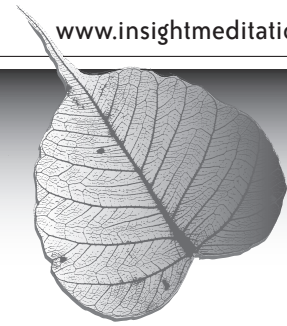


Insight



APRIL, MAY, JUNE 2008

VOLUME 11, NUMBER 2

The Buddha's Teachings on Love

Just as blood nourishes the heart which keeps it flowing, so love nourishes spiritual freedom and is, in turn, kept flowing by it. The connection is so strong that Buddhism, often known as a Path of Freedom, could equally be called a religion of love. Perhaps this is what he had in mind when the Dalai Lama said his religion is kindness. For the Buddha, love is one of the paths to full spiritual liberation.

If we call Buddhism a religion of love we need to be clear what we mean by love, or more precisely, what forms of love we are including. Because freedom is the guide, the measure, and the ultimate goal of all things Buddhist, Buddhist love includes those forms of love that are characterized by freedom. Love that involves clinging, lust, confusion, neediness, fear, or grasping to self would, in Buddhist terms, be seen as expressions of bondage and limitation.

Lovingkindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and a particular form of equanimity are the four kinds of love taught and encouraged in classic Buddhist teachings. None of these are uniquely Buddhist; they are four qualities of heart that reside within everyone, at least as potentials. Teachings about the four forms of love existed in India prior to the Buddha – they were elements common to the Indian spiritual world which he included within his system of practice. While Buddhism cannot exist without love, it may be helpful to realize that love can exist happily apart from Buddhism. Learning the ways of these four loves does not require one to become a Buddhist. It only requires a willingness to develop innate capacities.

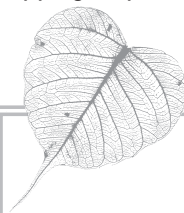
Love does not need to be left to chance. It mustn't be a matter of "falling in love," nor must it be accepted in whatever degree or frequency it happens to appear. The Buddhist tradition has developed a range of practices and reflections designed to develop our capacity to love. As with a treasure behind a locked door, we can find the key that allows us to open the door of love; like a muscle, love can be strengthened through practice.

In their most developed forms, the four types of love can each become a boundless radiance glowing from us. As such, love may flow from us equally toward all beings or it can glow freely without needing to be directed to anyone. When boundless, love without any particular object is recognized in Buddhism as a form of liberation.

To be "free" only when things are pleasant is not real liberation. Similarly, to love only in optimal conditions is not real love. Not a few Buddhist meditators have experienced great love while in meditation, only to have it disappear quickly outside of meditation. It can be easy to love all beings in the abstract, but it can be a great challenge to do so when we have to live with them. It is one thing to love and another to express that love in daily life.

One of the most rewarding spiritual practices is to cultivate the ability to bring love into all aspects of our life and to all people we encounter. This entails learning how to include love's presence while we speak to others, are in conflict with others, and are living with others. While this can be a daunting task, it begins with having the intention to do so. And it is supported by appreciating each manifestation of love that we encounter. Even practicing loving-kindness for the time it takes to snap the fingers is beneficial. Each drop of practice is significant and, as the Buddha said, "with dripping drops of water, the water jug is filled."

—Gil Fronsdal



Metta Retreat

From April 27 through May 4, IMC will be offering its first weeklong Lovingkindness (Metta) Retreat. In the past all our retreats have been Vipassana retreats. Lovingkindness practice is a core Buddhist practice that provides a foundation for healthy attitudes toward oneself and others, and for the practice of mindfulness. We are very fortunate to have Bhante Sujiva teach this retreat. Sujiva is a Malaysian monk who spent years in deep practice and study in Burma. He is well-versed in metta practice and has published a wonderful book on the topic. He lives in Europe and speaks fluent English. The retreat will be held at the hostel at Hidden Villa in Los Altos Hills. For more information, please contact Curt Smith, 408/842-0988, curt_smith@mac.com.

SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

IMC ADDRESS CHANGE

IMC has changed its address from 1205 Hopkins Avenue to 108 Birch Street. Because IMC's front door faces Birch, the Hopkins address has caused confusion for newcomers. The new address will remedy this situation, and also enable emergency services personnel to quickly locate our front door.

ONLINE COURSE: INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

by Gil Fronsdal and Ines Freedman. July 14 – September 1, 2008

In order to support the large community that listens to our Audio Dharma recordings, IMC is experimenting with offering an online course based on Gil Fronsdal's six-week Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation class. The course will be supplemented with written material, mindfulness exercises for bringing the practice into daily life, and reflective questions. Ines Freedman, the online teacher for the course, will provide further teachings and email guidance to the participants. For more info, go to www.audiodharma.org/onlinecourses/index.html.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING

This fall will mark the beginning of the sixth year that IMC has hosted Sati Center's Introduction to Buddhist Chaplaincy. This training is taught by Jennifer Block (education director and chaplain for Zen Hospice), Paul Haller (abbot of S.F. Zen Center), and Gil Fronsdal. It has been a pioneering program for Buddhist practitioners interested in offering spiritual care and support to others. A strong thrust of the program is its introduction to the fields of hospital, hospice, and prison chaplaincy. During the year of training, the students volunteer in a variety of such institutions throughout the Bay Area and beyond.

A number of the graduates from the Sati program have gone on to receive further training and are now working as hospital chaplains. A few of the graduates volunteer on IMC's Chaplaincy Council and help Gil with supporting IMC members experiencing major life challenges. Some eight Zen priests have gone through the chaplaincy program as a way to supplement their priest training.

Two years ago the training spawned an annual symposium for Buddhist Chaplains held every October at IMC. Both the chaplaincy training and the symposium have drawn Buddhist practitioners from around the country. It has been very gratifying that IMC could be connected to the maturing community of Buddhist chaplains. Having the chaplaincy training at IMC is a wonderful reminder of how we can share the benefits of our practice with others. For information about the program, visit www.sati.org.

SANGHA YELLOW PAGES: ONLINE VERSION

We now have two versions of the Sangha Yellow Pages. The new Sangha Yellow Pages Online is now accepting listings, and the Sangha Yellow Pages Binder on the IMC literature table is ready to be updated for 2008.

The Sangha Yellow Pages Online will display basic information about your business in a simple table form. You must be a member of Insight Forum to view the Sangha Yellow Pages Online. To subscribe, go to www.insightmeditationcenter.org and click "Subscribe." Note that if you do not want to receive e-mails from Insight Forum, you can change your preferences under "Edit membership." To view the new Sangha Yellow Pages Online, go to <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/insightforum/database> and click "Sangha Yellow Pages."

To be included in either version, pick up an instruction form found inside the Sangha Yellow Pages Binder on the literature table. For the online version, slip your completed form into the pocket labeled "Yellow Pages Online forms" in the front of the binder. It will be entered into the online database. For the binder, create a one-page description of your business or service and place it the appropriate section of the Yellow Pages binder. If you already have a sheet in the 2007 Sangha Yellow Pages Binder, please move it to the 2008 binder. The 2007 binder will be removed from the literature table on June 2, 2008.

It may seem more convenient to submit information via e-mail. However, by requiring that you physically drop off your information at IMC, we ensure customer confidence that you are indeed connected with IMC and have listed your business mindfully. If you have questions, please contact Wendy Alger, 650/315-7953, ninjettegirl@yahoo.com.

SPIRIT ROCK 20TH ANNIVERSARY RETREAT

Emptiness and Compassion with Gil Fronsdal and Guy Armstrong—May 31, 10am to 4pm, a Benefit for Spirit Rock's Capital Campaign.

Emptiness and compassion lie at the heart of Buddhist teachings. Compassion flows from emptiness and emptiness purifies compassion. Spirit Rock teacher Guy Armstrong will join Gil Fronsdal to present teachings and practices on these essential qualities.

