



## Reflective Practice

Andrea Fella

In the midst of our daily lives, often we don't have time to mindfully investigate: to feel into emotions and body sensations, to notice what triggered reactivity, or how to respond skillfully. We can get caught by habitual tendencies, acting in ways we later realize weren't skillful. A reflective practice can retrospectively support learning about ourselves and the situation: we can bring the situation to mind, and, with mindfulness, see how it affects us now.

Reflective practice uses our capacity to think, and to recognize that thoughts affect us as we think them. We can be mindful of the effect that thoughts have on us now. We sometimes recollect challenging situations without much mindfulness, and can find ourselves caught in a loop of thinking and reactions. When thoughts arise unbidden, we can be swept away. But we can have a very different experience if we bring thoughts into the mind consciously prepared to be mindful of what arises.

I learned reflective practice from Ajahn Amaro, a monastic in the Theravada tradition. He said, if you want to think about something mindfully, let your mind settle. Then bring a topic into your mind. He gave an analogy of letting a pool of water settle, and then dropping a stone into the pool and watching the ripples. When the mind has settled a little bit, "dropping" a theme into the mind will create some ripples. Ajahn Amaro said: just watch the ripples, notice what happens when you drop that topic into your mind. So, a key aspect of reflective practice is simply to feel into what arises when you drop a thought or topic into the mind. The intention is to be mindful of what arises, not to think about what arises.

This form of meditative practice can be applied in different ways: to reflect on a Dharma theme, or to contemplate life decisions. Yet, one of the most powerful uses of reflective practice is to revisit a challenging situation at a time in the day when we have space and capacity to be curious and mindful about the situation. Even ten or fifteen minutes of reflection can be very supportive.

In reflective practice, since we are removed from the immediacy of a difficult situation, we may have more capacity to be mindful of what arises. It can be useful to reflect on the same situation several times, over the course of several days. This gives an opportunity to recognize different things each time. We might recognize something that we didn't see at the time. We might see that our reactions connect not just to this situation, but to something from our history. We might recognize what the triggers or flash points were.

Exploring reflective practice over time, we can become attuned to these emotional triggers and gain some familiarity with being mindful of them, which may strengthen our capacity to be mindful when they happen right in the midst of daily life.

### REFLECTIVE PRACTICE: A GUIDED MEDITATION

To explore this practice, choose a situation to reflect on. Then set it aside and take a few minutes to let the mind settle, in whatever way is easiest for you. After a few minutes of settling, consciously bring the situation into your mind. You could use imagination to do this: remembering where you were, what you were doing, who you were with, what was happening around you.

While creating this recollection in your mind, be curious about your experience in the present moment. What moods or emotions are arising now? What is your bodily experience now? This is an opportunity to learn about yourself; so, see if you can let go of resistance and self-judgment.

You might also be curious about the way this situation affects the whole of your experience. This may be a broad, diffuse, or fuzzy felt sense. You might be able to give a word to the whole felt sense: jumpy, energetic, fuzzy, vague. This is not necessary, but it sometimes can help us to connect with the experience more fully. You could encourage investigation by asking questions. Using questions is not about trying to find an answer by thinking about them. Rather, the questions might reveal something else in your experience in the present moment. Questions like: Anything else want to show up right now? What purpose is this feeling serving? Or, What is being believed? Have some curiosity about how the body and mind are feeling here and now as you bring questions to mind.

After a few minutes of reflection on the situation, you can let go of recalling the specific event, and reflect on how a Dharma perspective might support you in this situation. Notice how the body and mind feel while you reflect on this as well.

Take some time at the end to let go of the whole reflection, and rest in a simple way with how you are right now, allowing the mind to settle in whatever way is most natural for you.

An audio version of this reflective practice is available on Audio Dharma at: [audiodharma.org/talks/23607](https://audiodharma.org/talks/23607)

## ACTIONS

### GIL FRONSDAL

In his time, the Buddha was known as a "Teacher of Action" (*kam-mavadi*). He taught a practical path emphasizing that our actions have consequences and that we can choose actions that contribute to a better future. To walk his path means deciding to avoid doing what brings suffering and to do what cares for the welfare of self and others. The greater our mindfulness, the more we see the ongoing moments of choice in how we act, speak, and think. The greater our wisdom, the more we choose what is wholesome and fosters our well-being and fulfillment. Where we are ignorant of having a choice, wisdom cannot play a role as we act on habit or impulse. The Buddha's teachings on karma (action) emphasize that the present moment is the only time we can choose to behave in ways that bring freedom, peace, and happiness. His primary concern with actions was neither about how the past has shaped our present circumstances nor how actions benefit us in a future life. Instead, he emphasized care in how we live now to benefit ourselves and others.

