

## Community as a Jewel Gil Fronsdal

*Note from Gil: A version of this article first appeared in 2000. We are reprinting it now as we emerge from the pandemic to highlight the importance of community as a priceless incubator for Dharma practice. May we all expand and deepen our sangha connections in 2023.*

Buddhist practice is supported, nourished, and protected by a community of fellow practitioners, i.e., the Sangha. This idea is expressed in the notion of Sangha as one of the three “refuges” for those who walk the path of liberation. Together the three refuges of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha have such great value they are also known as the Three Jewels that can provide tremendous inspiration.

Each refuge is equally important, together they are like the three legs of a tripod; to stand upright each one needs the other two. Even so, there is a tendency in Western Buddhist circles to emphasize the Buddha and the Dharma. People tend to be much more interested in the Awakening that is represented by the Buddha, and the practice and teachings represented by the Dharma. The important role that community has in a life of practice is often undervalued or overlooked.

Practicing alone can be difficult. Buddhist practice often changes our values and priorities. The values of virtue, contentment, peace, generosity, love and compassion that grow out of the practice can be in conflict with the values of consumerism, ambition, selfishness and insensitivity found in much of our popular culture. A community of practitioners offers mutual support for living by alternative values that may be undermined or overshadowed in some areas of our society.

Also, a Buddhist community, especially one with mature and experienced practitioners, can function as a mirror allowing a person to see themselves more clearly. This works well when compassionate members of the Sangha don't support or participate in the many conceits or fear-based attempts for approval-seeking and personal delusions we may bring to our interactions. When such Sangha members respond with kindness, wisdom, pauses and wise silence, we may be able to see more clearly the attachments we have. While this type of mirroring may also come with feelings of discomfort, the self-understanding it brings is invaluable.

In addition, a Sangha may be the home of people with personal maturity, compassion, and peace who inspire us in our own practice. They can function as encouragement to continue practicing

when practicing the Dharma is difficult. Their behavior can provide practical lessons in how to express the values and teachings of Buddhism in life. We might learn more from watching some of these exemplars than from reading books on Buddhism.

Importantly, it might be in the example of other practitioners that we gain confidence in how worthwhile and transformative the path of liberation is.

Of course, other communities besides Buddhist ones can provide helpful mirroring and modeling. However, there is a dedication that a Buddhist community tries to live by that may well be different than most other groups. A Sangha is a place where anyone can come and practice. Everyone interested in the practice is welcome. There is no need to be a Buddhist. If we end up in conflict with someone or we don't like what they have said or done, we don't banish that person from the community. Rather we bring mindful investigation to the conflict. We look for opportunities for healing, reconciliation and for wise ways of respecting one another and making room for differences. We try to notice any attachments, fears, projections and confusions that unnecessarily complicate a conflict. This all expresses a dedication of inclusion in a Sangha that aims to be a community safe for everyone to continue along a path of spiritual maturation.

For the same reason, a Sangha is also a safe place to experiment with new ways of being. As practice relaxes our insecurities and unhelpful habits of behavior, a Sangha can be, for example, a place for compulsive speakers to explore speaking less, or inhibited speakers to explore new ways of speaking up.

While there can be many benefits to practicing with others, we also must be aware of possible problems. As soon as a group of people gathers as a community, a culture is created, and cultures always have blind spots, or “shadows.” If we avoid being involved with a community because it has a shadow, no community will ever be adequate. If we relate only to the positive qualities of a community, we are doing ourselves a disservice. If we relate only to the shadow, we are also limiting ourselves. A function of Buddhist practice is to clarify and draw out the shadow and see it in the light of wisdom and compassion. Without honest practice, a culture's shadow can remain hidden. A function of a Buddhist community is to receive help from others in being honest in our social relationships. It is important to speak up about issues one sees.

*Continued inside*



## SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

*Editor: In this issue we introduce a new series of occasional articles, "Around IMC", to share with the broader community more in depth the background and happenings in IMC's vibrant programs and groups. Find your place at IMC!*

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### **AROUND IMC: AT HOME IN THE WORLD—DHARMA FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20s AND 30s**

In 2013 Max Erdstein had just started teacher training. Reflecting on his sangha experience with Gil, Max started a program for younger adults. The objective: provide a place for people in their 20s and 30s to share in meditation, teaching, and community. Quickly the guiding question for the group became clearer, and inspired the program's name: what is it to be at home in the world? How does one bridge "home" and "world"?

