

## Amazed to be Conscious Gil Fronsdal

I enjoy looking at old photographs of people—one hundred years old or even older. I am drawn to studying the emotional expressions on their faces and, in particular, their eyes. I feel this attraction most clearly when I come across an antique photograph with high enough resolution to show a sparkle of alertness in the eyes. The photo captures a moment—a flash of consciousness—in a person who is now long dead. That moment, so long ago, was that person's time to be conscious. This highlights for me that the present moment is my time to be alive and aware. Soon enough, my time will pass, as it has for the people in the old photographs, and this motivates me to be attentive to the unique opportunity consciousness provides.

I am amazed at our ability to be conscious. The more this sense of wonder has grown through Buddhist practice, the less I take awareness for granted. I marvel at the awareness that always operates when I'm involved in activities, thoughts, and reactions. At times I may be so absorbed in something that I'm not fully aware of being aware, but I have found that to recognize awareness as it's operating is enriching. To have this recognition as a regular and sometimes continuous experience brings forth many benefits and marvels. Being aware of being conscious is one of the great fruits of mindfulness practice.

Even so, I don't know what consciousness actually is. Dictionary definitions don't offer much help when they define it as "a state of being aware"; that just raises the question "What is awareness?" I don't view consciousness as a particular thing; instead I consider it an activity or, perhaps more likely, a synchronized interaction of many mental and sensory processes. One reason to think this is that we can be aware in many different ways, sometimes simultaneously.

The awareness needed to thread a needle is very different from the awareness we use to gaze peacefully out across an expanse of ocean. The attention needed to recognize the different fish in a river is different from simply watching the river flow by. Using our hands to find our way in the dark engages different capacities of awareness and perception than solving an involved math problem. Sometimes awareness can feel contracted—when, for example, we are caught in the grip of some intense personal challenge. Other times, it can feel expansive and spacious. Perhaps awareness is like a unit of water that takes the shape of the container it is poured into. To practice mindfulness is to exercise our choice of the form of awareness we use and how narrow or broad its scope.

In the Buddha's mindfulness teachings found in the Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness, different capacities of attention are taught for different circumstances. Most commonly he emphasizes a simple cognitive knowing or recognizing of what is happening. For example, when breathing, his instructions are to know when one is breathing a short breath and when one is breathing a long breath. In addition, he teaches the practitioner to recognize mental states that are present, and to know the particular mental processes that keep one attached and that release these attachments. When emphasizing this direct and simple knowing of experience, the Buddha does not teach actively fixing, changing, or judging experience; in a sense, he points to the transformative power of clear recognition that has become calm, stable, and continuous.

In order to be aware of one's physical body, the Buddha gave instruction in using a form of awareness that differs from simple recognition: the practice of physically experiencing or sensing the body. This bodily attention can reveal the tensions and muscular holding patterns in the body, which a person can then relax, another of the Buddha's instructions. The more intimate and penetrating one's ability to feel the body, the subtler and more foundational this relaxation is. Physical relaxation, in turn, gives access to greater sensitivity and unhindered awareness.

The Buddha also taught a higher-level cognitive awareness when he instructed meditators to "clearly comprehend" their simple physical activities as they do them. This can be understood as recognizing the purpose of an activity, its appropriateness, and the absence of delusion in doing the activity. This also includes comprehending the inherent and momentary processes of change and temporariness that characterize all experience, but which are hidden by the stories and concepts often overlaid on experience.

Another form of awareness taught in the Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness is "observation." This is a form of non-reactive, non-evaluative, equanimous watching or perceiving. It is observation that in and of itself does not interfere or interact with what is seen. For people who have a strong tendency to react and interact with present moment experience, settling back just to observe can be life-changing. It can show there is an alternative to being entangled in what is happening.

When we have the ability to observe our experience, we can then vary how we observe. Sometimes we can focus attention

*Continued inside*



# SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

## GUIDE TO IMC PROGRAMS

Slowly over the years IMC has created a set of recurring programs that can be linked together to form a progressive curriculum for beginners, intermediate students and more experienced practitioners. To participate in all these program offerings is one pathway for maturing in meditation and Buddhist practice.