The Buddha stressed being mindful of what we do rather than what we are. Here, we consider 'doing' to encompass mental activities as well as what we say or do. Instead of looking for some fixed, essential psychological state, inner nature, or spiritual essence, the Buddha focused on the dynamic psychological processes involved in suffering and in liberation from suffering. When we understand how our mind functions, we can begin to avoid mental actions that cause suffering and choose to engage in mental trainings and skillful actions that lead us to happiness and liberation.

It's sometimes said that the Buddha emphasized action over belief, and in one sense, this is true. Regarding the supernatural and metaphysical beliefs that underlie most religions, the Buddha showed little interest. However, he saw that belief is also a mental activity, so in that sense, our beliefs are actions worthy of investigation. This means that, in addition to investigating the truth or falsehood of a belief, it is possible to notice whether the act of believing is helpful. In particular, it can be useful to understand why we think the way we do. What is the intention behind our belief?

Another quality the Buddha emphasized in his teachings on action is faith—not blind faith in what can't be known, but a belief in what can be tested and verified through our actions. Until we see for ourselves the results of our actions, we are supported by the belief that certain activities will lead us to happiness and protect us from suffering. When we see and experience the results of practice, this faith can become an unshakeable confidence—we do not doubt what actions lead to inner freedom and peace.

Our mental states are forms of activity that have consequences. Our mental states affect the quality of our inner life, and the quality of our inner life affects our mental states. When we act on an impulse that involves attachment, suffering results. For exam-

ple, when we speak with hostility, not only is there attachment, but the act of hostility is stressful in itself and often creates the conditions for continued suffering for ourselves and others. Because greed, hatred, and delusion all involve clinging, actions motivated by these three states reinforce our clinging and so perpetuate the suffering of clinging. When we act on an intention that embodies freedom from clinging, the benefits of that freedom will strengthen within us. In this way, when we act on openhanded generosity, love, and wisdom—the opposites of greed, hatred, and delusion—we create mental conditions for happiness and further freedom.

This understanding connects directly to the growth of ethical sensitivity. As we develop the capacity to distinguish between actions that contract the heart and those that free it, we become increasingly able to recognize which mental states drive our behavior and what consequences follow.

The Buddha advocated more than simply ridding ourselves of harmful mental states and impulses. Avoiding certain behaviors and intentions, while worthwhile, is not enough in itself. To attain the highest goal of liberation, we must see directly into the nature of our own suffering. But because this direct seeing isn't easy, the Buddha suggested engaging in specific actions to help the mind perceive how it grasps and suffers. Key among these actions are the practices of concentration, mindfulness, and letting go.

Concentration helps keep the mind stable and focused on our present moment experience, allowing mindfulness to help us see more clearly. It also provides a person with experiences of happiness and well-being that can serve as powerful guides for determining which actions are unhelpful and which are helpful. The more mindfulness offers insight into the present moment, the better we are at recognizing moments of choice that bring happiness, well-being, and peace. Letting go helps us release unhelpful behaviors that interfere with deepening our practice. At times, the only action needed is letting go of all other actions.

While the Buddha's teachings on action may seem like instructions for constant activity, they are actually instructions leading to greater and greater ease and peace. It's the untrained mind that is always busy. A trained mind can experience profound rest. The mind that understands skillful actions can know the freedom to act wisely, ultimately culminating in freedom from all actions.



## **BUDDHIST PEACE AND CONFLICT CHAPLAINCY**

**WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND KERSTIN DEIBERT**

**JUNE 2026 TO DECEMBER 2027**

Building on Sati Center's chaplaincy programs, we will start an innovative new training program in Peace and Conflict Chaplaincy, PACC (pronounced "pax"). This will combine training in Buddhist practice, peace building, conflict transformation, and chaplaincy. Bringing these four together creates unique opportunities to work for peace through spiritual perspectives and maturation. As chaplains are known for caring for the spiritual and/or inner life of whoever they meet, peace chaplains care for the hearts of everyone involved in conflict. Peace chaplains also work to de-escalate conflict, build dialogue and understanding, and search for alternatives to force and violence. To ground the training in Buddhist practice, the program includes two retreats mostly focused on Buddhist practices.