IMC is offering this retreat as a benefit for Spirit Rock's scholarship fund. It was Spirit Rock that provided the original seed and nourishment for IMC. For much of IMC's history, Spirit Rock provided innumerable forms of support for IMC's growth. Without Spirit Rock it is highly unlikely that IMC would exist. The day's teachings will be offered in the spirit of both celebrating and giving thanks for IMC's connection with Spirit Rock.

WORDS FROM A VOLUNTEER

Volunteering at IMC over the past decade has proven an important asset in developing my practice. I began by sharing my professional fundraising experience to raise funds for the purchase of our center and then to increase the extent of IMC's programs. I now serve as Communications Director, which offers the opportunity to do things I value greatly—assuring that we give Sangha members and the public accurate information regarding the wealth of practice, educational, and community-building activities; supporting Audio Dharma efforts that serve hundreds of thousands of people around the world; and working with like-minded, interesting, and talented people.

Years ago, my first meditation teacher stressed that while our formal practice occurs on the cushion, it is skillful to develop our informal practice in our lives off the cushion. Thus, ideally, we are always practicing. I found this a profound idea that attracted me to IMC both to sit and to volunteer.

Donating time is an excellent opportunity to practice off the cushion. I notice, when mindful, the times I suffer because of attachment to having things go my way. Closer involvement with the Sangha makes it easier to facilitate positive change. Several months ago, I found myself receiving too many emails that could foster suffering and worked with the Board to implement emailing guidelines for the community to consider (see “Right Emailing” article).

A while back, I was feeling stressed because I was saying “yes” a bit too often and was fortunate to have an interview with Gil who in one sentence said all I needed to know – “Just be careful not to sacrifice a relaxed breath.” Looking back on my years of involvement, I know I receive more than I give and am honored to have the opportunity to contribute my time and talents to help our Sangha thrive.

—Cheryl Hylton

RETREAT CENTER UPDATE

Our search committee continues to seek a suitable property for IMC's residential retreat facility. Fueling the search is our vision of strengthening IMC's ability to offer opportunities for touching the depths of Buddhist and contemplative practice. Anyone interested in our plans for a retreat center can learn more at www.insightretreatcenter.org.

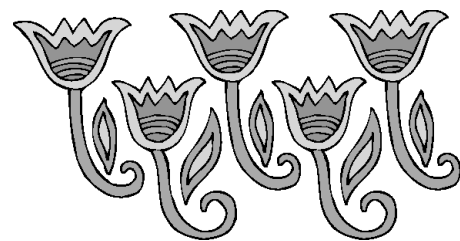
We have expanded our search by contacting non-profit organizations that own property and might be interested in selling all or part of their land. Typically, non-profits use their network of connections with other non-profits to identify buyers. To that end, we're asking people with connections to non-profit organizations to help. Please let us know if you are aware of any suitable property within 20-30 minutes of IMC. We are also interested in churches, schools, or building sites. Carol Collins, 408/354-5893, ccollinsc@verizon.net.

WHAT'S HAPPENING WITH COHOUSING AT IMC?

IMC Cohousing Study Group takes on new objective. In February 2007, a group interested in learning about cohousing began meeting for study, discussion, and to get acquainted. At the January 2008 meeting, attendees decided to morph for a time into the IMC Cohousing Forum. The objective is to invite and learn from well-respected speakers with a wealth of experience in establishing and sustaining cohousing communities. Please join us after the dharma talk from 11:15am to 12:15pm on Sunday, April 20 and June 8 (dates may change) to be inspired and learn about the nuts and bolts of creating a cohousing community.

IMC Cohousing Core Group becomes Insight Village. In June 2007, seven households from the IMC Cohousing Study Group decided to create a residential community (preferably near IMC) utilizing the cohousing model. It has grown to ten households comprising fifteen people and is still open to new members. The group recently chose a name—Insight Village—and completed its vision statement, which addresses the community's values, decision-making process, relationship to nature and how practice is supported. The statement is posted on Insight Announce and in the Cohousing binder on the IMC literature table.

