

## The Heart of Ethics: The First Precept

The intention to not cause harm lies at the heart of Buddhist ethical and spiritual life. The commitment to non-harming leads to a life committed to not killing, which is the first of the five precepts undertaken by Buddhists the world over.

The first precept has implications in many areas of our lives, some personal and others societal. Close to home it may relate to such issues as eating meat, hunting, having firearms, self-defense, and pest-management. Both at personal and societal levels the precept is connected to questions of abortion, euthanasia and physician-assisted suicide. More widely, the first precept relates to questions about war, military service, capital punishment, the culling of wildlife, and laboratory research with animals.

The first precept is also intimately connected to our inner life as it relates to our motivations, values, emotions, and beliefs. To live by this precept is more than avoiding killing, it touches on our capacity for goodness—sometimes called virtue. Mindfulness, love, compassion, generosity and wisdom are all companions to the first precept. In addition, freeing ourselves from the distortions of selfishness, greed, or aversion creates the conditions for naturally wanting to avoid harming.

As a Buddhist practice, the first precept can be approached through the framework of the three areas of Buddhist training: training in ethics, in meditation and in wisdom. Traditionally called *sila*, *samadhi*, and *pañña* these three trainings concern how we behave, how we are, and how we see. As such, they support us like the legs of a tripod: we need all three to stay upright and balanced in situations that may challenge a commitment to non-harming and the first precept.

Training in *sila* (ethics) emphasizes the practice of restraint. This training entails restraining from killing, even ants in our homes. Some people include avoiding activities indirectly connected to killing, such as buying produce grown with pesticides. Restraint is useful in cultivating a number of important personal qualities. It develops will power, patience, the capacity to let go, and the safety of blamelessness. Restraint can also foster greater self-understanding; not acting on an urge can help us to see the urge more clearly.

In relation to the precepts, training in *samadhi* (meditation) involves developing the heart and mind so our inner life supports our ethical life. Traditional forms of *samadhi* training include meditation practices that develop mindfulness, concentration, loving-kindness, or compassion. Greater concentration, with the associated contentment, calmness confidence, and equanimity

reduce the selfishness that lies at the root of most unethical behavior. Developing loving-kindness and compassion helps us consider and regard others in caring ways. These all contribute to greater ethical sensitivity and self-awareness. This, in turn, reduces the chances that we will act on the fear or hate which often motivate the impulse to harm.

Training in *samadhi* ensures that living by the precepts is not simply adhering to particular rules. When our virtues and beneficial inner states are developed, we are naturally motivated to act in ways informed by the precepts. When we are happy, mindful, and compassionate we are not inclined to kill. Rather, we understand that killing any living being diminishes our inner well-being and ease.

Training in *pañña* (wisdom) is developing our understanding and insight. One way ethical wisdom is cultivated is through investigation. When we are about to act contrary to the precepts we can stop to investigate the situation. In particular it is useful to inquire into three areas of our potential action, their intentions, their consequences, and alternatives to them.

For example, when our actions will directly or indirectly cause the death of a living being, we can investigate the intentions motivating the actions. Do the intentions support a path to awakening? Are we happy and proud to have these intentions? Is what we are intending to do worth the sacrifice of another life? How do we balance competing intentions? We may want to safeguard both the termites eating our house and our house. Are there times when we need to choose between the termites and house? Or, what about a situation where we are being physically attacked? How do we choose between not wanting to cause harm and the desire to protect ourselves?

Because these can be difficult questions to answer, it is important to investigate the consequences of killing. Too often people kill with a short-sightedness that fails to recognize the ripple effect of taking life. Using pesticides may successfully exterminate a pest, but too many times we have discovered later that the pesticide harmed other creatures and humans exposed to the pesticide. Killing an enemy soldier may seem appropriate in times of war but when we consider the ripple effect on the soldier's children, family, and community, is war the best way to accomplish what needs to be done? By investigating and understanding consequences, the balance between self-care and caring for others may change.



# SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

## DHARMA MENTORING AT IMC

Even though meditation is often done alone with eyes closed, practicing together with others often supports Dharma practice. One means for such support is to have a teacher or a Dharma mentor to talk with.