The group started meeting monthly, and eventually weekly (except second Sundays). Since its start, twenty to thirty people participate, most in their late 20s to early 30s. Today there are hundreds of people in the program's participant list.

The meeting format is a guided meditation; a short teaching; and then time for small groups to connect and to share responses to discussion prompts. For Max, the heart of the meetings are the breakout sessions of about four people each, in-person or on Zoom. New participants note that there is no other place where within thirty minutes they can be comfortably having a sincere and deep conversation with strangers.

Zen Buddhist master Dogen taught, "To study the Buddha Way is to study the self." While the group is a place to meet others, it is also a place to meet oneself. Whether a new or experienced practitioner, this dharma group holds up a mirror to the participants: how are we in the world? How are we in relationships, in our hopes and fears? Conversing is its own valuable practice: what is it to be mindful in communication? What is it to listen with wholehearted attention, to be attuned to the group's rhythm, to know how and when to share?

The program has inspired participants to join in-person retreats. In 2015 Max and Gil led the first week-long in-person retreat for people in their 20s and 30s. Judging by the waiting list this retreat filled a huge need; it is now a yearly event. Similarly, participants seek other retreats co-led by Max. The March 2023 retreat led by Mathew Brensilver and Max had many participants in their 20s and 30s.

Moving meetings to Zoom in 2020 didn't affect their spirit and energy. It's a different experience: less eye contact, serendipity, casualness—no option for hanging out at IMC until well past the end of a meeting. However, online meetings collapsed geography and expanded the program's community: today about 50% are in the Bay Area, 40% elsewhere in the US, and 10% are international. As pandemic restrictions receded, the local program community restarted participant-led dharma events, like home meetings,

book groups, and hikes. These events connect people and reinforce the community's social fabric. The group has already restarted in-person meetings, with plans to make the first Sunday meeting regularly in-person, and perhaps eventually half Zoom and half in-person meetings. Max often invites guest teachers such as Bruni Davila and Tanya Wiser, who offer wonderfully relevant teachings for this group.

If you're in your 20s or 30s and interested please see the Event Calendar on the IMC website and come to one of these friendly Dharma evenings!

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### **AROUND IMC: HAPPY HOUR—PRACTICING LOVING-KINDNESS**

Joseph Goldstein, one of the first American Vipassana teachers, famously said that practicing Insight without metta (loving-kindness) is like riding a bicycle without air in the tires—a rough ride!

In early 2017 Nikki Mirghafori and Diana Clark saw a need for a regular metta-centered program at IMC. Practices of the heart not only support Insight practice and the cultivation of wisdom, they are transformative in their own right. When our attitude is one of friendliness towards ourselves and others, the world feels like a friendly place. Our minds naturally feel at peace and ease. And we feel happier, hence the name: Happy Hour.

In April of that year, a weekly Happy Hour offering at IMC started on Wednesday evenings. The local participation grew from 5 to 20 in the first three years. And then Covid shutdowns arrived. It is well-studied that *metta* and compassion practices are an antidote to feelings of loneliness and isolation. In April of 2020, sensing the need for connection and community in the face of the pandemic, Happy Hour moved online, keeping the 6 to 7 pm Pacific time slot, but expanded to every weekday. Over the next three years, the sangha grew to be national, including every US time zone, and international, including Canada, Asia, Latin America, and often Europe. Average session attendance has grown to 45 on Zoom, and 40 to 80 on Zoom plus YouTube.

The teachings center on the Brahma Viharas, *metta* (loving kindness), *karuna* (compassion), *mudita* (vicarious joy), or *upekkha* (equanimity)—and offshoots like gratitude and forgiveness practice. Following a dharmette and guided meditation, the Zoom participants are invited to join 3–4 person breakout groups to connect with each other and to share practice reflections. The meeting ends with the teacher responding to comments and questions.

For many, Happy Hour meetings have become their primary connection to practice. Many regular participants report that their relationship to self, loved ones, and the world has become kinder, more patient and spacious. Hundreds of breakout groups later, the community's practice has matured. Newcomers often comment on the goodwill and authenticity felt in the breakout rooms.

