



The Four Faces of Love: The Brahmaviharas Gil Fronsdal

The heart has four faces. Each sees the world in a different way and speaks with a different purpose. Yet, as each aspect belongs to the same heart, they are inseparable, like the four directions of a compass.

This image of a four-faced heart is borrowed from the Buddhist myth of the god Brahma, who had four faces, one for each of the four kinds of unselfish love championed in Buddhism. In the language of the Buddha, these are *metta*, *karuna*, *mudita*, and *upekkha*. In English they are commonly known as loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. Because the god Brahma is said to dwell (*vihara*) in these four forms of love, they are known as Brahmaviharas, translated in English as “divine abidings.”

We all have the potential to abide in loving-kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. When we know how to do this, these capacities become an inner wealth, more valuable than any outer riches. To tap into this wealth, Buddhism teaches practices for developing each of the four Brahmaviharas. Love doesn't have to be dependent on ideal circumstances; rather, we can learn to recognize, awaken, and develop it so it becomes the natural dwelling place of the heart.

In Buddhist mythology Brahma is a powerful god; in Buddhist practice the four Brahmaviharas are associated with strength. To develop them well we must become strong, even courageous. When developed, the Brahmaviharas become potent forces through which we protect ourselves and others. They are powerful aids for resolving conflict, promoting healing, and creating social harmony. As strengths they contribute to confidence in all areas of life.

In their simplest forms the Brahmaviharas are attitudes experienced in ordinary, everyday life. Seeing a small puppy can evoke loving-kindness: a feeling of appreciation, goodwill, and friendliness. If the puppy gets hurt we may feel compassion: a sense of kindness, caring, and a sincere wish for the puppy not to suffer. If the puppy is frolicking around, we may feel appreciative joy: delighting in the happiness the dog feels. And when the puppy is overeager to run after a squirrel and then deflated when it can't catch it, we can feel the Brahmavihara of equanimity: we can clearly love the dog with a stability that keeps us from becoming elated or distressed by its ups and downs.

When the Brahmaviharas become strong, they are much more profound than our responses to a puppy. They enable us to keep love at the forefront in all our social encounters, with

anyone we meet, no matter how challenging. With loving-kindness we learn how to maintain a healthy goodwill for those who are hostile, to have a balanced compassion for those encountering tragic suffering, to experience a stress-free joy when celebrating others, and to feel an equanimous love for those we cannot help.

All these capacities are said to be of the “heart” because they are dispositions deeper and more stable than thoughts about loving. They are deep when not entangled in the shallowness of selfishness, and they're stable when not compromised by fear, aversion, and craving. They involve attitudes and intentions that arise out of the social instincts embedded in our physiology, neurology, and psychology. Because they appear easily when we are at ease, they can feel like the natural working of our inner life. When we're free from stress, the presence of any of the Brahmaviharas is deeply satisfying and nurturing, supporting relaxation and a sense of wellbeing.

Each Brahmavihara is appropriate and right for a particular kind of circumstance. In uncomplicated social encounters we can offer the face of friendliness and kindness. When people are suffering we approach with compassion. When people are happy and successful, our appreciative joy shares in their good fortune. And when the other three faces of love are not appropriate or helpful, it is equanimous love that is present for the situation.

Part of the power of the Brahmaviharas comes from the intention to love, not just the feelings or emotions themselves. When we appreciate others, *metta* is a basic goodwill that wishes wellbeing for others. When their suffering moves us, *karuna* is the wish for that suffering to end. When their joy delights us, *mudita* is the wish for their joy to continue. And in the particular circumstances when we have no role in the welfare of others, *upekkha* is the wish that we ourselves not become agitated while keeping our hearts open and responsive, perhaps available for when we can help. Each time these intentions are evoked they become stronger and more readily available to motivate our actions in the world.