### SIX-WEEK ONLINE INTRODUCTION TO MEDITATION COURSE

This course is offered online through Audiodharma once or twice a year using prerecorded “introduction to meditation” talks given by Gil plus supplemental readings, reflections, and practices. Once a week during the six weeks, participants can have a half hour meeting with a mentor to discuss their practice and ask questions. Depending on where people live, these meetings can be done in person, over the phone, with Skype, or by email. Information for the next course can be found on IMC’s website (under PROGRAMS click on ONLINE COURSES). Sign up on that page to be notified as to when the next course will be offered.

### EIGHT MONTH EIGHTFOLD PATH MENTORING PROGRAM

Starting in October each year, this course is based on Gil Fronsda’s recorded talks, essays, reflections and practices related to each step of the Eightfold Path. For people living close to IMC, there is a class once a month taught by the senior mentors of the program. Regular reading, reflection, and practicing with each factor of the Eightfold Path is important to the program. Once a month participants have an opportunity to have a one-hour meeting with a mentor. Mentoring meetings are for the discussion of one’s experience with reflecting and practicing the Eightfold Path. More information will be in the next newsletter.

### DHARMA MENTORING TRAINING PROGRAM

IMC, in partnership with the Sati Institute for Buddhist Studies will be offering an intensive two-year training in Dharma Mentoring.

Dharma Mentors are people who have matured enough in their own Dharma practice and understanding to mentor others in their practice. A Dharma Mentor has been trained to meet individually with people to support their personal Dharma practice, study, and reflection. In offering spiritual direction, Dharma Mentors are not Dharma Teachers; they are spiritual friends facilitating another person’s engagement with the Dharma.

Prerequisites for the program are six years of regular insight meditation practice, a cumulative 60 days of silent meditation retreat practice, and a recommendation from a Dharma teacher. Taught by Gil Fronsda and Andrea Fella, the core of the program will consist of monthly daylong classes and practicums. During the first year, the practicums will include participating as a student in IMC’s mentoring programs mentioned above. The second year involves being a mentor in these mentoring programs. More information will be in the next IMC newsletter and on the IMC and Sati Center websites.

## 2013 IMC FINANCIAL SUMMARY

All of IMC’s programs are freely offered. The programs and the operation of our center are funded by donations and supported by volunteers.

### 2013 INCOME

Regular Donations to IMC	\$148,460
Year-End Fund Drive	\$ 40,795
<b>Total Ordinary Income</b>	<b>\$189,255</b>

### 2013 EXPENSES

General Operations	\$103,709
Building Operations	\$11,409
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$115,118</b>

With the year-end fund drive, we were fortunate to end 2013 with a \$74,136 reserve. This will be used toward a number of projects in 2014: a major seismic upgrade of the large glass wall in the meditation hall, improving our sound and recording equipment, and possibly renting a small facility near IMC to allow us to offer more programs. Expenses for last year included donations toward the health insurance for our teachers, Gil and Andrea, IMC insurance, printing this newsletter and *The Issue at Hand*, mailings, maintaining Audiodharma and the IMC website, and supporting the Memorial Day Weekend Family retreat at Jikoji. Insight Retreat Center donations and expenses are not included in this summary.

Thank you for your continuing generosity. All donations to IMC or IRC are fully tax deductible. (Our tax ID number is 77-0450217).

—Ed Drury, IMC Treasurer

## EARTH CARE PRACTICES

One way to practice mindfulness in daily life is to reflect on the ways that people (as well as plants and animals) are interconnected and interdependent. For example, this year’s drought in California highlights our mutual dependence on a healthy water supply at a time when there is a more limited amount available.

Two ways to practice compassionate interdependence are:

- Exchange information about ways you’ve found to save water with your friends, your workplace, and local schools.
- Find new ways to conserve water, such as composting food scraps instead of running your garbage disposal, or using the water in which you rinsed vegetables and fruits to water your house plants. More info at <http://saveourh2o.org>.

—IMC’s Earth Care Committee

## FEED THE HOMELESS

Please join Insight World Aid and the Saranaloka Foundation to distribute a free breakfast to the hungry in San Francisco on Sunday morning, April 13 in San Francisco’s Tenderloin neighborhood. Please contact [insightworldaid@gmail.com](mailto:insightworldaid@gmail.com) for time and meeting location.