Happy Hour sessions are available in the IMC website's Audio Dharma page. There are now several extended practice series. For instance, a complete collection covering all the Brahma Vihara practices and categories (recorded January 5th to March 12th, 2021) can be found at [www.bit.ly/HHEBV](http://www.bit.ly/HHEBV) or by going to [AudioDharma.org](http://AudioDharma.org) and searching for "Happy Hour Series".

With the pandemic receding, there are new opportunities to enhance online Happy Hour meetings with in-person retreats. For example, Nikki and Diana will be leading a weeklong retreat at IRC from August 31st to September 4th, and Nikki will be teaching a daylong retreat at IMC on September 30.

Air in bicycle tires is not a luxury. It is a necessity. Heart practices are not just for our own happiness and freedom, but for the sake of all those whose lives we touch directly and indirectly. Practicing kindness connects us to our common humanity. Please see the Event Calendar on the IMC website and take a first step—join us for Happy Hour!

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### **EARTH CARE: REDWOOD CITY COMMUNITY SERVICE**

On April 15th IMC's Earth Care team participated in Redwood City's Spring 'Pride and Beautification CleanUp Day'. The Earth Care team members cleaned up along the creeks of Redwood City, hauling out several bags of trash. The event was an opportunity to care for our community, our planet, and to help the thriving of biodiversity in the area. The next clean-up activity in Redwood City is scheduled in the Fall. The Earth Care team plans to organize volunteers and to participate at the event—join us! The Earth Care team is formed to practice engaged Buddhism by caring for the planet's ecology in a meaningful way. The group meets at IMC on the last Saturday of every month at 8:30 am.

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### **ENTERING THE STREAM WITH GIL FRONSDAL Seven Daylong Zoom Classes and a Three-Day Zoom Retreat 9am to 4pm, about once a month**

This eight-month program provides experienced practitioners an opportunity to delve into some of the deeper teachings of our Buddhist tradition in a community of other committed practitioners. We will discuss core principles and insights including aspects of liberation and awakening. Includes required monthly readings and short reflective essays. This is the "wisdom program" of a three year cycle of programs for experienced practitioners focused on the three trainings of Ethics, Samadhi, and Wisdom.

**Participation by selection.** Application available on IMC website in July. Pre-requisites: at least five years of Insight Meditation practice, five seven-day (or longer) silent Vipassana retreats, and completion of IMC's Eightfold Path Program or its equivalent.

Dates 2023–2024:

Daylong sessions: Monday, Oct 2; Fridays, Oct 27, Dec 8, Jan 19, Mar 29; Saturday, May 4.

Three-day Zoom Retreat: Wednesday, Feb 28 – Friday, Mar 1

### **Community as a Jewel, cont'd. from front page**

One of the common shadows of Buddhist communities is anger. This is in great part because Buddhists value kindness and compassion. And the more a group of people values kindness and compassion, the easier it is for anger and hostility to be pushed into the shadows. People then become reluctant to show this side of themselves, sometimes even to themselves. One function of mindfulness practice is to shine a light into these shadows. However, even though developing personal mindfulness may reveal some of what we have been overlooking in ourselves, a Sangha that brings mindfulness to its own social dynamics can strengthen the practice of each Sangha member.

Life is comprised of many encounters and we can learn about ourselves in each of these encounters. In relation to Buddhist practice, we look at what we bring to each encounter. How do we allow other people to encounter us, and how do we encounter them? To meditate and to settle on oneself, and encounter the world from that settled place is a wonderful thing. A practice community is a place to begin learning to bring that settled place into the rest of our lives. It is a place where our wisdom and inner freedom can be met and supportively mirrored by others. The more mature practitioners in our Sangha the more facets there are to our Sangha jewel.

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*A friend who is a helper;*

*A friend when we are happy or sad;*

*A friend who advises what's beneficial;*

*And a friend with loving care;*

*In truly knowing these four friends,*

*A wise person*

*Attends to them*

*As a mother her own child.*

(Sigalovada Sutta)

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### **SATI CHAPLAINCY TRAINING IN-PERSON AND ONLINE**

Gil Fronsdal, with Jennifer Block, and Paul Haller, have now taught the yearlong Introduction to Buddhist Chaplaincy Training for twenty years. This is a training in offering compassionate care in relationship to people's spiritual life, both Buddhist and of other religions. It is a solid spiritual foundation for receiving professional training to be a chaplain. It is also a valuable training for providing compassionate care in a Buddhist sangha, in volunteer roles, and in one's relationship to people in daily life.