Meditating on the Brahmaviharas

While the Brahmaviharas are natural human capacities, they may be underdeveloped and unavailable when they are most needed. So that they can be available at all times, specific practices, especially meditation practices, are useful for developing each of them. One of the principles of doing Brahmavihara medi-

Continued inside



SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

MEETING DIVINE MESSENGERS THROUGH THE SATI CENTER CHAPLAINCY PROGRAM

I completed the 11-month long Sati Center Chaplaincy program held at IMC in 2016. This program was rich, deeply transformative and rewarding for me. I'm glad to share some perspectives about the program here.

The program systematically teaches and guides the students to develop three key areas of chaplaincy competencies: personal, interpersonal, and spiritual. It does so by combining teachings of the Ten Paramis, practical chaplaincy tools, and chaplaincy volunteering. These skills have some parallels to the teachings on the three refuges: Buddha, Dhamma, and Sangha. The personal development cultivates the inner qualities of a chaplain, such as self-awareness and mindful presence (Buddha). The interpersonal skills focus on how chaplains engage others in hospital, hospice, and prison settings (Sangha). The spiritual and religious skills deal with the capacity to meet the vast and diverse spirituality in the interfaith chaplaincy services (Dhamma). These competencies are not unique to chaplains. They are qualities of individuals who care about their own well-being as well as that of others and are willing to meet the world without contention but with boundless love and compassion.

One of the most impactful components of this program for me was going to serve in a real world environment. My internship was at Kaiser Hospital in San Jose, working with cancer and general hospital patients. Going to the hospital to meet old age, illness and death was like the Buddha leaving his palace and meeting the divine messengers. I clearly saw how unpredictable our human condition is and how much suffering there can be. I realized I no longer can live as if I will live forever. I must live fully now, not tomorrow, next week, or next year.

It was also in working at Kaiser that I met some of the most loving, kind, and courageous individuals. They were like the fourth divine messenger that the Buddha met—the recluse who was at peace in the midst of suffering. One of the cancer patients had suffered tremendous losses in her life, in addition to cancer. Yet whenever she sat in the infusion room getting her chemo, she would do Metta towards everyone—the nurses, doctors, patients, and all beings. Meeting her was one of the liveliest and happiest moments of my life. Her love for life, no matter what condition it is, was so contagious, that it was impossible not to love life after meeting her. Her compassion was profoundly radiant and touching.

I am changed by this course. Loving life and living a worthy life became a priority. I wish that everyone could have an opportunity to take this course and let the course change them, whether or not they wished to become a chaplain, .

—Ying Chen

WELCOME TO IMC'S NEWEST TEACHER ~ JOHN MARTIN

We are pleased and privileged to welcome a wonderful and warmhearted presence to IMC. John Martin is now serving as Guiding Teacher for IMC's LGBTQueer Sangha which meets the second Sunday evening of every month at 7:30pm in the IMC Conference Room. IMC's LGBTQueer Sangha is a community within a community. John states that, "my intention for the group is to share the Buddha's teachings and support sharing in community. I particularly value the interchange that occurs within our LGBTQueer Sangha. In leading LGBTQueer daylongs and retreats, I have also witnessed the power of taking refuge together in a community that supports practice."

In addition to guiding our sangha, John leads an on-going weekly meditation group in the Castro as well as an Advanced Practitioners Program group. He has had a dedicated practice while being engaged in the working world and emphasizes practice for daily life. John has also been a hospice volunteer for many years, first with the Shanti Project and more recently with Zen Hospice. John completed the Insight Meditation Center/Spirit Rock/Insight Meditation Society 4-year teacher training program in 2016. He continues to greatly value long retreat practice in his own life.

This summer John Martin will join with Noliwe Alexander in teaching IRC's first LGBTQueer residential retreat from August 10 through 13. A deep bow of gratitude to John for his dedication to our LGBTQueer dharma community!

For more information about IMC's LGBTQueer Sangha, contact imcqueersangha@gmail.com.

GREAT NEWS AT IRC!

IMC's Insight Retreat Center is now debt-free! Our \$800,000 mortgage has been forgiven!