More information at [Sati.org](https://sati.org) and an informational meeting on Zoom at 9am (PT) on Friday, February 20.

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## **IRC RETREATS IN THE SIERRAS**

**GIL FRONSDAL**

A friend of IRC/IMC has built a retreat center, called Big Springs, in a beautifully forested spot under the magnificent Sierra Buttes near Sierra City. Enter the retreat center around a small lake fed by the property's natural springs. It can host about 30 people in its new resident buildings and ten campers on its ten large tent platforms. In the last two years, IRC rented the facility four times to offer in-person retreats in the freely offered way we do at IRC. So that the teachings and practice would be attuned to the strong presence of the natural world, I used the theme "The Dharma in Nature, Nature in the Dharma" for the retreat I taught there in August. While I taught the retreat, the natural world provided most of the teachings.

We are enthused to continue our partnership with Big Springs and this next year we will offer retreats there in May, June and August. These are listed on the schedule pages.

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## **WHOLE AND WHOLESOME SHIKANTAZA:**

**"JUST SITTING" THROUGH THE SUPPORT OF INSIGHT RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL**

**GREEN GULCH FARM, SATURDAY, MARCH 21– SATURDAY, APRIL 4**

This two-week retreat offers an opportunity for experienced Zen and Insight meditators to join Green Gulch residents in a period of intensive residential practice guided by Gil. The teaching and practice orientation will be "Shikantaza Through the Support of Insight," Shikantaza being the core Zen meditation practice of Soto Zen. The retreat includes a five-day sesshin (Silent Zen Retreat Intensive). Apply through the Green Gulch website: [sfzc.org/locations/green-gulch-farm](https://sfzc.org/locations/green-gulch-farm)

## **PEACE & CONFLICT CHAPLAINCY SPEAKER SERIES**

Periodically, Gil Fronsdal and Kerstin Deibert, the teachers of the Buddhist Peace and Conflict Chaplaincy Program, host a discussion and learn from people involved with peace building. The aim is to learn from the wide range of work related to any of the four areas of our program: peace, conflict, chaplaincy, and Buddhism. When these are scheduled, they will be announced on [Sati.org](https://sati.org).

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## **BUDDHIST PRACTICE FOR BUILDING BRIDGES TO PEACE AND JUSTICE: A DIALOGUE BETWEEN**

**MOHSEN MAHDAMI AND GIL FRONSDAL**

**A SATI CENTER EVENT • TUE, JAN 13 AT 6PM (PST) • ON ZOOM**

What does it mean to practice peace when you're facing deportation for being a peacemaker? In April, while working to bridge divides between Israelis and Palestinians, Columbia University student and Buddhist practitioner Mohsen Mahdawi was detained by ICE and nearly deported—accused without evidence of promoting the type of terrorism he works to prevent.

Join us for an intimate conversation exploring:

- How do we have empathy for "both sides" when we have deep personal stakes?
- Can Buddhist practice sustain us when faced with political persecution?
- How do we build bridges between people in conflict?

This is an invaluable chance to hear from someone dedicated to peacemaking and conflict resolution in the most challenging situation while being rooted in inner practice and peace.

Register for this event on [sati.org](https://sati.org).

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## **HIDDEN VILLA RETREATS**

This Fall, IMC hosted a Woman's Retreat at Hidden Villa Nature Preserve in Los Alto Hills. Doing so, we hope to restart our ten-year tradition of offering retreats there before opening the Insight Retreat Center. Nested between the preserve's natural world and its farm with cows, sheep, pigs, and horses, the location is wonderful for retreats. The hostel we rent is rustic with bunk-style cabins.

For the woman's retreat, we experimented with offering it freely supported by community members generously cooking and delivering enough lunch for supper leftovers. Breakfast was made by the teachers, Shelley Gault and Tanya Wiser. We call this "Community-Supported Retreats." We would love to host more retreats at Hidden Villa. For this, we need people who enjoy cooking to provide the community-supported food. When we have our next Hidden Villa retreat scheduled, it will be posted on IRC's website ([insightretreatcenter.org](https://insightretreatcenter.org)) and in future newsletters. Anyone interested in cooking and offering food for our future Hidden Villa retreats, please contact: [nancyhamilton@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:nancyhamilton@insightmeditationcenter.org)

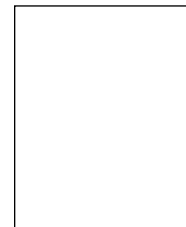
## Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

Redwood City, CA 94062

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

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



### DANA IS THE BUDDHIST WORD FOR GIVING

IMC and IRC continue a 2,600-year-old Buddhist tradition of providing the teachings freely to all who are interested. IMC and IRC have no paid staff and are 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. We at IMC and IRC 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!