### Basic Programs

- Five-week Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation course offered a number of times a year in English, Spanish and online
- Four or five-week programs on different aspects of meditation that will help you build a meditation practice: Beginner's Practice Group, The Hindrances, etc.
- Half-day retreats on Wednesdays and some Saturday mornings
- Four or five-week Intermediate Mindfulness meditation course
- Introduction to Loving Kindness Course; offered once a year
- Mindfulness and Wisdom Saturday Daylong Retreats and weeklong non-residential retreats

### Intermediate

- Monthly Saturday daylong meditation retreats
- Saturday daylong thematic retreats
- Eightfold Path Program: monthly two-hour class and monthly individual meetings with a mentor; usually from October to June.
- Seven or eight-month series on important Buddhist practices, e.g., the Seven Factors of Awakening, the Ten Perfections (*paramis*). Often on Fridays.
- Two- and three-day residential retreats at the Insight Retreat Center in Santa Cruz
- Refuge class and refuge ceremony once every two or three years

### Experienced

- Daylong intensive retreat in June and September every year; 6am to 9pm.
- Week-long retreats at the Insight Retreat Center in Santa Cruz.
- Experienced Practitioners Programs: Ethics, Meditation, and Wisdom series: Three eight-month programs offered on a three-year cycle on three main areas of Buddhist Practice: The Equivalence of Ethics and Enlightenment, Deepening Meditation Program, and Entering the Stream.
- Sati Center's online courses on the Teachings of the Buddha

### Dharma Service Programs:

- Volunteering at IMC or IRC
- Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy program
- IMC/Sati Center's Dharma Mentoring Training Program

## NEW IMC WEBSITE!

The new IMC website has been launched! It has been upgraded and redesigned to not only make it easier to access the voluminous online resources we now have, but much easier to manage for our volunteers.

Our first website was generously created by Mike Peters in 2000. Thanks to Peck Yee and Christopher Minson, by 2004 we had an early version of what has been our website for the last fifteen years. Over these years various volunteers have continued to develop it and to add content.

The new website is the result of the generous work of many volunteers. Ryan Oblak created the initial design based on the vision we had. Diana Clark organized and edited our existing content to create the architectural structure of the new site. Randima Fernando and then Matt McNeal refined, edited, rebuilt and transformed this early design to what we have now launched. Matt also built a robust server on which we now host the website. Along the way, many others supported the efforts: Jennifer Lemas, Hilary Borison, Maureen O'Brien, Jenny Liu at Giant Rabbit, Bill Cortright, Jon Kaplan, and Ines Freedman.

It takes many generous hearts to create a sangha website. Thank you all!

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## GRADUATES OF THE IMC KALYANAMITTA TRAINING PROGRAMS

A *kalyanamitta*, often translated as a "good spiritual friend," is a person with mature Buddhist practice who supports others in their practice. IMC has two *kalyanamitta* training programs taught by Andrea Fella and Gil Fronsdal: the Dharma Mentor Training Program (DMTP) and the Local Dharma Leader (LDL) Program. This Spring twenty-four people graduated from these two-year programs.

The DMTP trains mentors who meet one-on-one with practitioners to support the practitioner's personal engagement, reflection, and deepening in the Dharma teachings and practice. Many of them serve as peer mentors for IMC's Eightfold Path program. The LDL Program trains and empowers long-time practitioners to teach in local sitting groups and community meditation centers like IMC. Many of them give Dharma talks and lead introductory programs at IMC.

Graduating from the DMTP are Ali Caldwell, Betsy Morgenthaler, Fred Branaman, Jim Memmott, Johna Peterson, Lauren Silver, Mark Rabkin Peter Nau, and Valeria Galetto.

Graduating from the LDL program are Andrea Castillo, Ari Crellin-Quick, bruni dávila, Chris Clifford, David Cohen, David Lorey, Diana Clark, Eileen Messina, Jennifer Lemas, Liz Powell, Maria Straatmann, Oori Silberstein, Robert Cusick, Shelley Gault, and Ying Chen,

We are delighted with all these graduates! We are confident they will bring great benefit to others.

## Amazed to be Conscious, cont'd. from front page

narrowly; other times we can use a broad focus.