In 2005 Barbara Ryan made the very substantial donation that allowed us to consider purchasing a retreat center property. She did so in memory of her husband, Marty Marder (1934-2001). IRC was founded on the generosity of Barbara and Marty. Once we began renovating the center, Barbara also provided us with an essential loan of \$800,000. She and Marty's children have now converted this loan into another generous donation to IRC! This momentous gift will greatly help ease the financial demands of running our donation based retreat center.

Marty was a founding member of IMC. He created IMC's "Sangha Neighbors," a group supporting community members in times of need. Those who knew him remember his great sense of humor, warmth and kindness. His goodness, generosity, and devotion to meditation practice live on in the offerings at both IMC and IRC.

We are very grateful for this act of generosity.

2016 IMC FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Dear Sangha Members, we had another good year financially at IMC. Thank you very much for your support and generosity. As all of IMC's programs are freely offered, the programs and the operation of our center are funded by donations and operated by volunteers. 2016 IMC finance is summarized as following:

2016 INCOME

Regular Donations to IMC	\$ 191,425
Year End Fund Drive	\$ 62,510
Total Income	\$253,935

2016 EXPENSES

General Operations	\$112,859
Building Operations	\$ 8,458
Total Expenses	\$121,317

With the 2016 year-end fund drive, we had a surplus of \$132,618 at the end of the year. This surplus is planned to be used toward a number of IMC projects: replacing/reinforcing the meditation hall windows including seismic improvement to the wall, enhancing our sound and recording equipment, redesigning our website, resurfacing our parking lot and supporting other Insight retreats to be offered to under-served communities. Expenses incurred during the 2016 include maintaining Audio Dharma, the IMC website, half a year's rent for the Annex, printing *The Issue at Hand* as well as quarterly newsletters, sidewalk repair and donations toward health insurance for our teachers, Gil and Andrea. Insight Retreat Center donations and expenses are accounted for separately; hence not included in this summary.

All donations to IMC or IRC may be fully tax deductible. (Our tax ID number is 77-0450217).

—With gratitude, Lydia Ridgway, IMC Treasurer

IMC'S 2017 DANA RETREAT SEED GRANT

For the last dozen years IMC has been able to offer residential retreats on a freely given basis. This means we do not charge for any of our retreats. Through the kindness of donations received, we were able to steadily offer more of these retreats. We call these "dana retreats" using the Buddhist word for generosity and gift. Five years ago we were able to buy our own retreat center and offer dana retreats year-round.

Before we started offering dana retreats we received various donations and a grant that enabled us to undertake this supportive economic model. It has been a great adventure that has inspired many people by the power of generosity, gratitude and goodwill that are the foundation of the retreats we offer.

This year IMC is in the fortunate position to be able to pass on the gift of generosity by helping others start dana retreats. We have established a fund to support other Vipassana groups through providing the initial financial support needed to begin offering all-dana retreats. These grants are intended primarily to support underserved communities and people who have limited or no access to Vipassana retreats. Applications for these grants are due May 1. For more information email IMCretreatfund@gmail.com.

The Brahmaviharas, cont'd. from front page

tation is that it's best to start by summoning each of the Brahmaviharas toward someone who easily evokes the associated attitude, intentions, and feelings. Rather than trying to artificially make ourselves feel love, we can begin these practices by recognizing how we already experience the different aspects of love. Even if it's only toward an endearing puppy, once we recognize any of these four qualities of love within ourselves, the meditation practice is to then focus on staying present with this attitude so we can get to know it better, feel it in the body and mind, and allow it to grow. A big part of meditating on one of the Brahmaviharas is developing the ability to stay focused on it without being distracted by anything else. It is learning to dwell in love.

Once we're able to have a stable, undistracted loving focus toward an easy person, the next step is to think about or imagine someone who is somewhat easy to love but not quite as easy as the first person. When we have developed a stable focus on this love, we again let it grow so it fills our body and mind. Then the next step in the practice is to progressively do the same for people who are decreasingly easy to love. Eventually, we practice cultivating love for those who are difficult—e.g., people with whom we have conflict or people who are hostile.