Donations to IMC and IRC are tax-deductible. Donations to teachers are not tax-deductible. To learn how to donate, please go to [insightmeditationcenter.org/donate](http://insightmeditationcenter.org/donate). If you have any questions, please email [gratitude@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:gratitude@insightmeditationcenter.org) or call (650) 260-8674. Insight Meditation Center of the Mid-Peninsula, parent organization of both IMC and IRC, is a 501(c)(3) organization with federal tax ID 77-0450217.



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

### 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 & 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!



### GENERAL INFORMATION:

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

**NEWSLETTER:** If you have any suggestions for articles please email your thoughts to: [newsletter@insightmeditationcenter.org](mailto:newsletter@insightmeditationcenter.org).

### ON THE IMC WEBSITE:

- To sign up to receive emails: click on the **EMAIL SIGN-UP** button (upper right).
- To receive this newsletter by postal mail: Resources>Newsletter, click on "PAPER newsletter: [sign up for our postal mail list](#)"





# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

January ~ March 2026

## WEEKLY MEDITATION & TALKS

### IN-PERSON AT IMC:

#### MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Diana Clark or guest teachers, 7:15 to 8:30pm. A 30-min sitting, a 30-min Dharma talk, and 15 min Q&A.

#### 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
- 12:15 – Informal lunch and discussion outdoors in the parking lot (weather permitting). Everyone welcome (bring bag lunch).

#### 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

### IN-PERSON AT IMC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED:

#### 5-WEEK INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

Basic instructions in mindfulness meditation taught sequentially, starting with mindfulness of breathing, followed by mindfulness of the body, emotions, thinking, and the application of mindfulness in daily life.

- Wednesdays, Jan 14–Feb 11, 7 to 8:30pm, with Gil Fronsdal. In-person & YouTube
- Saturdays, Jan 31–Feb 28, 10 to 11:30am, with Mei Elliot. on Zoom
- Sundays, Mar 1–29, 1:30pm to 3pm, In Chinese, with Lydia Ridgway and Yanli Wang
- Wednesdays, Apr 15–May 13, 7 to 8:30pm, with Lydia Ridgway and Lauren Silver

#### INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

##### DAYLONG

- Saturday, Feb 14, 9:30am to 4:30pm, with bruni dávila

#### BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- Monday evenings 6:15 to 7pm
- Wednesday mornings 8:15 to 9am

## DAYLONG RETREATS

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

- Jan 17, 8:30am to 5pm, **Mindfulness with Instruction** with Gil Fronsdal
- Jan 24, 9am to 4pm, **Speaking from the Heart** with Kim Allen, David Lorey, Ying Chen and Diana Clark
- Jan 31, 9:30am to 4pm, **Mindfulness of Breathing** with Kodo Conlin
- Feb 14, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation** with bruni dávila

- Feb 21, 8:30am to 5pm, **Silent Mindfulness** with Gil Fronsdal
- Feb 28, 9:30am to 4pm, **Mindfulness of the Body** with Kodo Conlin
- Mar 14, 8:30am to 5pm, **Silent Mindfulness** with bruni dávila
- Mar 21, 9:30am to 4pm, **Mindfulness of Emotions** with Ying Chen
- Mar 28, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Natural Intelligence** with Kim Allen
- Apr 25, 6am to 9pm, **Intensive** with bruni dávila
- May 2, 9:30am to 4pm, **Mindfulness of Thinking** with Kodo Conlin

### SATURDAY ONLINE THRU IRC:

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

- Jan 17, 9am to 4pm, **Lovingkindness** with Matthew Brensilver
- Feb 21, 9am to 4pm, Retreat with Kim Allen
- Mar 14, 9am to 4:30pm, Retreat with Gil Fronsdal
- Apr 4, 9am to 4:30pm, Retreat with Kodo Conlin

## SATURDAY HALF-DAY RETREATS

- Mar 7, 9am to 1pm, **Refining Our Meditation Practice** with Matthew Brensilver