Some experiences lend themselves to a close observation where attention is intimate with the experience and the details are seen. Other experiences are best observed as if we are watching from a distance without emphasis on the details.

Interestingly, the Buddha does not teach observation as something one actively does; rather, he instructs one to abide in observation. Observation is something we allow and relax into when there is adequate mental stability and clarity. In the Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness observing phenomena is presented as a result of developing and strengthening awareness by knowing, feeling, and clearly comprehending our direct, present-moment experience. The Buddha explains that one practices mindfulness in such a way that there arises a clear observation of the coming and going, arising and passing of phenomena. In a sense, we settle back and with a relaxed and sharp awareness, we watch the river of experience flow by.

When mindfulness practice becomes even stronger, the activity of watching falls away, and there remains a form of "lucid awareness" (*patisati*). When fully developed, it is in this lucid awareness that a meditator "abides neither dependent on nor clinging to anything," having an experience of freedom in which there is neither attachment nor suffering.

One way of understanding what is meant by lucid awareness is to see it as consciousness free of attachments. Rather than believing that the purpose of Buddhist practice is to have some experience of pure or essential or non-dual consciousness, for the Buddha the goal is to be aware without attachment. It is when consciousness has no attachment that consciousness is most wonderful. The old photographs teach me that this is my time to be free.

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## AWARENESS OF SCENT AND ITS IMPACT

Some practitioners at IMC are sensitive to scents and chemicals and may become physically ill from exposure to ingredients in common personal care products.

As part of keeping our community accessible to all, we request that those who attend IMC refrain from the use of perfume, cologne, after-shave, and minimize or avoid personal care and hair styling products containing scents or the ingredient fragrance. By this compassionate act of restraint, you can help to ensure the health of all who wish to practice here.

## PARKING AT IMC

To be good neighbors, we ask that those attending IMC events do not park on the 100 block of Birch Street where IMC is located, unless you are not able to walk more than a short distance. Also, do not park in The Abigail parking lot across the street from IMC; your car may be towed.

Abundant street parking is found close to IMC: on El Camino, Brewster, Broadway, and Hopkins & Fulton. Parking further from IMC will not only help our neighbors, it will provide more parking for people for whom walking is a challenge. ~Thank you!

## AN AUSPICIOUS DAY

*The Buddha said,*

*"Don't chase the past*

*Or long for the future.*

*The past is left behind;*

*The future is not yet reached.*

*Right where it is, have insight*

*Into whatever phenomena that has arisen;*

*Not faltering and not agitated,*

*By knowing it one develops the mind.*

*Ardently do what should be done today –*

*who knows, death may come tomorrow.*

*There is no bargaining with Mortality*

*And his great army.*

*Whoever dwells thus ardent,*

*– active day and night –*

*Is, says the peaceful sage,*

*One who has an auspicious day."*

—The Buddha

from the *Bhaddekaratta*

## CHILDREN'S BOOK DRIVE

In November we begin our annual children's book drive to benefit the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. As part of their holiday food distribution, IMC will donate new or nearly-new books for several hundred children. It's a delightful way for our sangha to offer dana to our under resourced neighbors. Not only does it promote a love of reading, it brings smiles to many young faces as they select a special book for themselves and their siblings. Books from pre-school through high school ages are needed. If "nearly new", please be sure there is no writing in them or missing parts. Look for the collection box in the community hall in November. We will also need volunteers to sort the books. The date for distribution is December 13th, so please donate books or checks (made out to "The Reading Bug") by December 12th. To help or if you have questions, please contact Hilary Borison at [IMC.VolunteerDirector@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.VolunteerDirector@gmail.com).



## APPRECIATING CHLOE SCOTT (1925-2019)

Chloe Scott passed away peacefully on September 10. In the 1990s she was a much loved member of IMC who provided important contributions to the growth of our community. Before IMC moved to Redwood City, she often let us use her dance studio for Saturday daylong events and arranged for IMC to have its first office in a neighbor's home where Gil offered practice discussion (in lieu of meeting with people in parks and coffee shops). She also commissioned the sculpture of Mahapajapati that sits in IMC's community hall. She is remembered with great appreciation, love, and gratitude.