## MY ADVENTURE IN VOLUNTEER CHAPLAINCY

Last year, I was privileged to participate in the Sati Center Buddhist Chaplaincy Training Program, a deeply engaging, 11-month-long program, taught by Gil Fronsdal, Paul Haller and Jennifer Block at IMC. It required lots of reading, reflection, writing, group work and one-to-one interviews, as well as 100 hours of volunteer work as a Buddhist chaplain. From the very first, our teachers showed us—little by little—how to be chaplains and how to create relationships of trust and safety. Part of the training was to be chaplains for each other. The mutual trust we developed allowed us to explore ourselves—in my case, more deeply than I ever had before.

An important part of the training was our volunteer chaplaincy work. Some participants volunteered in hospice, some in prisons, and others in hospital settings. I was lucky to be able to take part in a multi-faith chaplaincy program, called Sojourn, at San Francisco General Hospital. Volunteering taught us many powerful lessons, including regularly asking ourselves “Who is our service for?” to help keep our focus on being of service. The training encouraged us to be mindful of what came up for us in the chaplaincy visits and to commit to deeper reflection and to taking care of our own needs—outside the chaplaincy visit.

At SF General I was privileged to meet folks from all sorts of backgrounds with all kinds of challenges. Being the trauma center for San Francisco, the hospital serves people who have suffered serious accidents and injuries. Most of the folks served have no insurance or safety net. Often homeless, they are subject to the many problems caused or made worse by poverty. Patients and their families come from a variety of religious orientations. The chaplaincy service exists to help patients and families find access to their own deep source of spiritual strength.

I learned a lot about being present with people in very tough times—dealing with illness, addiction, trauma, and death, as well as opening to my own suffering. I was taught how and when to pray—no small task for me, having come from a profound disenchantment with God-based religions. I began to learn the importance of just sitting silently with a patient or family member who is going through a crisis. I can’t fix it, but I can spend time with them. Then, at least, they’re not alone. And that turns out to be a lot.

I find chaplaincy so fulfilling, and such a rich experience, that I continue to volunteer at SF General weekly. It allows me a chance to put my Buddhist practice to work in the world, trying to balance wisdom and compassion. It has motivated me to make some changes in my own life that I would not have dared to attempt otherwise. I’m grateful for the chaplaincy trainings—it continues to transform my life.

—Martha Chickering



## The Heart of Ethics, cont'd. from front page

We can also consider the consequences to our inner life if we take the life of another. Meditation practice reveals the toll that killing has on our inner life. When those who have killed other people or animals begin to meditate, it is not uncommon for them to experience difficulty in facing their past actions and working through the pain and regret. Until they meditated, the harmful personal consequences laid buried in their minds.

The third area to investigate when we are motivated to kill is to consider the alternatives. All too often people want a quick solution with clear results. But discovering the alternatives to killing sometimes requires research and creative problem solving. For example, instead of buying a gun to protect myself, can we take the time to learn self-defense strategies that will keep us safe without needing a firearm? Instead of physician-assisted suicide, can palliative care reduce the pain? Instead of pesticides on our crops, can we choose to grow plants that are not threatened by local pests?

While killing can be done quickly and easily, the unexpected negative consequences can last a long time. Finding alternatives to killing may take much time and effort, but they do not leave the same legacy of suffering. Rather, alternatives to violence leave a legacy of peace and good-will.

The personal maturity that comes from the combined training in *sila*, *samadhi*, and *pañña* gives a person an internal guide for their ethical life. The motivation to live a life of non-harming becomes something we want to do; it becomes something we know enriches our inner life and the lives of those around us. Not only does it diminish the impulses of greed, hate and delusion, it also increases the presence of generosity, love, and wisdom.