Because it can be challenging to cultivate love for those who have difficulty loving, the meditation practice can help us systematically and gradually discover and develop our capacity to love. This is not an easy task, but by undertaking it we can discover the healing and wisdom that makes universal love possible.

Through regular practice, it is possible to have unlimited love—that is, love which is not withheld from anyone. In deep meditation practice with the Brahmaviharas, the experience of *metta*, *karuna*, *mudita*, and *upekkha* can become, as described by the Buddha, "extensive, expanded, limitless, free from hatred and ill-will." When they radiate outward in all directions of the compass without limit, the four Brahmaviharas are called the "Four Immeasurables." It is phenomenally transformative to be absorbed in the radiance of any of these four.

The Brahmaviharas in Daily Life

Outside of meditation, the Brahmaviharas also grow as we begin to recognize and cultivate them in our ordinary life. If one of them appears, it might be possible to stay aware of it rather than becoming preoccupied and forgetful of love's presence. If we have a regular familiarity with what it's like to love, we may be able to evoke any of the Brahmaviharas when it is appropriate. The Brahmaviharas can also become a guide for our actions as we seek to discover the wise and loving thing to do in every situation. Developing the Brahmaviharas in our social life provides a double benefit. We benefit from the inner goodness they bring us, and those who are the recipients of our love benefit as well.

Insight Meditation Center

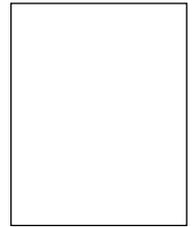
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Redwood City, CA 94062

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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 or enter through IMC's

RECOMMENDED BOOKS page.

DONATE YOUR CAR: Make a tax-deductible donation of any vehicle, working or not. *Center for Car Donations* handles pick-up and all paperwork; IMC/IRC receives 75% of sale price. Tell them you want to donate to Insight Retreat Center. Call 877/411-3662 to be guided through the process.

EBAY GIVING WORKS: Recycle your unwanted possessions and support IRC at the same time - it's tax-deductible. Go to: 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; 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, or 408/348-1385.



- **GENERAL INFORMATION:** insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com or 650/599-3456.
- **NEWSLETTER QUESTIONS:** Contact the editor at 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

April ~ June 2017

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 Afternoons, April 10 – May 8, 1:30 to 3pm with Diana Clark
- 5 Tuesday Afternoons, May 17 – June 14, 1:30 to 3pm, with Liz Powell

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.

INTERMEDIATE MINDFULNESS MEDITATION COURSE

- 4 Wednesday Evenings, April 26 – May 17, 1:30 to 3pm, with Gil Fronsdal

Building on IMC'S five-week Introduction to Mindfulness course, this four-week series introduces further instruction for mindfulness practice. Included in the class is the role of concentration,

intention, and the five strengths that support this practice. We will also discuss how to work with the five hindrances that limit the growth of mindfulness. Suitable for those who have taken the Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation course or the equivalent.

ONE DAY RETREATS

On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- April 1, 8:30am to 5pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- April 8, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Time and Our Human Condition** with Sayadaw U Jagara and Nikki Mirghafori
- April 15, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness of Mind** with Andrea Fella
- May 20, 9am to 4:30pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- June 3, 6am to 9pm, **Intensive Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- June 10, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness & Wisdom Daylong** with Andrea Fella
- June 24, 9am to 4:30pm, **Practicing with Impermanence: Like Water Flowing, Clouds Drifting** with Max Erdstein
- July 29, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Awakening to Life Through Contemplating Death** With Nikki Mirghafori

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

For more information go to www.insightretreatcenter.org/retreats.