From September 2023 through July 2024 the Chaplaincy Training program will be offered in-person at IMC as before. In addition, a parallel version will be offered online by Vanessa Able, a graduate and adjunct faculty for the in-person program. The chaplaincy teachings of Jennifer, Paul, and Gil will be part of the online program. More information at [Sati.org](http://Sati.org).

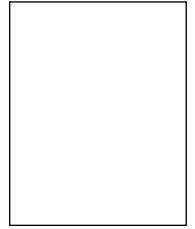
## Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

Redwood City, CA 94062

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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### DANA SUPPORTS IMC

IMC continues a 2,600-year-old Buddhist tradition of providing the teachings freely to all who are interested. IMC has no paid staff and is run entirely by volunteers. All financial support comes from the generosity of people who value what we do. Tax-deductible donations support all expenses, including programs, publications, website, the Insight Retreat Center, and AudioDharma. Teachers receive no salary and are supported by teacher dana, which isn't tax-deductible.

We at IMC are very grateful for all the support we receive, and are inspired by how beautifully Dharma practice develops when it does so in a field of generosity and gratitude!

To donate, please go to [www.insightmeditationcenter.org/donate/](http://www.insightmeditationcenter.org/donate/). If you have any questions or would like to donate in a different way, please email [fundraising@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:fundraising@insightmeditationcenter.org), or call (650) 260-8674.

### IMC MASK REQUIREMENT ENDS

The requirement to wear masks when indoors at IMC ended on June 1. We encourage anyone wishing to continue wearing a mask, to do so.

We request that anyone with cold or flu symptoms to not attend IMC programs in person. If you believe you are no longer sick, we request you wear a mask until you no longer have symptoms.



#### • GENERAL INFORMATION:

[contact@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:contact@insightmeditationcenter.org) or 650/599-3456.

• **CONNECT:** To sign up for our **UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS** emails, go to the IMC website and click on the **EMAIL SIGN-UP** link. To receive this newsletter by mail: sign up by clicking on **NEWSLETTER**.

#### 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, please 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 and 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!



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

July ~ September 2023

## WEEKLY MEDITATION AND TALKS

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### IN-PERSON AT IMC

#### MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Diana Clark or guest teachers, 7:30 to 9pm. A 45-minute sitting and a 45-minute Dharma talk.

#### WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

Sitting and walking meditation with Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers. 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

At 12:15 we have an informal lunch and discussion outdoors in the parking lot. Everyone welcome (bring bag lunch).

#### THURSDAY EVENINGS: MEDITATION FOR EVERYONE

With Tanya Wisner or guest teachers, 6:30 to 8pm

Join us for encouragement and inspiration from a changing combination of silent and guided meditations, Dharma thoughts and teachings, small group discussions, and opportunities to ask questions of teachers. Suitable for beginners and experienced beginners.

#### 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

## MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

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**IN-PERSON AT IMC** (Details under Special Events)

#### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- Saturday July 22, with Tanya Wisner, 9am to 3:30pm. (See details in Special Events)
- Saturday, August 12, 9am to 4:30pm with Bruni Davila (See details in Special Events)

**ON ZOOM** (See details in Special Events)

- 5 Wednesdays, August 2–30, 7 to 8:30pm, in Chinese with Ying Chen

## ONE DAY RETREATS

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### ON SATURDAYS, IN-PERSON AT IMC:

- August 26, 10am to 4:30pm, Embodying Awareness: Daylong Mindfulness Meditation Retreat with Dawn Neal
- September 16, 8:30am to 5pm, Daylong Retreat with Max Erdstein
- September 30, 9:30am to 4:30pm, Daylong Metta Retreat with Nikki Mirghafori

