews to talk about the practice will be available with Gil. Previous experience is recommended. Bring lunch.

## YOGA

**WITH TERRY LESSER.** Suitable for all. Bring a large towel and sticky mat, if you have one. Mats are also available.

### MONDAY EVENING YOGA

- **6:15 to 7pm.** Join us for yoga before evening meditation.

### THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

- **8:30 to 10:30am**

### YOGA AND MEDITATION HALF DAY RETREAT

- **Saturday, January 5, 9am to 12pm.** After the busyness and external focus that often accompanies the holidays, this mini-retreat offers a quiet and grounding place where we can slow down, deepen our meditation, connect with our bodies, and help clarify what is important for the coming year. Appropriate for beginners and experienced yogis and meditators—you don't need to be flexible to do yoga; you only need to be as you are. Bring a large towel and a yoga mat if you have one, otherwise mats are available for your use.

## SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center and held at IMC. Visit [sati.org](http://sati.org) or contact 650/223-0311, for more information.

### THE METTA SUTTA: THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS ON LOVING-KINDNESS WITH DIANA CLARK

**SATURDAY, APRIL 13, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM.** Loving-kindness or metta is one of the central practices taught by the Buddha in his Discourse on Loving-kindness (the *Metta Sutta*), a beautiful poem often chanted. We will study these verses, be introduced to the chant, and learn how loving-kindness is related to insight and concentration meditation. Please join us for a day of lecture, discussion and loving-kindness meditation as we also consider how these teachings can be applied to meditation practice and to our lives.

### INTRODUCTION TO CHAPLAINCY

WITH JENNIFER LEMAS, DAJAKU KINST & OTHERS

**SATURDAY, MAY 11, 9:30AM TO 12:30PM.** A half-day overview of a chaplain's work of providing spiritual care and support for people in hospitals, hospices, prisons, and a wide variety of other settings. In recent years, Buddhist practitioners have been experiencing chaplaincy as a powerful opportunity to practice engaged Buddhism, and for some, as a profession. Information about the Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training and the Institute for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy Degree Program will be provided.

### BUDDHIST ECO-CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM

SUMMER 2019 – SUMMER 2020 WITH GIL FRONSDAL, KIRSTEN RUDESTAM AND SUSIE HARRINGTON

One year introduction to the wisdom and skill needed to be a Buddhist Eco-Chaplain. See Sangha Programs & News for more information.

## YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM

**AT HOME IN THE WORLD: DHARMA EVENINGS FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S WITH MAX ERDSTEIN**  
**Sundays, 7:30 to 9pm (except the 2nd Sunday of the month).**

This weekly group addresses themes relevant to people in their 20s and 30s and includes guided meditations, short dharma talks, and group discussions. We have a friendly and vibrant ongoing community, and all are welcome to drop in at any time.

## LGBTQUEER SANGHA

**4th Sunday of each month, 5pm to 6:30pm.** We are led by Guiding Teachers John Martin and bruni dávila, and open to all who identify under the LGBTQ+ umbrella. Contact co-facilitators sue bachman and Joe Hayes at [imcqueersangha@gmail.com](mailto:imcqueersangha@gmail.com) with questions or to be added to our mailing list.

### YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

**DHARMA SPROUTS (K–2ND GRADE)** Led by Hilary Borison and Carla Rayacich. **First Sunday of each month, 11:15am to Noon.** Meditations and mindfulness practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate with their children. For more information or to RSVP, contact Hilary at [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com) or 650/575-2052. Please provide first names of each adult and child who will attend.

**DHARMA ROCKS (3RD–5TH GRADE)** Led by Hilary Borison and Elisabeth Waymire. **Third Sunday of each month, 11:15am to 12:30pm.** Interactive mindfulness meditations, games, art/crafts, and movement. RSVP to [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com) if you plan to attend, including the first name and age of each participant.

**DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH–8TH GRADE)** (6th-graders can attend Dharma Rocks and/or Dharma Bodhis). Led by Hilary Borison and Darrin Force. **Second Sunday of each month, 5 to 7pm.** A time to explore how the Dharma can support challenges and opportunities pertinent to middle schoolers, through group discussions, mindfulness practice, creative activities, interactive games, pizza dinner, and more. RSVP for dinner plans. Contact Hilary, [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com), or 650/575-2052.

**MINDFUL TEENS (AGES 13 TO 19)** Led by Vy Le & Gregor Levy. **First and third Sunday of each month, 5pm to 7pm.** We aspire to create a safe and joyful space where teens learn mindfulness to nurture inner-discovery, clarity and a deeper connection with others. After a guided meditation, we discuss issues around relationships with friends/family, stress, intentions, identity, etc, and in general have some fun with life! For info: [www.mindfulteens.net](http://www.mindfulteens.net). Please RSVP Vy or Gregor at [Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com](mailto:Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com).

### SUPPORT GROUPS

#### SUPPORT GROUP FOR PERSONS WITH ILLNESS AND HEALTH CHALLENGES

**First and Third Thursdays of the month, 12:30 to 2:30 pm.** Meetings of this group include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics, but the primary purpose of the group is to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation. At least four days before attending the group for the first time, please contact the group facilitator, Ying Chen at 408/802-6430 or [yingchen@yahoo.com](mailto:yingchen@yahoo.com).

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

### BUDDHISM AND 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP

**Second Sunday of each month, 7:30 to 9pm.** Group discussion and study exploring the 12-Step program and the teachings of the Buddha. Includes a 30-minute meditation, short talk and open discussion on the Buddha's teachings selected for the evening. Everyone welcome. Facilitated by Jennifer Lemas, [jennlemas@comcast.net](mailto:jennlemas@comcast.net).

### OTHER GROUPS

#### WOMEN'S CIRCLE OF MINDFULNESS

**2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, 10:45AM TO 12:30PM.**

A gathering for women who wish to deepen practice by exploring together how to bring principles of mindfulness into our daily lives. You're welcome to bring lunch or have tea until 1pm. Facilitated by Hilary Borison ([hborison@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hborison@sbcglobal.net)).

#### DHARMA-INSPIRED BOOK GROUP

**THIRD FRIDAYS, JAN 18, FEB 15, MAR 15, 7 TO 8:30PM**

IMC Meditation Hall. Contact Anne Foster, [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com), 650/591-1285 for information about our current book.

#### SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS PRACTICE SESSIONS

**SATURDAYS, JAN 12, FEB 9, MAR 9, 1PM TO 2:30PM.** Please join us as we strum our way to samadhi...with ukuleles! We are a group of sangha members who are getting together to sing and play ukulele. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For location and more info contact Martha Chickering at [marthachickering@gmail.com](mailto:marthachickering@gmail.com).

#### SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS PLAY AT HOPKINS MANOR

**SATURDAYS, JAN 26, FEB 23 MAR 23, 1PM TO 2:30PM.** We are making music with the residents of Hopkins Manor once a month. Hopkins Manor is a residential care facility for the elderly next to IMC. No prior musical experience is necessary. If you don't play the ukulele, you can come and sing along. For more information contact Martha Chickering at [marthachickering@gmail.com](mailto:marthachickering@gmail.com).

### CHARITABLE EVENTS

#### FEBRUARY CLOTHING DRIVE

What better way to clear some space and share your generosity by donating your unneeded clothing and camping gear to those who most need it? New and wearable used clothing for men, women and kids. Clothing will be donated to PARCA and Gear for Good Santa Cruz. For more information contact Joe at [Joe@insightretreatcenter.org](mailto:Joe@insightretreatcenter.org).

**LOCAL SITTING GROUPS**—go to our website and click on "Links" on the left navigation bar, and scroll down the page.