- May 26–29, **Insight Retreat for People in Their 20's and 30's** with Max Erdstein and Kate Munding
- June 16–21, **Insight Retreat in Spanish (Español)** with Rebecca Bradshaw & Andrea Castillo
- June 25–July 9, **Two-Week Mindfulness of Mind Retreat for Experienced Students** with Andrea Fella
- July 20–23, **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Richard Shankman
- August 2–4, **Insight Retreat** with Andrea Fella and Pam Weiss
- August 17–20, **Insight Retreat for People in their 20's and 30's** with Max Erdstein and Matthew Brensilver.

SERIES PROGRAMS

DHARMA PRACTICE DAY SERIES: THE TEN PERFECTIONS WITH GIL FRONSDAL. FRIDAYS 9:30AM TO 3:30PM, APR 21, MAY 26.

April 21: Determination

May 19: Loving Kindness

June 16: Equanimity

A program of study, exploration and practice of the ten perfections (*paramis*)—the ten qualities of character which, when developed, support both Buddhist practice and compassionate involvement with others. welcome to attend any or all of the Friday programs. Bring lunch.

SPECIAL EVENTS

DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY APRIL 1, 8:30AM TO 5PM. Retreats are a wonderful environment for developing a continuity of awareness for an extended period. This retreat is meant for people who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. At the end of the day Gil gives a Dharma talk. Brief interviews will be available with Gil. Bring lunch.

HAPPY HOUR: PRACTICING LOVING-KINDNESS AND THE BRAHMAVIHARAS WITH DIANA CLARK & NIKKI MIRGHAFORI

WEDNESDAY APRIL 5, 5 TO 6PM, APRIL 12–27, 5:30 TO 6:30PM. An hour to practice and discuss the Buddhist teachings on loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity. In these weekly offerings, we will explore gradual cultivation and expansion of these heart practices, which are known to be both supportive for a mindfulness practice, and transformative in their own right. Our hour together will start with a 30-minute guided meditation, followed by a short talk on an aspect of the Brahmaviharas, concluding with discussion and Q&A.

TIME & OUR HUMAN CONDITION WITH SAYADAW U JAGARA & NIKKI MIRGHAFORI

SATURDAY APRIL 8, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. The notion of time is central to our human experience. It is our constant companion, and we experience our life within the framework of time with a variety of conscious and unconscious patterns. In this daylong, we will explore our relationship to time primarily through the vast Theravada literature, from *suttas* to commentarial analysis. In addition, the day will include guided meditations, small and large group discussions, and Q&A periods. The goal is to shed light on our implicit and often unexamined attitudes towards time, and gain a practical understanding and embodiment of the teachings that can be adopted in our daily life.

MINDFULNESS OF MIND DAYLONG WITH ANDREA FELLA

SATURDAY APRIL 15, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. Taught in the style of U Tejaniya. Practicing mindfulness on retreat is a foundation for maturing insight meditation. The simplicity, silence and support of retreats contribute to letting go of distractions that get in the way of clear seeing. During this day, we will explore a relaxed open awareness, qualities of mind, and attitudes towards one's experience. With alternate periods of sitting and walking, instructions and discussion. Aside from the instruction and discussion periods, the day will be primarily in silence. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Please bring a bag lunch.

DHARMA RETIREMENT WITH ADAM BENDELL AND BILL

MANNING. SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 1PM TO 3PM. An introduction to the IMAGINE THE DHARMA COMMUNITIES PROJECT which is creating a dharma retirement community in Northern California. The plans, implementation, and site specific details for the project will be discussed.

IMC TEMPLE SPRING CLEANING

SATURDAY, APRIL 29, 9AM TO 12PM. It's that time of year when the temple we all share receives our tender loving care. Please join in a concentrated cleaning practice to sweep away dust and dirt so that we can renew our practice with a fresh new breath. Feel free to come all or part of the morning. Look for a sign-up sheet in the community hall. Everyone is invited. Please contact Hilary at IMC.volunteerdirector@gmail.com with any questions.

DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY MAY 20, 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.

INTENSIVE DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY JUNE 6, 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. Fifteen minute interviews with Gil will be available on a sign-up basis.