### ON SATURDAYS, ONLINE THRU IMC:

- July 15, 9:30am to 3:30pm, The Heavenly Abodes with Liz Powell

### ON SATURDAYS, ONLINE THRU IRC:

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

- July 29, 9am to 4:30pm with Gil Fronsdal
- August 19, 9am to 4:30pm with Ying Chen
- September 2, 9am to 4:30pm with Bruni Dávila
- October 7, 9am to 4:30pm with Liz Powell

## SATURDAY HALF-DAY RETREATS

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### IN-PERSON AT IMC:

- July 1, 9:30am to 12:15pm, Mindfulness Meditation and Practice with Tanya Wisner

**ONLINE** (See IMC website Calendar for Zoom link)

- September 2, 9:30am to 12:45pm with Liz Powell, Mindfulness Meditation

## WEEKLY ONLINE PROGRAMS

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See website calendar for links for the following programs:

- **MONDAY THRU FRIDAY MORNING SITTING AND TALK** with Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers, 7 to 7:45am. On YouTube
- **MONDAY THRU FRIDAY EVENING HAPPY HOUR: LOVING KINDNESS PRACTICE** with Nikki Mirghafori, Liz Powell and others, 6 to 7pm. Guided Meditation teaching, and discussion on loving-kindness. On YouTube and/or Zoom
- **TUESDAY MORNING SITTING, REFLECTION, & DISCUSSION** with Dawn Neal and others, 9:30 to 10:45am. 30-minute sitting, followed by a reflection and discussion. On Zoom
- **MARTES EN LA NOCHE DHARMA EN ESPAÑOL**, con Andrea Castillo, 7:30 a 9pm. Meditación y pláticas de Dharma en Español. On Zoom
- **THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND Q&A**, with Ari Crellin-Quick, Lienchi Tran, and others, 7:30 to 8:30pm. A sitting followed by a short reflection and discussion. On Zoom

## RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

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

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

- July 24 – 29, **6-day Earth, Water, Fire, Air, Space: A Practice-and-Study Retreat** with Kim Allen, Diana Clark, David Lorey, and Ying Chen
- August 9 – 13, **5-day Insight Retreat** with Andrea Castillo and Kim Allen
- August 22 – 27, **6-day BIPOC Insight Retreat** with Bruni Dávila and Noliwe Alexander
- August 31 – September 4, **5-day Metta Retreat** with Nikki Mirghafori and Diana Clark
- September 10 to 30, 3-week **Insight Retreat for Experienced Practitioners** with Gil Fronsdal, assisted by Ines Freedman (Also available as Webcast/Zoom)

## SCHEDULE PG. 2

- October 5 to 8, 4-day **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Diana Clark
- October 15 to 22, 1-week **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal, Liz Powell, and Francisco Gable (Also available as Webcast/Zoom)
- October 29 to November 5, 1-week **Insight Retreat** with Max Erdstein and Matthew Brensilver

### ONLINE ONLY

- July 19 to 23, 5-day Online Insight Retreat with Ines Freedman and Shelley Gault

## SERIES PROGRAMS

### ENTERING THE STREAM WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SEVEN DAYLONG ZOOM CLASSES, OCT 2023 THRU MAY 2024, 9AM TO 4PM: MON OCT 2, FRIDAYS: OCT 27, DEC 8, JAN 19, FEB 9, MAR 29; SAT MAY 4, PLUS 3-DAY ZOOM RETREAT: WED-FRI, FEB 28-MAR 1.**

This eight-month program provides experienced practitioners an opportunity to delve into some of the deeper teachings of our Buddhist tradition in a community of other committed practitioners. We will discuss core principles and insights including aspects of liberation and awakening. Includes required monthly readings and short reflective essays.

**Participation by selection. Application available on IMC website in July.** Pre-requisites: at least five years of Insight Meditation practice, five seven-day (or longer) silent Vipassana retreats, and completion of IMC's Eightfold Path Program or its equivalent.

### 2023 – 2024 EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

**TAUGHT BY CHRIS CLIFFORD, TANYA WISER, LIZ POWELL AND OTHERS. OFFERED BOTH IN-PERSON AND ONLINE. SUNDAYS 1PM TO 3:30PM (PACIFIC), 2023: SEPT 3, OCT 1, NOV 5, DEC 3; 2024: JAN 14, FEB 11, MAR 10, APR 14, MAY 12. CONCLUDING DAYLONG: JUNE 22**

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.