## WEEKLY ONLINE PROGRAMS

### 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, Anne Roise and others, 6 to 7pm. Guided meditation small-group practice, and discussion on loving-kindness. On YouTube and/or Zoom.
- **TUESDAY MORNING SITTING, REFLECTION, & DISCUSSION** with Dawn Neal, Marjolein Janssen and others, 9:30 to 10:45am. 35-minute sitting, followed by a reflection and discussion. On Zoom
- **TUESDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK** with various Dharma leaders, 7 to 8:15pm. 30-minute sitting, 30-minute Dharma talk, and 15 minutes for Q&A and discussion. On Zoom.
- **MARTES DHARMA EN ESPAÑOL** con Andrea Castillo, Sandra Sanabria y otros, 6:30 a 8pm. Meditación y pláticas de Dharma en Español. En Zoom.
- **WEDNESDAY SITTING AND DHARMETTE** with Matthew Brensilver, 7:30 to 8:15pm. On YouTube.
- **THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND Q&A**, with Liz Powell, and others, 7:30 to 8:30pm. A sitting followed by a short reflection and discussion. On Zoom.

## RESIDENTIAL RETREATS AT IRC

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

- Mar 1–8, **1-WEEK LGBTQIA+ INSIGHT RETREAT** with Gil Fronsdal and Francisco Morillo Gable
- Mar 15–22, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with Mei Elliott, Kodo Conlin, and Kirsten Rudestam
- Mar 29–Apr 5, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with Diana Clark, Kim Allen, Ying Chen, and David Lorey
- Apr 12–26, **2-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT FOR EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS** with Gil Fronsdal, assisted by Diana Clark (Also Online)
- May 3–10, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with bruni dávila and Liz Powell—Reg opens 1/3

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- May 24–31, **1-WEEK AWARENESS AND WISDOM RETREAT** with Andrea Fella and Alexis Santos (also Online)—Reg opens 1/24
- June 7–14, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with Gil Fronsdal and Paul Haller (also Online)—Reg opens 2/7
- June 21–July 5, **2-WEEK MINDFULNESS OF MIND RETREAT FOR EXPERIENCED STUDENTS** with Andrea Fella—Reg opens 1/21

### IRC ONLINE RETREATS

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

- Jan 25–Feb 1, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with Gil Fronsdal & Ines Freedman; Kim Allen online practice support (waitlist open)
- Mar 25–29, **5-DAY INSIGHT RETREAT** with Ines Freedman & Shelley Gault
- Apr 12–26, **2-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT FOR EXPERIENCED PRACTITIONERS** with Gil Fronsdal, assisted by Diana Clark—Reg opens 2/12
- May 24–31, **1-WEEK AWARENESS & WISDOM RETREAT** with Andrea Fella & Alexis Santos, Online Practice Discussions with Liz Powell—Reg opens 2/24
- June 7–14, **1-WEEK INSIGHT RETREAT** with Gil Fronsdal, Paul Haller, Online Practice Discussions with Kodo Conlin—Reg opens 3/7

### IRC OFFSITE RETREATS

Except where noted—for info: [insightretreatcenter.org/offsite-retreats/](http://insightretreatcenter.org/offsite-retreats/)

- May 13–20, **1-WEEK INSIGHT MEDITATION RETREAT** with Diana Clark, Kim Allen, David Lorey and Ying Chen at Big Springs Retreat Center outside of Sierra City, CA —Reg opens 1/13
- May 23–28, **6-DAY INSIGHT MEDITATION RETREAT** with Matthew Brensilver and Dana DePalma at Big Springs Retreat Center outside of Sierra City, CA —Reg opens 1/23
- Jun 23–28, **6-DAY BIPOC NATURE DHARMA AND INSIGHT RETREAT** with Liên Shutt and Ram Appalaraju at Big Springs Retreat Center outside of Sierra City, CA—Reg opens 3/1
- Aug 1–8, **1-WEEK DHARMA IN NATURE, NATURE IN DHARMA** with Gil Fronsdal at Big Springs Retreat Center outside of Sierra City, CA—Reg opens 4/1