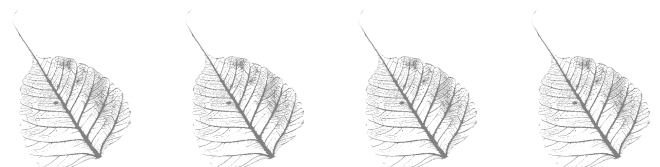
In this way, living by the first precept is not only about what we don’t do. It is also about what we do. The Buddha associated the first precept with the practice of generosity in the following teachings:

*Abandoning the taking of life, one abstains from taking life. This gives freedom from danger, freedom from hostility, and freedom from oppression to limitless numbers of living beings. In giving freedom from danger, hostility, and oppression to others one gains a share in limitless freedom from danger, hostility, and oppression. This is the first great gift.*

—AN 8.39

Just as not taking life is the first Buddhist ethical precept, so generosity is the first Buddhist virtue. When they come together, we can have firsthand experience that the first precept is less about following external rules and more about expressing generosity and compassion arising from within.

—Gil Fronsdal



## Insight Meditation Center

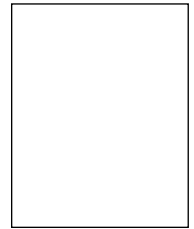
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Redwood City, CA 94062

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### CREATIVE WORKS INVITED

Contributions are invited for the 2015 issue of *Passing It On: Lay Practitioners Share Dharma Wisdom*, a collection of creative works reflecting the teachings found in our daily lives. The authors and artists, all connected with IMC, celebrate everyday activities in ways that honor the richness and complexity of our ordinary experiences through personal essays, stories, poems, and art. Policies for submissions are available in the closing pages of the previous issues. The current and earlier editions can be found on the **RECOMMENDED BOOKS** page on the IMC website (scroll down to **IMC COMMUNITY**) or purchased on Amazon. The deadline for submissions is July 31. If interested, please contact Nancy Flowers and Judy Long at [imc.passingiton@gmail.com](mailto:imc.passingiton@gmail.com).

### HELP IRC WHILE BUYING OR SELLING A HOME

Carol Collins is an IMC sangha member and longtime local real estate broker, now retired. If you are selling your home, she can refer you to a realtor who specializes in your area. If you are buying, she can refer you to a realtor who will help you identify properties, areas, loans, etc. Buying or selling, the realtor will make a donation in your name to our Insight Retreat Center.

Carol will be available as your consultant at no charge through the whole process. She has performed this service for sangha members in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and other Bay Area counties. If you have any questions or would like to discuss buying or selling a home, contact Carol at 408/348-1385 or [carolcollins888@gmail.com](mailto:carolcollins888@gmail.com).



### IMC SPRING CLEANING!

Please join other sangha members for our Spring Cleaning on Saturday, May 10, from 9:30 to noon, and give our center some tender loving-kindness. With mindful intention, concentrated attention, and a little elbow grease, we can sweep away the cobwebs and bring shine to the windows and floors. The more the merrier, and the cleaner! Refreshments will be provided!

Look for the sign-up sheet on the literature table or contact Hilary Borison at [imc.volunteerdirector@gmail.com](mailto:imc.volunteerdirector@gmail.com).

#### • 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 be added or removed from the IMC mailing list or to update your address, phone, or email -OR- to sign up for our Upcoming Events and Announcements emails, go to the IMC website and click on the CONNECT link.



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April ~ June 2014

## 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.

### TUESDAY EVENING 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

### 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 Monday mornings, June 2–30, 10 to 11:30am, with Shin Kwan Park.
- 5 Wednesday evenings, July 2–August 3, 7:30 to 9pm, with Ines Freedman.

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 preregistration necessary.



Most teachings given at IMC are recorded and posted online at [Audioldharma.org](http://Audioldharma.org)

## DAYLONG MEDITATION RETREATS

On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- April 19, 9am to 4:30pm, with Andrea Fella.
- May 17, 9am to 4:30pm, with Gil Fronsdal.
- May 31, 9am to 4:30pm, **Metta Daylong** with Andrea Fella.
- June 14, 6am to 9pm, **Intensive Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal.
- July 19, 9am to 4:30pm, with Nikki Mirghafori.

## RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

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

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

- June 20–22, **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Bob Stahl. Registration open. Apply online.
- June 26–29, **Meditation Retreat in Spanish** with Rebecca Bradshaw, assisted by Andrea Castillo. Registration open. Apply online.
- July 12–26, **Mindfulness of Mind Retreat** with Andrea Fella. Registration open. Apply online.
- August 13–17, **Insight Retreat** with Andrea Fella and Pamela Weiss. Registration opens April 13.
- September 14–28, **14-Day Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal. Registration opens April 14.
- October 10–12, **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Carla Brennan. Registration opens June 10.
- October 15–17, **Retreat** with Ajahn Amaro. Registration opens June 15.
- October 19–26, **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Ruth King. Registration opens June 19.