**Pre-requisite:** completion of IMC's Introduction to Meditation course or the equivalent. **Please register.** The in-person and online versions will occur in parallel at the same time. Participants can attend either version, although we encourage you to pick one as primary to build community. After registering, you will receive Zoom links and course materials by email. A longer application is required to be assigned a mentor. Mentoring slots may fill. Registration will be available soon under the Program menu > Special and Yearlong Programs.

Questions: [eightfoldpath@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:eightfoldpath@insightmeditationcenter.org)

## SPECIAL EVENTS

### IN-PERSON MINDFULNESS MEDITATION AND PRACTICE

**HALF-DAY WITH TANYA WISER. SATURDAY, JULY 1, 9:30AM TO 12:15PM.** Includes guided meditations, a brief dharma talk, group discussion and mindful activity. An opportunity to deepen your meditation practice as well as daily life practice, ask a teacher questions and practice with other sangha members. Suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

### HEAVENLY ABODES DAYLONG ONLINE RETREAT

**WITH LIZ POWELL. Saturday, July 15, 9:30am to 3:30pm, on Zoom.** Join us for a full-day immersion in the formal practice of loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy and equanimity, supported by guided meditations, movement practice, brief dharma talks, and an optional group practice discussion. Suitable for beginners as well as experienced practitioners.

### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

**DAYLONG WITH TANYA WISER. SATURDAY JULY 22, 9AM TO 3:30PM, IN-PERSON AT IMC.** Includes instructions and guidance on mindfulness of breath, body, emotions, and thoughts. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation as well as brief small group meetings with the teacher. Recommended for beginners and those who wish to review. Bring lunch.

### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION IN

**CHINESE WITH YING CHEN. 5 WEDNESDAYS, AUGUST 2-30, 7 TO 8:30PM. ON ZOOM.** Basic instructions in mindfulness meditation taught sequentially starting with mindfulness of breathing, followed by mindfulness of the body, emotions and thinking, and concluding with a discussion on concentration and the application of mindfulness in daily life. Opportunities for Q&A.

### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

**DAYLONG WITH BRUNI DÁVILA. SATURDAY, AUGUST 12, 9AM TO 4:30PM, IN-PERSON AT IMC.** Includes guided meditations, dharma talks, and alternating periods of sitting and walking. Instructions and guidance on mindfulness of breathing, body, emotions, thoughts, and open attention will be provided. An opportunity to strengthen mindfulness, develop concentration, practice with the IMC community, and ask a teacher questions. Appropriate for beginners and those with more experience. Bring lunch.

### EMBODYING AWARENESS: DAYLONG MINDFULNESS

#### MEDITATION RETREAT WITH DAWN NEAL

**SATURDAY AUGUST 26, 10AM TO 4:30PM, IN-PERSON AT IMC.**

This day of practice supports the maturation of mindful awareness through instruction and continuity. With alternating sitting and walking meditation periods, as well as light guidance on mindfulness of breathing, body, emotions, thoughts, and choiceless receptive awareness. Recommended for those who have attended an introductory meditation course (or similar), as well as for experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

**HALF-DAY ONLINE MEDITATION PRACTICE WITH LIZ POWELL. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 2, 9:30AM TO 12PM, ON ZOOM**  
A half-day of mindfulness supported by lightly guided meditations, movement practice, and a dharmette. There will be an optional sharing about one's practice from 12 to 12:45pm, facilitated by Liz.

**DAYLONG RETREAT WITH MAX ERDSTEIN. SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 16, 8:30AM TO 5PM, IN-PERSON AT IMC.**  
Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. For those who understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. Includes alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation with a Dharma talk at the end of the day. Brief interviews to talk about the practice will be available. Bring lunch.

**DAYLONG METTA RETREAT WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 30, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM, IN-PERSON AT IMC.**  
Metta or lovingkindness meditation is a foundational practice in Buddhist tradition. Metta is a gentle cultivation of kindness, friendliness, goodwill towards ourselves and all beings. With alternate periods of sitting and walking, supported with instructions, guided meditation, and discussion. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

### YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

IMC has a variety of programs for youths and family from preschool through high school. For more information contact Hilary at [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com). In-person at IMC.