### NON-IMC RETREATS WITH IMC TEACHERS

- Feb 4–6, **3-DAY NON-RESIDENTIAL RETREAT** with Kim Allen, David Lorey, Ying Chen and Diana Clark at Los Altos Community Center. Info: [uncontrived.org/upcoming-teachings](http://uncontrived.org/upcoming-teachings)
- Feb 12–16, **5-DAY INSIGHT MEDITATION RETREAT** with Shelley Gault and Tanya Wiser. Offered by Open Door Sangha of Santa Barbara at Holy Spirit Retreat Center, Encino, CA. Info: [opendoorsangha.org](http://opendoorsangha.org)

### NON-IMC ONLINE RETREATS WITH IMC TEACHERS

- Jan 22–25, **4-DAY LGBTQIA+ RETREAT** with Marjolein Janssen and Kirsten Rudestam, Info: [brighdharma.org](http://brighdharma.org)
- Mar 20–22, **3-DAY AWAKE AND AT EASE: A SPRING WEEKEND RETREAT** with Marjolein Janssen and Dawn Neal, Info: [imcrva.org](http://imcrva.org)

### SERIES PROGRAMS

**AWAKE TOGETHER: THE MIDDLE WAY FOR THE MIDDLE OF LIFE: 5-MONTH SERIES FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 30S AND 40S WITH MEI ELLIOTT AND KODO CONLIN**

**5 Sundays, Apr 5, May 24, Jun 21, Jul 19, & Aug 23. 1:30pm to 3:30pm. In-person.** Includes meditation, Dharma talks, discussion and activities that support connection. Practices, readings and/or

brief written reflections to be completed in between meetings. Designed for those who wish to strengthen their practice, deepen their understanding, and form connections with others on the path. Please attend all sessions—the first class is required. Registration will be closed once it begins.



### SPECIAL EVENTS

**IN-PERSON AT IMC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED.**

**A FOUNDATION IN FREEDOM: PROGRESSIVE INSTRUCTION IN MINDFULNESS MEDITATION SERIES WITH KODO CONLIN AND YING CHEN**

**4 Saturdays, Jan 31, Feb 28, Mar 21, & May 2: 9:30am to 4pm.**

Four daylongs to promote clarity and mindfulness. Each day will include guided, silent and walking meditations, short Dharma talks, and discussion. Recordings will be available for review and practice between sessions. Participation in all four days is recommended, but not required. For both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch. **JAN 31: MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING; FEB 28: MINDFULNESS OF THE BODY; MAR 21: MINDFULNESS OF EMOTIONS; MAY 2: MINDFULNESS OF THINKING**

**MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH INSTRUCTION WITH GIL FRONSDAL Sat, Jan 17, 8:30am to 5pm.** Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners, instruction will be given. Includes alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation with a Dharma talk at the end of the day. Bring lunch.

**SPEAKING FROM THE HEART DAYLONG WITH KIM ALLEN, DAVID LOREY, YING CHEN AND DIANA CLARK**

**Sat, Jan 24, 9am to 4pm.** The day will focus on Wise Speech. The Buddha encourages us to speak from the heart in ways that support our practice and our engagement with the world. Includes periods of sitting meditation, teachings, small group discussion, and Q&A. Intended for people who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness meditation. Bring lunch.

**INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION DAYLONG WITH BRUNI DÁVILA**

**Sat, Feb 14, 9:30am to 4:30pm.** Includes guided meditations, Dharma talks, and alternating periods of sitting and walking. Instructions 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. For beginners and those with more experience. Bring lunch.

**SILENT MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL**

**Sat, Feb 21, 8:30am to 5pm.** Intended for those who already 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 practice interviews will be available with Gil. Bring lunch.

## SCHEDULE pg. 3

### REFINING OUR MEDITATION PRACTICE HALF-DAY WITH

**MATTHEW BRENSILVER Sat, Mar 7, 9am to 1pm.** Meditation is a subtle art, and even seemingly simple instructions are easy to misunderstand or misapply. We are always discovering how to practice. Provides a framework for understanding how practices relate to each other and the value of experimentation in practice. Intended for both beginners and experienced practitioners.

### SILENT MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH BRUNI DÁVILA

**Sat, Mar 14, 8:30am to 5pm.** Intended for people who already 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 practice interviews will be available with bruni. Bring lunch.

### NATURAL INTELLIGENCE DAYLONG WITH KIM ALLEN

**Sat, Mar 28, 9:30am to 4:30pm.** Meditation can help us attune to a natural intelligence that resides within, including both wisdom and heart qualities. Includes alternating periods of sitting and walking, guided meditations, Dharma talks, and contemplation. For those who are already familiar with basic mindfulness instructions. Bring lunch.