## Insight Meditation Center

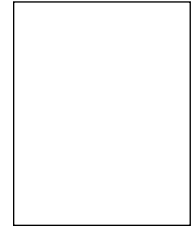
108 Birch Street

Redwood City, CA 94062

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

Email: [insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com](mailto:insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com)

650/599-3456



RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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### ON-LINE GIVING TO IMC & IRC

Most gifts to IMC and IRC are now made online! Using the “Donate Now” buttons on the IMC or IRC websites, you can make donations of any amount using a credit card, debit card, or PayPal account. The online mode of giving is quick, easy, and secure. When making a gift of dana online, you can specify gifts to IMC Teachers, IMC operations (including Audio Dharma), and/or the Insight Retreat Center.

If you have a PayPal account, a recurring monthly donation can be set up. Monthly giving provides sustained support for all IMC and IRC programs, and you can choose an amount to fit your budget. Both one-time and ongoing online giving makes it possible to continue offering the Buddha’s teachings on a dana-basis to all who seek it.

Shortly after you make your gift online, you will receive an email receipt that confirms that IMC has received your gift. And, by the end of January of the following year, IMC will email you an acknowledgement for the sum of your gifts in the previous year; this acknowledgement can be used for tax purposes.

IMC and IRC thank you for your online support!

#### 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.*

*For ways to donate go to: [www.insightmeditationcenter.org/donate/](http://www.insightmeditationcenter.org/donate/)*

### GIFTS OF APPRECIATED STOCK TO BENEFIT IMC OR IRC

Gifts of stock to IMC are a great way to support IMC and IRC while at the same time meeting your personal financial planning objectives. In particular, if you would like to reduce or eliminate tax liability on potential capital gains, consider making a transfer of appreciated stock to IMC or IRC to support the Dharma teaching and opportunities for practice. Consult with your financial advisor about whether this mode of giving might be useful to you as part of your overall financial planning; you can print out and fill in the form available on the IMC website or simply provide the information available there to your broker (please let your broker know whether you would like your gift to benefit IMC or IRC). Contact [fundraising@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:fundraising@insightmeditationcenter.org) with any questions.

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#### • 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

## October ~ December 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 Wednesday Evenings, 7:30 to 9pm, September 25 – October 23, with Gil Fronsdal
- 5 Wednesday Evenings, 7:30 to 9pm, January 15 – February 12, with Gil Fronsdal

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.

### ONE DAY RETREATS

On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- October 5, 8:30am to 5pm, Daylong with Gil Fronsdal
- October 12, 9am to 3:30pm, **Being Your Own Teacher** with Diana Clark
- October 19, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Emptiness** with Nikki Mirghafori
- November 2, 9am to 4:30pm, **Samadhi** with Max Erdstein
- November 9, 9am to 4:30pm, Daylong with Gil Fronsdal
- December 7, 8:30am to 5pm, Daylong with Gil Fronsdal
- January 11, 2020, 9:30am to 4pm, **Loving Heart, Resilient Heart** with Diana Clark and Nikki Mirghafori
- January 18, 2020, 8:30am to 5pm, Daylong with Max Erdstein
- January 25, 2020, 9am to 4:30pm Daylong with bruni dávila

### HALF-DAY RETREATS

• **SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 16 WITH DAVID LOREY**

• **SATURDAY, DECEMBER 14 WITH LIZ POWELL**

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)

### RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

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

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

- November 3–10, 1-Week **Just Sitting, Clear Seeing: the Meeting of Zen and Insight** with Max Erdstein & Brian Lesage
- November 18–24, 1-Week **Insight Santa Cruz Retreat** with Bob Stahl, Mary Grace Orr, & others
- December 8–15, 1-Week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella
- January 26–February 2, 1-Week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal, bruni dávila, & Gullu Singh
- February 22–29, 1-Week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal, Dawn Scott, & Neesha Patel

**SERIES PROGRAMS****HINDRANCES IN MEDITATION PRACTICE**

**WORKING WITH THE FIVE HINDRANCES WITH DIANA CLARK AND TANYA WISER. FOUR WEDNESDAY EVENINGS, 7:30 TO 9PM; OCT 30, NOV 6, 13 & 20.** Please join us as we explore and discuss well-known obstructions to practice, the “Five Hindrances.” In this course we’ll explore how to skillfully work with sensual desire, ill will, sloth & torpor, restlessness & worry, and doubt using mindfulness and antidotes. We’ll practice how to turn these potential stumbling blocks into stepping stones to greater ease and happiness. The course will include talks, guided meditations and discussions.