### OTHER RETREATS WITH GIL FRONSDAL OR ANDREA FELLA AT SPIRIT ROCK, [WWW.SPIRITROCK.ORG](http://WWW.SPIRITROCK.ORG)

- July 30–Aug 3, Family Retreat (Lottery), with Gil Fronsdal, Ajahn Pasanno, Dana DePalma, Betsy Rose.

### OTHER RETREATS WITH ANDREA FELLA

- July 20–27, Cloud Mountain Retreat Center, **Mindfulness of Mind Retreat**, with Andrea Fella. Taught in the style of Sayadaw U Tejaniya. Info at [cloudmountain.org](http://cloudmountain.org).
- September 13–October 25, Insight Meditation Society, **Three-Month Retreat, Part 1**, with Joseph Goldstein, Carol Wilson, Andrea Fella, Winnie Nazarko, and Bhante Buddharakkhita. Info at [www.dharma.org/meditation-retreats](http://www.dharma.org/meditation-retreats).

**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.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### **DHARMA PRACTICE DAY: MINDFUL STEPS TO AN ETHICAL LIFE WITH GIL FRONSDAL**

**FRIDAYS, APRIL 4, AND MAY 2, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM.**

Monthly Dharma Practice Days focus on training in mindfulness and ethical integrity as supports to the path of liberation. We will explore how mindfulness cultivates greater ethical wisdom and how ethical behavior cultivates greater mindfulness. This series is structured around the ten skillful actions that are the primary ethical guidelines taught by the Buddha. We will consider what perspective mindfulness practice gives to some of the important ethical issues of our times. The program will combine guided meditation, teachings, exercises, and discussion. You are welcome to come to any part of the series.

#### **IMC SPRING CLEANING**

**SATURDAY, MAY 10, FROM 9:30 TO NOON.** Join us for our annual spring cleaning! Refreshments will be provided. Look for the sign-up sheet on the literature table or contact Hilary Borison at [imc.volunteerdirector@gmail.com](mailto:imc.volunteerdirector@gmail.com).

#### **MINDFULNESS DAYLONG**

**SATURDAY, 9AM TO 4:30PM. APRIL 19 WITH ANDREA FELLA; MAY 17 WITH GIL FRONSDAL; JULY 19 WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI.** Practicing mindfulness meditation on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. This is a daylong retreat with alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and a Dharma talk. It is recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

#### **TAKING REFUGE: CLASS AND CEREMONY**

**WITH GIL FRONSDAL. CLASS: 3 WEDNESDAYS, APRIL 23, 30, AND MAY 7, 7:30 TO 9PM. CEREMONY: WEDNESDAY, MAY 14, 6:30 TO 9PM.** For those who would like to formally take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we will have three classes exploring both the meaning of “going for refuge” and one’s personal interest and commitment to Dharma practice. On the evening of May 14, we will meet for a potluck supper, a sitting, Dharma talk and refuge ceremony.

#### **METTA DAYLONG WITH ANDREA FELLA**

**SATURDAY, MAY 31, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** Beside insight meditation, *metta* or loving-kindness meditation is a foundation of our Buddhist practice. It is the opening to a compassionate heart, the heartfelt wish for the well-being of oneself and others. This day is dedicated to cultivating friendliness and goodwill. With alternating periods of sitting and walking, instructions and discussion. The day will be primarily in silence. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

#### **INTENSIVE DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 14, 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 con-

tribute to letting go of many of the distractions that get in the way of clear seeing. Retreats are also a wonderful environment for developing a continuity of awareness for an extended period. Fifteen minute interviews with Gil will be available on a sign-up basis. Bring breakfast and lunch. Light supper provided.