## 20's AND 30's PROGRAM

### AT HOME IN THE WORLD 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 the IMC website Calendar for details. Our group addresses themes relevant to people in their 20's and 30's 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.

## IMC LGBTQIA2S+ SANGHA

### ON ZOOM: 3RD SUNDAY OF THE MONTH, 5 TO 6:30PM

Suitable for both beginners and experienced practitioners within our LGBTQIA2S+ community. Open to people who self-identify as LGBTQIA2S+ (lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, intersex, asexual, and two-spirit) and genderqueer and inquiring. To join us online and be added to our e-mail list, please contact [imc-queersangha@gmail.com](mailto:imc-queersangha@gmail.com). The Zoom link will be sent separately. Guiding teacher Tanya Wiser.

## YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

### IN-PERSON AT IMC UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. CHECK IMC WEBSITE CALENDAR

**MINDFUL PARENTS** Led by Lauren Silver and Melody Baumgartner. **THIRD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH IN-PERSON AT IMC, 11:30AM TO 1PM.** This year's theme is Anukampa (or compassionate care). Parents are invited to practice in a warm and caring community, supporting each other as we raise thriving children of all ages—infancy through adulthood. Includes meditation, mindful speech and listening, with time for sharing. No registration necessary. Contact Melody: [melodybaumgartner@gmail.com](mailto:melodybaumgartner@gmail.com).

**DHARMA SPROUTS (K-2ND GRADERS & THEIR PARENTS)** Led by Hilary Borison and Carla Rayacich. **FIRST SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH**

**11:30AM TO 12:30PM.** Meditation and mindfulness practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate with their children. Contact Hilary at [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com) 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 Lily Pan and Hilary

Borison. **THIRD SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 4:30 TO 6PM.** Meditation and mindfulness practice through games, stories, and art. Vegetarian pizza will be provided. Parents/guardians can either drop off and pick up their kids or wait at IMC. We ask participants to sign up at least two days before the event. Info: [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com).

### DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL) & MINDFUL TEENS

**(HIGH SCHOOL)** Led by Hilary Borison and Conrad Sherby. **SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 5:30 TO 7PM ON ZOOM.** We'll explore how the Dharma can support challenges and opportunities through group discussion, mindfulness and self-compassion practices. Contact Hilary at [IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.familyprogram@gmail.com) for the Zoom link.

## 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 similar situations. 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 RECOVERY SUPPORT GROUP

**ON ZOOM, WEEKLY ON SUNDAY 7 TO 8:15PM.** Group discussion and study exploring Recovery principles and the Buddha's teachings. Includes 15-20 minutes of sitting meditation, a short talk on Dharma and Recovery followed by open discussion. Everyone is welcome. Peer-led group. See IMC website calendar for Zoom link.

## OTHER GROUPS

### CHECK THE IMC WEBSITE CALENDAR FOR ZOOM LINKS UNLESS NOTED.

### ONLINE SUNDAY SANGHA WITH JAN MESSER AND BARRY

**ROTHMAN, IMC SANGHA MEMBERS. ON ZOOM: SUNDAY FOLLOWING THE DHARMA TALK, AT APPROXIMATELY 10:45 TO 11:30AM.** Connect with sangha (community), foster Dharma friendships and support each other's Buddhist practices and discuss Dharma teachings online with IMC members from all over the world.

### DHARMA CIRCLE FOR PEOPLE OF ASIAN BACKGROUND

**WITH YING CHEN. ON ZOOM: 2ND AND 4TH SUNDAYS OF EACH MONTH, 1 TO 2:30PM.** Includes sitting meditation, a short Dharma talk, discussion and community activities. Provides a safe, friendly, and nourishing environment. Open to all self-identified people of Asian or South Asian, Southeast Asian, East Asian and Pacific Islander background. No registration required. For info contact [asianimc2020@gmail.com](mailto:asianimc2020@gmail.com).



## SCHEDULE PG. 4

### WOMEN'S CIRCLE OF MINDFULNESS WITH HILARY

**BORISON. ON ZOOM: THURSDAYS, 11AM TO 12PM.**

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).