*Check online calendar — these programs pause during the Summer.*

**DHARMA SPROUTS (K–2ND GRADERS & THEIR PARENTS)**  
Led by Hilary Borison and Carla Rayachich. **First Sunday of each month, 11:15am to 12:15pm.** Meditation and mindfulness practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate with their children. Contact Hilary Borison at [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com) or 650-575-2052 for more information or to RSVP. Please provide first names of each adult and child who will attend.

**DHARMA ROCKS (3RD–5TH GRADERS)** Led by Camille Whitney and Tim Sandoe. **Third Sunday of each month, 11:15am to 12:15pm.** Meditation and mindfulness practice through games, stories, and art. Light snack provided. Parents/guardians can either drop off and pick up their kids or wait at IMC. For more information or to RSVP, contact Camille Whitney at [CRWmindfulness@gmail.com](mailto:CRWmindfulness@gmail.com).

**MINDFUL TEENS (HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS)** Led by Laura Hansen and Max Erdstein. **First Sunday of each month, 5:30pm to 6:30pm.** Open to all teens interested in mindfulness and discussions of applying mindfulness to all aspects of our lives. For info, or to be added to our email list: [imcmindfulteens@gmail.com](mailto:imcmindfulteens@gmail.com).

### 20s AND 30s PROGRAM

**AT HOME IN THE WORLD: DHARMA EVENINGS FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S WITH MAX ERDSTEIN AND GUEST TEACHERS. Sundays, 7:30 to 9pm (except the 2nd Sunday of the month).** Our meetings alternate between Zoom and in person at IMC; please check IMC's website Calendar for details. 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 PEOPLE WITH HEALTH CHALLENGES ON ZOOM: 1ST & 3RD THURSDAYS OF THE MONTH, 12:30 TO 2PM.** The primary purpose of this group is to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation. Meetings include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics. At least four days before attending the group for the first time, please contact Ying Chen at [imcsg22@gmail.com](mailto:imcsg22@gmail.com).

### BUDDHISM AND 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP

**ON ZOOM, 2ND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH 7 TO 8:15PM.** Group discussion and study exploring Recovery principles and the teachings of the Buddha. Includes a 15-minute period of sitting meditation, a reading on Dharma and Recovery and open discussion. Everyone is welcome. Facilitated by Jennifer Lemas. For more information contact: [jennlemas@comcast.net](mailto:jennlemas@comcast.net). See IMC website calendar for Zoom link.

### OTHER GROUPS

**DHARMA CIRCLE FOR PEOPLE OF ASIAN BACKGROUND WITH LILU CHEN AND YING CHEN. ON ZOOM: 2ND AND 4TH SUNDAYS OF EACH MONTH, 1 TO 2:30PM.** Includes meditation, short Dharma talk, discussion, and community activities. Open to all self-identified people of Asian or South Asian background. No registration required. The circle is open for drop-in at any time. Contact: [asianimc2020@gmail.com](mailto:asianimc2020@gmail.com). See IMC website calendar for Zoom link.

**WOMEN'S CIRCLE OF MINDFULNESS WITH HILARY BORISON. THURSDAYS, 11AM TO 12PM. In-person on 2nd Thursdays of the month; on Zoom other weeks.** A gathering for self-identified women who wish to deepen practice in a loving community, as we learn to weave mindfulness throughout our daily lives. For info and to receive the Zoom link, contact Hilary at [hborison@sbcglobal.net](mailto:hborison@sbcglobal.net).

## SCHEDULE PG. 4

### DHARMA-INSPIRED BOOK GROUP

**ON ZOOM: FRIDAYS, 5 TO 6:30PM.** We stroll through books on Buddhism and meditation at a pace that allows lots of discussion. You are free to drop in even if you don't have the book. The Dharma-Inspired book group is self-led. For our current book, Anne Foster is acting as facilitator, contact: [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com). For info, Zoom link, and to sign up to receive email updates: [insightmeditationcenter.org/dharma-friends/](https://insightmeditationcenter.org/dharma-friends/)

### EARTH CARE GROUP

**ON ZOOM: LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH, 8:30 TO 10AM.** We focus on a set of diverse topics relating to the right actions we can take to mitigate climate change. Meetings will usually have an invited speaker and include a brief meditation, presentation, and group discussion. See IMC website calendar for Zoom link. For questions, contact the Earth Care group at [EarthCare.Dharma@gmail.com](mailto:EarthCare.Dharma@gmail.com).