#### **DAYLONG WITH KIM ALLEN, CHRIS CLIFFORD, AND ROBERT CUSICK**

**SATURDAY, JUNE 21, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** Wisdom and compassion are said to be the two “Wings to Awakening”. We may ask, how does the work we are doing seemingly on “ourselves” actually serve the world? One way is that it increases our ability to open to peace, joy, and connection amidst our common vulnerability. In this day of practice, we will explore how wisdom and compassion complement, support, and enhance each other to bear fruit in our practice. Mindfulness practice leads to the wisdom that allows greater ease with change, loss, and other challenges of human life. And opening to our own fear, anger, sadness, and love is an essential aspect of true compassion for others. Appropriate for both beginners and experienced practitioners.

#### **SUMMER PICNIC AT STAFFORD PARK**

**SUNDAY, JULY 27, 11AM TO 1PM.** Join your fellow sangha members—adults, teens, children, and babies—in sharing friendship and favorite summer foods at IMC’s summer vegetarian potluck picnic. This is a great chance to meet the people you meditate with. Everyone is invited and welcome. If you can, bring a dish for 4 to 6 people to share. If you can’t bring a dish, please bring yourself.

*Stafford Park is about half a mile west on Hopkins Avenue, a very pleasant 10 to 15 minute walk from IMC.*

#### **DAILY LIFE PRACTICE RETREAT WITH ANDREA FELLA**

**SUNDAY, AUGUST 3, 1 TO 4:30PM; MONDAY–FRIDAY, AUGUST 4–8, MORNINGS 7:30 TO 9AM, AND EVENINGS 7:30 TO 9PM; SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM, DAYLONG RETREAT.**

We will integrate formal practice and Dharma discussion with our daily life by surrounding our usual workweek and workdays with practice and discussion. We 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. If you would like to attend the retreat during the week, please attend the Sunday session. The Sunday and Saturday sessions are open to all; the Monday and Thursday evening programs are also open to all as usual—the retreat will integrate with these evening programs.

#### **MINDFULNESS OF MIND DAYLONG WITH ANDREA FELLA**

**SATURDAY, AUGUST 9, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.** Taught in the style of U Tejaniya. 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 supports both the formal meditation of sitting and walking, as well as awareness of our normal daily activities. The schedule for the

## SCHEDULE PG. 3

retreat will alternate periods of sitting and walking with instructions and discussion. Aside from the instruction and discussion periods, the day will be primarily in silence. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners.

### YOUTH PROGRAMS

**DHARMA SPROUTS (K-2ND GRADE)** Led by Liz Powell and Carla Rayacich. First Sunday of each month, 11:15am to noon.

Meditations and Dharma practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate with their children. Contact Liz at [eapowell@aol.com](mailto:eapowell@aol.com) if you plan to attend.

**DHARMA ROCKS (3RD-5TH GRADE)** Led by Liz Powell. Second Sunday of each month, 5 to 7pm. Includes fun, interactive, community-building games and crafts, pizza, and a half-hour of practice and Dharma. Contact Liz at [eapowell@aol.com](mailto:eapowell@aol.com).

**DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH-8TH GRADE)** (Sixth-graders have the option of attending Dharma Rocks and/or Dharma Bodhis). Led by Hilary Borison. Fourth Sunday of each month from 5:15 to 7:15pm. A time to explore how the Dharma can support challenges and opportunities pertinent to middle schoolers through small and large group discussions, mindfulness practice, creative activities, interactive games, pizza dinner, and opportunities for community service. No registration required; RSVPs are encouraged for dinner plans. Contact Hilary, [hborison@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hborison@sbcglobal.net), or 650/575-2052 for info or to RSVP.

**MINDFUL TEENS (HIGH SCHOOL)** Led by Aaron Chavira, Nirali Shah and Trent Walker. First Sunday of each month, 5 to 7pm. A safe, fun space where teens apply mindfulness to self-discovery, empowerment, and fulfillment. A trusting environment where teens can discuss issues that are important in their lives among themselves and adult facilitators. Please RSVP for purposes of food headcount to Aaron at [Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com](mailto:Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com).

### MINDFUL PARENTS SERIES

**SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH, 7 TO 8:30PM.** April 11: Discussion groups for parents. May 9 and June 13: Guest speakers will be local dharma leaders/ parents, Rebekkah LaDyne and Dana DePalma, offering talks on the dharma of parenting.

**MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FAMILY RETREAT: K-5TH GRADERS & PARENTS WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN AND REBEKKAH LADYNE. SATURDAY, MAY 24-MONDAY, MAY 26.** Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Practice together as a family during a relaxed weekend that will offer structured retreat practice and small group sharing with other parents, teens, and children, along with hiking and appreciation of the forest, grasslands, and views from the top of the Santa Cruz mountains. The site features camping and a limited number of shared dorm rooms. Registration is available on the IMC website, and applications will be accepted until the retreat is full.

### SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center and held at IMC. Contact [sati.org](http://sati.org) for more information.

#### INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY WITH DAJAKU JUDITH KINST AND JENNIFER BLOCK

**SATURDAY, APRIL 5, 9:30AM TO 5:30PM.** Chaplains provide spiritual care and support to people in places such as hospitals, hospices, prisons and a wide variety of other settings. The work is wonderfully challenging and satisfying. In recent years, dharma practitioners have been experiencing chaplaincy as a powerful opportunity to practice engaged Buddhism, and for some, as a vocation and profession.

Join us for an explanation of this field of service, which is gaining in size and scope in dharma communities. Professional chaplains and educators will introduce aspects of chaplaincy, including: a definition of chaplaincy, the history of chaplaincy, settings where chaplains serve, and the steps one can take to become a volunteer or professional chaplain (including educational requirements) as a Buddhist practitioner. Information about the Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training and the Institute for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy Degree Program will be provided.

#### ROMANCING THE BUDDHA WITH AJAHN THANISSARO

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26, 9AM TO 5PM.** This daylong course—through talks, readings, and discussions—will focus on understanding how European Romantic ideas about religious life have influenced modern American understandings of the Dharma. We will also explore the role of American thinkers such as Emerson and James had in the transmission of Romantic philosophy into American forms of Buddhism.



### SUPPORT GROUPS

**FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES  
WEDNESDAYS 1:30 TO 3PM.**

**FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES  
WEDNESDAYS 3:30 TO 5:30PM.**

At least 4 days before attending either group for the first time, please contact Mick Bennett, [hmbennett@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hmbennett@sbcglobal.net) or 650/368-2518.

#### 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. At each meeting we will focus on a particular discourse from the early Buddhist scriptures which contain teachings and stories connected to each of the 12 steps. 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).

## SCHEDULE PG. 4

### YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM

**AT HOME IN THE WORLD: DHARMA EVENINGS FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S. WITH MAX ERDSTEIN.**

**Third Sunday of the month, 7 to 8:30pm.** An open, monthly group addressing Dharma themes relevant for twenty- and thirty-somethings. With meditation, Dharma talks, and discussion.

### YOGA WITH TERRY LESSER

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

#### MONDAY EVENING YOGA

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

#### THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

- 8:30 to 10:30am.

### DHARMA FRIENDS

Dharma Friends encourages spiritually based friendships and a sense of community in our sangha. To receive email updates on upcoming Dharma Friends events, go to the IMC website, click on **DHARMA FRIENDS** and follow instructions to subscribe.

- **Women's Circle of Mindfulness**—2nd Thursday of each month starting April 10, 10:45am to 12:15pm. A gathering for women who wish to deepen practice by exploring how to bring principles of mindfulness into our daily lives. You're welcome to bring lunch or have tea until 1pm. Facilitated by Alicia McLucas, [mclucasalicia@gmail.com](mailto:mclucasalicia@gmail.com), and Hilary Borison, [hborison@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hborison@sbcglobal.net).
- **Mindful Nature Walk at Purisima Creek**—Sat, April 12, 9am. Moderate 3.6-mile walk with longer hiking options available for those who want to continue. Walking in sun and shade; includes walking meditation period. Dress in layers, wear sunscreen. Heavy rain cancels. Carpool from IMC. Heather Seifert, [heather04@gmail.com](mailto:heather04@gmail.com).
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Practice Sessions**—Sun, April 13, May 18, June 22, 1pm to 2:30pm. Please join as we strum our way to samadhi... with ukuleles! We are a group of sangha members who get together to sing and play ukulele, and provide entertainment to the residents of Hopkins Manor, a residential care facility for the elderly next to IMC. No prior musical experience necessary. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For info and RSVP contact Paul at [sonasstrummers@gmail.com](mailto:sonasstrummers@gmail.com).
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group (#1)**—Fridays, April 18, May 16, June 20, 7pm to 8:30pm. We are reading *Awakening to Joy: 10 Steps That Will Put You on the Road to Real Happiness*, by James Baraz and Shoshana Alexander. Grounded in Buddhist principles, and daily life exercises! IMC Meditation Hall. Anne Foster, [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com), 650/591-1285.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Gig at Hopkins Manor**—Sunday, April 27, May 25, June 29, 1:30 to 2:30pm. 1235 Hopkins Ave. Come sing and play the ukulele for the residents of Hopkins Manor. (See above).
- **Creative Writing Group**— Practice the Dharma by writing and sharing your work with a supportive group. All levels of writing experience welcome. For info, dates and location contact Sydney Reuben, [sydneyreuben@yahoo.com](mailto:sydneyreuben@yahoo.com)
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group (#2)**—Fridays, April 25, May 30, June