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 sitting is in progress, please sit in one of the chairs in the outer hall.

Bring breakfast and lunch. Light supper provided.

MINDFULNESS AND WISDOM WEEKEND RETREAT

WITH ANDREA FELLA. SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM; AND SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 1PM TO 5PM. Taught in the style of U Tejaniya. During this retreat, we will explore a relaxed open awareness with an emphasis on exploring qualities of mind, and the attitude towards one's experience. Aside from the instruction and discussion periods, the day will be primarily in silence. It is recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. People who have attended the entire weekend retreat have the option to participate during the week with a meeting each morning from 7 to 9am (see next event for more information).

WEEKLONG DAILY LIFE PRACTICE RETREAT

WITH ANDREA FELLA. SATURDAY, JUNE 10, 9:30 TO 4:30; SUNDAY, JUNE 11, 1 TO 5PM; AND JUNE 12–16, 7 TO 9AM. During this week-long non-residential retreat 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.

SCHEDULE PG. 3

For those who have attended the entire weekend portion of the retreat, the retreat can continue during the week with a meeting each morning from 7 to 9am. These meetings will include instructions and Dharma discussion. To support the community continuing to practice together during the week, Andrea asks that you commit to attending every morning during the week.

PRACTICING WITH IMPERMANENCE: LIKE WATER FLOWING, CLOUDS DRIFTING WITH MAX ERDSTEIN

SATURDAY JUNE 24, 9AM TO 4:30PM. Insight into impermanence is liberating—it frees us to flow like unimpeded water and drift as lightly as clouds. We will explore the valuable role seeing impermanence has for mindfulness practice. Includes alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction, and a Dharma talk. For beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES

THURSDAYS 3:30 TO 5:30PM.

At least 4 days before attending either group for the first time, please contact Mick Bennett, hmichael.bennett1@gmail.com 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. 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.

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.

SATI CENTER

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

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY

WITH JENNIFER LEMAS & OTHERS. SATURDAY, MAY 6, 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 variety of other settings. The work is wonderfully challenging and satisfying. In recent years, Buddhist practitioners have been experiencing chaplaincy as a powerful opportunity to

practice engaged Buddhism, and for some, as a vocation and profession. Information about the Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training and the Institute for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy Degree Program will also be provided.

EMPTINESS: A PRACTICAL INTRODUCTION FOR MEDITATORS WITH GUY ARMSTRONG

SATURDAY, MAY 13, 9AM TO 4:30PM. Emptiness, one of the most important concepts in all Buddhist schools, refers to fundamental understandings of our human condition, deep spiritual insight, and the radical experience of liberation. We will explore the teachings and meditations on emptiness and their application in our lives. The content of the day will be drawn from Guy's forthcoming book of the same title (Wisdom, May 2017).

THE BODHISATTVA AND THE ARAHANT WITH VEN. AJAHN CHANDAK & VEN. TENZIN CHOGKYI

SATURDAY MAY 27, 9AM TO 4:30 PM. In this unique presentation, a Theravada Buddhist monk and a Vajrayana Buddhist nun will explore the common ground and differences between their respective traditions. The teachers will draw on their decades of experience to discuss approaches to the three refuges, ethics and vows, methods of meditation and what constitutes liberation. Bring lunch for yourself. If you want, bring food to participate in the lunch offering for the two monastics.

I WILL NOT PASS AWAY: REINSTATING THE BUDDHA'S VISION OF THE FOUR-FOLD SANGHA WITH AYYA

ANANDBODHI AND MINDY ZLOTNICK

SATURDAY, AUGUST 19, 1 TO 5PM. This afternoon will offer a colorful and informative overview of the history of the Buddha's vision of the four-fold sangha, and especially how women were an integral part of this vision. Ayya Anandabodhi and Mindy Zlotnick will talk about the movement of modern nuns, including how the nuns at the Aloka Vihara Forest Monastery are a local example of a group of pioneering women who are helping to revive the lineage.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY WITH GIL FRONSDAL, JENNIFER BLOCK, AND PAUL HALLER

One Friday a month, September 15, 2017–July 2018. An introduction to a Buddhist approach for volunteering and working as a chaplain in hospital, hospice, prison and community settings.