### SENIOR SANGHA GROUP: ENJOYING OUR AGING WITH DAVID COHN, FIONA BARNER & ROBERT CUSICK

**ON ZOOM: USUALLY ON THE THIRD THURSDAY OF THE MONTH, CHECK THE IMC CALENDAR TO CONFIRM, 11AM TO 1 PM.** (See the calendar entry and fill out the short form to be added to the email list for class materials, announcements and Zoom link). Suzuki Roshi was asked, "Why do you practice?" He laughed and said, "To enjoy my old age." Join our dharma-based community of IMC seniors of all ages. We will cultivate enjoying our journey through the vicissitudes and blessings of aging with kindness and wisdom practices. Includes guided meditations, talks, and discussions on topics that support aging with ease and contentment.

### SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS

Join us as we make music for the elderly. No prior musical experience is necessary. Once a month, we visit an elderly residential care facility in Redwood City and sing old favorites accompanied by our ukulele playing. If you don't play the ukulele, you can come and sing along. We practice once a month in a nearby home. Basic ukulele instruction provided. Masks required indoors. For info contact Martha at [marthachickerting@gmail.com](mailto:marthachickerting@gmail.com).

### IMC LGBTQIA+ SANGHA

**ON ZOOM: 1ST AND 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, 5 TO 6PM**  
Suitable for both beginners and experienced practitioners within our LGBTQIA+ community. Open to people who self-identify as trans, nonbinary, queer, genderqueer, questioning, bisexual, asexual, intersex or two-spirit, gay, lesbian.  
Please contact [imcqueersangha@gmail.com](mailto:imcqueersangha@gmail.com) to join us online and be added to our e-mail list. The Zoom link will be sent separately. We are peer facilitated with guiding teacher Bruni Dávila.

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

## YOGA

### THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION WITH TERRY LESSER 9 TO 10:30AM IN-PERSON AT IMC

Each session uses a variety of asanas (poses) to focus and calm the mind, enhance breath and overall awareness, and develop flexibility, balance, and strength. Beginners are always welcome. The class is a mixed level, and everyone is encouraged to work in accordance with their own needs and abilities. Bring a large towel and sticky mat if you have one.



## SATI CENTER

Register for these events at [Sati.org](https://Sati.org) for more info and Zoom links.

### ONLINE PROGRAMS:

#### PALI FOR PRACTICE WITH CLARALYNN NUNAMAKER SATURDAY, AUGUST 26, 9 TO 11AM, ON ZOOM

Looking at the Pali of canonical texts can reveal layers of meaning as well as alternate understandings that are not fully captured in standard translations. The aim of this session is to give practical insights and understandings that can enrich your personal practice. We'll investigate the *Satipatthana Sutta* (Foundations of Mindfulness, MN10), looking at the Pali and the related Sanskrit.

#### KIM ALLEN BOOK EVENT

##### WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 30, 7 TO 8PM, ON ZOOM

Kim will be discussing her new book, *Full Simplicity: The Art of Renunciation and Letting Go*

#### SAMADHI WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN

##### SATURDAYS, SEPTEMBER 23 AND 30, 9AM TO 12PM, ON ZOOM

Two half-days of practice and teaching on the various ways *samadhi* is taught and its place in Insight meditation. We will offer an in-depth examination of *samadhi* in the source texts. Are insight and concentration two separate paths of meditation, or is there a single path that synthesizes the two into one practice? What is the nature of the deepest stages of concentration known as *Jhana*? Is deep concentration necessary for liberating insight? In answering these questions, we will compare different views and approaches to *samadhi*.

### IN-PERSON PROGRAM:

#### THANISSARO BHIKKHU DAYLONG

##### SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9, 9:30AM TO 3PM

**BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING** with Jennifer Block, Gil Fronsdal, and Paul Haller. **SEPTEMBER 2023 – JULY 2024.** An 11-month training program introducing, from a Buddhist perspective, spiritual care skills needed for being a chaplain, Buddhist teacher, or offering spiritual support to people in times of major life transitions and challenges.