27, 7 to 8:30pm. We will be reading Charlotte Joko Beck's *Nothing Special: Living Zen*. Books available at Kepler's for a discount. IMC Meditation Hall. Bill Kostura, [saddhadhamma@gmail.com](mailto:saddhadhamma@gmail.com), 650/815-1174.

- **Dharma Friends Steering Committee Planning Meeting**—Sun, May 4, 11am to 12:15pm. Plan events for July, August, September. IMC conference room. Come join us! Shelly Gordon, [sgordon@g2comm.com](mailto:sgordon@g2comm.com), 650/856-1607.
- **Mindful Nature Walk at Wunderlich Park**—Sat, May 10, 9am. Moderate 7-mile walk in sun and shade; includes walking meditation period. Dress in layers, wear sunscreen. Heavy rain cancels. Carpool from IMC. Ryan Delaney, 650/325-7795.
- **Dharma Friends Brunch**—Sunday, May 18, 11am. Gather by the kitchen following the morning sitting. We will choose a local restaurant for brunch. Wendy Alger [wendyalger@gmail.com](mailto:wendyalger@gmail.com).
- **Cinema Sanity**—at least 1 film during the quarter. 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](mailto:James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov), 650/968-6168.

### OTHER LOCAL SITTING GROUPS

#### BERKELEY VIPASSANA GROUP WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN

Wednesdays 7:15 to 9:15pm at St. Clement's Episcopal Church.

Info at [www.mettadharm.org](http://www.mettadharm.org).

#### INSIGHT MEDITATION SOUTH BAY

WITH SHAILA CATHERINE Tuesdays 7:30 to 9pm. 2094 Grant Rd, Mtn View, [www.imsb.org](http://www.imsb.org).

#### COASTSIDE VIPASSANA MEDITATION GROUP

Wednesdays in Montara, 7 to 8:30pm. Info at

[www.coastsidevipassana.org](http://www.coastsidevipassana.org).

#### LOS GATOS SITTING GROUP WITH KIM ALLEN

Sunday, 10:15 to 11:30am, meditation and dharma talk. Meet at Yoga Source, 16185 Los Gatos Blvd. Drop-in; no membership needed. Contact Kim Allen, [kimall@mindspring.com](mailto:kimall@mindspring.com).

#### INSIGHT MEDITATION CENTRAL VALLEY

WITH LORI WONG. Sunday 12:30 to 2:30pm in Modesto, Monday 6:30 to 8:30pm in Stockton, and Tuesday 6:30 to 8:30pm in Modesto. For locations and info, go to [imcv.org](http://imcv.org).

#### OAKLAND MONDAY DROP-IN MEDITATION GROUP

WITH REBECCA DIXON. Instruction 5:15pm; meditation / discussion 5:30 to 6:30pm. Unitarian Church, 14th/Castro. 510/482-2032.

#### PALO ALTO DROP-IN MINDFULNESS GROUP

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

#### SAN JOSE SANGHA

1041 Morse St. Contact Berget Jelane, 408/255-2783, [bbjelane@gmail.com](mailto:bbjelane@gmail.com), website [sanjoseinsight.org](http://sanjoseinsight.org).

• Wednesday Evening Sitting, 7:30 to 9pm..

• Cultivating Happiness as We Age, Saturday, April 12, 9:30am to 3:30pm.