### DHARMA-INSPIRED BOOK GROUP

**ON ZOOM: FRIDAYS, 5 TO 6:30PM.** We read books on Buddhism and meditation at a pace that allows for discussion. You may drop in even if you don't have the book. Anne Foster is acting as facilitator for our current book. Contact: [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com). For info and Zoom link: go to the IMC website Calendar > Dharma Friends Events Calendar.

### 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 usually have an invited speaker and include a brief meditation, presentation, and group discussion. For info email [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 WEBSITE CALENDAR TO CONFIRM, 11AM TO 1 PM.** (See calendar entry and fill out the short form to be added to the email list for class materials, and Zoom link). Join our Dharma-based community of IMC seniors of all ages. 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 necessary. Once a month, we visit two residential care facilities in Redwood City and sing old favorites accompanied by our ukulele playing. We practice once a month; basic ukulele instruction provided. Contact Martha at [marthachickerting@gmail.com](mailto:marthachickerting@gmail.com).

## YOGA

### THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION WITH TERRY LESSER 9 TO 10:45AM IN-PERSON AT IMC

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

## SATI CENTER

**ON ZOOM UNLESS OTHERWISE NOTED. MORE INFO, REGISTRATION AND ZOOM LINKS AT [SATI.ORG](http://sati.org)**

### THE FIVE HINDRANCES AS A FOUNDATION FOR MINDFULNESS: A PRACTICAL APPROACH

**WITH BHIKKHUNI DHAMMADINNA SAT, JAN 17, 9AM TO 12PM.**

Presents a practical approach to working with the five hindrances, grounded in the teachings of early Buddhism. Explores

resources—both meditative and related to daily life—aimed at cultivating awareness of how to work with the hindrances as one of the four establishments of mindfulness or presence.

### FOCUSING ON WHAT MATTERS: PRACTICES IN MINDFUL COMMUNICATION WITH LILY HUANG

**SUN, JAN 18, 9AM TO 10AM.** This introduction to Nonviolent Communication (NVC) explores ways to live the Buddha's guidance on Wise Speech. Examines how the practice of NVC offers tools to bring more awareness, connection, and wisdom into our life and all our relationships.

### MINDFULNESS AT HOME: SPRING CLEANING FOR THE HEART WITH RACHEL LEWIS SAT, FEB 7, 9AM TO 12PM.

The early days of spring are a time of renewal. In this mini-retreat, we'll take time for purification, both inner and outer. Includes periods of formal practice and intervals of mindful movement in the form of housework.

### THROUGH THE SENSES: POETRY, DHARMA, AND OUR HUMAN HEART WITH VANESSA ABLE

**AN EXPLORATION OF POETRY, MEDITATION, AND WRITING PRACTICE. 6 MONDAYS, FEB 16 – MAR 23, 8AM TO 10AM.** Explores universal human themes—love, loss, friendship, memory, joy, suffering, stillness, nature—through the lenses of Dharma, poetry and meditative awareness. By the end, participants will have created a body of original poems or prose, written through the senses, reflecting their own Dharma journey. Open to all.

### SEE FOR YOURSELF: EXPERIENCING WISDOM IN LIFE

**WITH KIM ALLEN 4 WEDNESDAYS, FEB 25 – MAR 18, 7PM TO 8:30PM.**

Explores ways to recognize and deepen the Dharma wisdom already present in life so that it can be applied to benefit ourselves and others. Includes readings from the suttas and contemporary sources, meditation, teachings, and group discussion.

### THE SIX SENSE BASES: CLARITY AND WISDOM WITH LEIGH BRASINGTON AND KIM ALLEN FRI, MAR 20: 7 TO 9PM; SAT, MAR 21:

**9AM TO 5PM; SUN, MAR 22: 9AM TO 1PM.** The Buddha pointed out how prone we are to attachment around sense experience. Includes alternating sitting and walking practice, guided by a range of instructions and teachings from the suttas about the sense bases.

## CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS

Sati Center now offers two certificate programs in Buddhist Studies. More info can be found at [sati.org/certificate-programs/](http://sati.org/certificate-programs/)

- Theravada Buddhist Studies
- Buddhist Spiritual Care

## STUDY PROGRAM

### EXPLORING THE BUDDHA'S MIDDLE LENGTH DISCOURSES: WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND DIANA CLARK

- Part A covers the themes Relating to the Teachings, Faith & The Path
  - Part B covers the themes The Buddha, Karma & Rebirth
- A systematic study of the *Majjhima Nikaya*. Self-paced online courses, that include audio, video and written components.