THE TEN PERFECTIONS WITH AJAAN THANISSARO (GEOFF)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 9AM TO 4:30PM & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 1:30PM TO 4PM. The Ten Perfections (*parami*) provide a useful framework for leading a meaningful life, especially for lay Dharma practice. Through readings in the Pali Canon and the teachings of the Thai Forest Tradition, along with talks, discussions, and meditations, we'll explore ways in which these perfections can be pursued effectively in an imperfect world. For Saturday, bring lunch. There will be an opportunity to offer food to the monastics.

YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

DHARMA SPROUTS (K–2ND GRADE) Led by Liz Powell 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. Contact Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend, giving first names of each participant.

DHARMA ROCKS (3RD–5TH GRADE) Led by Carla Brooke. **Third Sunday of each month at IMC, 11:15am to 12:45pm.** Interactive mindfulness meditations, games, art/ crafts, and movement. RSVP to Liz at eapowell@aol.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. **Fourth Sunday of each month, 5:15 to 7:15pm.** 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, hborison@sbcglobal.net, or 650/575-2052.

MINDFUL TEENS (AGES 13 TO 19) Led by Nirali Shah and Bruni Davila. **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 go to www.mindfulteens.net. Please RSVP Nirali or Bruni at Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com.

MINDFUL PARENTS. Second Friday of each month, 7:30 to 9pm. An opportunity for parents to practice in community and to hear from parents who are senior students or dharma teachers. Facilitated by Liz Powell. No pre-registration required. Guest Speakers: May 12, Hilary Borison; June 9, Patty McLucas.

CHARITABLE EVENTS

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE, APRIL - JUNE

IMC's LGBTQ Sangha is sponsoring a summer food drive that benefits Second Harvest food Bank. Express your generosity and compassion by donating non-perishable foods or monetary donations at shfb.org. The collection canister is located in the back of the community hall. imcqueersangha@gmail.com

Most teachings given at IMC are recorded and posted online at Audiodharma.org

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.

- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—3rd Fridays: April 21, May 19, June 16, 7pm to 8:30pm. IMC Meditation Hall. We are reading *Silence: The Power of Quiet in a World Full of Noise* by Thich Nhat Hanh. Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Playing at Hopkins Manor**—Sundays: April 23, May 21, June 25, 1:30 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. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For more information contact Paul at sonasstrummers@gmail.com.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Practice Sessions**—Sundays: April 9, May 7 and June 11, 1 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. For more information contact Paul at sonasstrummers@gmail.com.
- **Sunday Morning Brunch**—location TBD by the group. Sundays: April, 16, May 21, and June 18 at 11am. Meet outside the kitchen, by the tea and hot water dispenser. Lysanna Anderson, lysanna@xinyu.us, Christine Junge, cejunge@gmail.com.
- **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 Alicia McLucas, mclucasalicia@gmail.com and Hilary Borison, hborison@sbcglobal.net.

AFFINITY GROUPS

LGBTQUEER SANGHA

2ND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 7:30PM TO 9PM (IMC). A peer-led sitting group open to all lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender diverse, intersex and queer individuals. Co-facilitated by Sue Bachman and Joe Hayes, with Guiding Teacher John Martin. imcqueersangha@gmail.com.

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM

AT HOME IN THE WORLD: DHARMA EVENINGS FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S. WITH MAX ERDSTEIN. FIRST & THIRD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, 7:30 TO 9PM. An open, monthly group addressing Dharma themes relevant for twenty- and thirty-somethings. Through meditation, Dharma talks, and discussion we will explore how Dharma practice can be a refuge and inspiration as we make our way through the many worlds we inhabit.

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