**THE EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM**

**WITH CHRIS CLIFFORD, BRUNI DÁVILA, LIZ POWELL & TANYA WISER.** The Buddha’s most explicit path of practice is the Eightfold Path— a set of eight practical approaches to bring Buddhist practice into the width and depth of our lives. The Eightfold Path Program is an introduction to each of the Eightfold factors so participants will discover how to apply each set of practices in ways that are personally meaningful.

Prerequisite: Completion of IMC’s Introduction to Meditation course or equivalent.

All are welcome to attend the Sunday sessions below as well as the Mindfulness Daylong on Saturday, April 25. Please register to receive course materials by email. A longer application is required to be assigned a mentor in addition to the group meetings. The form for both purposes is found under the Eightfold Path Program notice on the Special Events page of IMC’s website. Applications for mentoring due by September 1.

**2019**

Right View—Oct 6; Right Intention—Nov 3; Right Speech—Dec 1

**2020**

Right Action—Jan 12; Right Livelihood—Feb 16; Right Effort—Mar 15; Right Mindfulness—Apr 19; Mindfulness Daylong at IMC—Sat, Apr 25, (9:30am to 4pm); Right Concentration—May 17; Concluding Daylong Retreat at Insight Retreat Center, Santa Cruz—Sat, June 13 (9:30am to 4pm)

**10 SUPREME SUPPORTS FOR MEDITATION**

**WITH CHRIS CLIFFORD, DAVID COHN AND JENNIFER LEMAS**  
**FRIDAYS, 9AM TO NOON: SEP 13, OCT 11, NOV 8, DEC 13, JAN 17, FEB 14, MAR 13, APR 17, MAY 15, JUN 19**

The ten perfections (*paramis*) are ten supreme qualities of character which, when developed, support both Buddhist practice and compassionate involvement in the world. This 10-month series is suitable for in-person participation or online study and practice with emailed readings and reflections and recorded in-class teachings and discussion. Sign-up forms to receive course materials are available on the IMC website. Drop-in participation is welcomed. Participants may bring a brown bag lunch.

**SPECIAL EVENTS****DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 5, 8:30AM TO 5PM.** 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.

This retreat is meant for people who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given.

**BEING YOUR OWN TEACHER WITH DIANA CLARK**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 12, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM.** One goal of Buddhist meditation is for meditators to become their own teachers. This is done by learning to wisely evaluate one’s own meditation and recognize the path of practice as it appears for us. In the big picture, one learns to recognize which practice and how to practice given what is happening in the present. Moment by moment in meditation, being one’s own teacher is choosing how to meet and practice with whatever is arising; it is recognizing what is helpful and not helpful, what freeing and not freeing. Join us as we explore the Buddha’s guidance on evaluating our practice so that we might find greater ease and freedom. The day will include teachings, guided meditation, and small group discussions. Please bring lunch.

**EMPTINESS WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI**

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 19, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.** What is the teaching on emptiness? The third century Indian Buddhist master Nagarjuna said: “Emptiness wrongly grasped is like picking up a poisonous snake by the wrong end.” An incorrect understanding of this teaching can lead to nihilism or spiritual bypass. A wise discernment of this subtle teaching can serve as a liberating way to perceive phenomena and the self, leading to freedom and compassion. In this daylong, we approach teachings on emptiness both intellectually, through lectures and discussions, and experientially (to the extent possible) through guided meditations. Bring a bag lunch.

**SAMADHI WITH MAX ERDSTEIN**

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 9AM TO 4:30PM** Still, flowing water: cultivating samadhi for wholeness, healing, and Insight. To train in samadhi is to center, steady, and unify the heart and mind. The Buddha taught that one who cultivates samadhi sees “things as they are.” This one-day sitting will offer guided practices and teachings to support a softness, silence and stillness that nourishes our being and allows us to open to the flow of life exactly as it is. Beginners and experienced meditators welcome. Please bring a bag lunch.

### DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 9, 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.

### DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 7, 8:30AM TO 5PM.** 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. This retreat is meant for people who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given.

### NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION WITH TANYA WISER

**TUES, DECEMBER 31, 2019, 7:30PM TO WED, JANUARY 1, 2020, 12:15AM.** Join us on New Year's Eve for an alternative celebration of the ending of 2019 and the beginning of 2020. We will enjoy sitting and walking meditation; some time for reflection and sharing; refreshments; bring any holiday leftovers you wish to share; and end with chanting and ringing the bell 108 times. It's a tradition at IMC. Please come whenever you can and stay as long as you like. The only thing we ask is not to leave and return. A schedule will be posted at the door. See you then!

### YOGA AND MEDITATION HALF-DAY RETREAT

**WITH TERRY LESSER SATURDAY, JANUARY 4, 2020, 9AM TO 12:30PM** 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 perhaps 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.

*Terry Lesser has been teaching weekly classes and retreats at IMC since 1995.*

### LOVING HEART, RESILIENT HEART

**WITH DIANA CLARK AND NIKKI MIRGHFORI SATURDAY, JANUARY 11, 2020, 9:30AM TO 4PM.** The more we're able to soften and open the heart to gentleness, care, and love for ourselves and others, the more we're able to allow the emotional entanglements of our lives to untangle. Join us as we explore practices that support heart-opening and increase our capacity to bounce back from adversity and be with the vicissitudes that life brings us. Our time together will include brief teachings, guided meditations, and opportunities for questions, as well as individual practice discussions with the teachers. Please bring a bag lunch.

## 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.

## 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.

### DELVING INTO THE WISDOM OF THE BUDDHA:

**UNDERSTANDING THE BUDDHIST SUTTAS WITH BHANTE SUJATO. SATURDAY, OCTOBER 26, 9AM TO 4PM.** Bhante Sujato is the first translator of the entire collection of the four main collection of the Buddha's teachings (the Pali "Nikayas"). In this daylong he will share insights he has gained through this project. This will include discussing his approach to framing the 2,500 year old Buddhist teachings in a contemporary voice as well the broader historical context of the origin of these teachings in India. The day will include an introduction to the suttas and short periods of meditations.

### STUDY AND PRACTICE THE BUDDHA'S PATH OF GRADUAL TRAINING ONLINE COURSE WITH DAVID LOREY, DIANA CLARK, KIM ALLEN AND YING CHEN

Saturdays, Nov 2, 9, 16, and 23, 8:30 to 10am PST  
How does the mind transform from a condition of clinging, identifying, and suffering to the knowledge and experience of liberation? As part of the answer to this question the Buddha taught a path of training that unfolds gradually, each step leading onward and supporting subsequent steps which leads to liberation. Based on two suttas from the Middle Length Discourses, our interactive sessions will include discussions, teachings, and practices that help us contemplate and work with the Buddhist path in our own life. This course is part of the Sati Center's "Study & Practice" series. Registration info at [Sati.org](http://Sati.org).

## 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**

### THANKSGIVING MORNING YOGA & SITTING MEDITATION

- November 28, 8:30 to 10:30am. Everyone welcome.

### YOGA & MEDITATION HALF-DAY RETREAT

- Saturday, January 4, 2020, 9am to 12:30pm.

### 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).

### 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.

### 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).

#### 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, OCT 20, NOV 15, DEC 20, 7 TO 8:30PM**

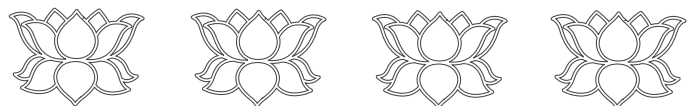
IMC Meditation Hall. In July we start *What's Beyond Mindfulness* by Stephen Fulder. Contact Anne Foster, [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com), 650/591-1285 for information.

#### SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS PRACTICE SESSIONS

**SUNDAYS, NOV 3, DEC 1, 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

**SUNDAYS, OCT 13, NOV 17, DEC 15, 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. 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).



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