Interested in cohousing? Attend IMC Cohousing Forum meetings and use the resources assembled by the Study Group to learn more. Interested in Insight Village? Read its vision statement and talk with one of the members whose names are listed in the binder. Think you may want to join the Insight Village group? Attend one of its meetings to get acquainted with the members, experience the process, and, if you decide to join, make a non-refundable contribution at the end of the meeting. For more information, contact Cheryl Hylton, cjhylton@earthlink.net or Marcie Fein, marciafein@pacbell.net.



DID YOU RECEIVE THIS NEWSLETTER IN THE MAIL?

Many people choose to receive this newsletter by postal mail. While in some cases this is the best option, mailing the newsletter is an expense for IMC, and each copy that we print uses paper. We ask you to consider these other options: Picking up the newsletter at IMC, or reading the newsletter online. The current issue is always available on the IMC literature table and website.

If you are currently receiving the newsletter by mail and would prefer another option, please send email to Kim Allen, kimall@mindspring.com, with your name and address. Thank you for saving money and trees!

Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

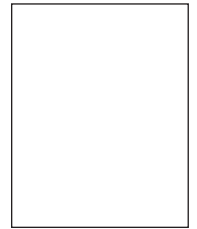
Redwood City, CA 94062

www.insightmeditationcenter.org

Email: info@insightmeditationcenter.org

650/599-3456

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RIGHT EMAILING

If the Buddha had used email, he probably would have given guidelines on “Right Emailing” as he did for “Right Speech.” Given the frequency and importance of written communication—as well as its potential for harm and miscommunication—we benefit from consciously bringing our mindfulness practice to the realm of email. Several Board and community members collaborated to create key guidelines in using email wisely—please see www.insightmeditationcenter.org/imc-policies.html.

IMC BOARD MEETINGS

IMC board meetings are open to the sangha, all are welcome. If you are interested in learning more about the way the IMC board functions, or think that you might be interested in serving on the board, you are welcome to attend any board meeting as a guest. Tuesdays, May 6 and June 3, 7 to 9pm.

SECOND HARVEST FOOD BARREL

An opportunity to practice generosity—please bring your donations of canned goods and other non-perishable food items to IMC; remove from their paper bags and place them inside the Second Harvest food barrel, located in the community hall.

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.

HELPING IMC WHILE SELLING A HOME

Sangha member Carol Collins is a long-time local real estate broker, now retired. If you are thinking of selling a home or investment property, Carol can refer you to an ethical realtor. She will negotiate a reduced brokerage fee and the realtor will make a substantial donation to the retreat fund. She can also refer you to a realtor if you are buying, and is generally available as your consultant (at no charge) through the process. Please contact Carol at 408/354-5893, ccollinsc@verizon.net.

PLEASE ENROLL IN E-SCRIP!

E-scrip is an effortless way of raising funds for our center. If you register your grocery club card and credit/debit cards with E-scrip, the participating merchants will donate a small percentage of your purchases to IMC. You keep all your credit card rewards. Register at www.escrip.com.

To sign up for either or both of our Email Lists, go to www.insightmeditationcenter.org and click “Subscribe”.

MAILING LIST OPTIONS AND CHANGE OF ADDRESS

To be added or removed from the Mailing List and/or Directory, or to update address, phone, or e-mail—contact Cindy Heyer cyn@coastside.net 650/712-0231.

NEWSLETTER questions—contact Kim Allen, kimall@mindspring.com 408/998-5491.

SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April thru June 2008

WEEKLY MEDITATION & TALKS

MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

7:30 to 9pm. 45-minute sitting and a 45-minute dharma talk.

WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

Will not be held 7/21 to 8/15 during IMC renovation

9:30am to 12:15pm. Sitting and walking meditation, led by Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers. Bring lunch, informal discussion afterwards. You may attend any part of the morning.

- 9:30am - Sitting • 10:15am - Walking
- 11am - Sitting • 11:45am - Dharmette (Brief Talk)
- Noon to 12:15pm - Temple Cleaning

THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

7:30 to 9pm. Especially suited for new meditators. A 30-minute sitting is followed by a talk and time for questions.

SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

1st Sitting - 8:30am • Walking Meditation - 9:10am

2nd Sitting - 9:25am • Talk - 10 to 10:45am

Vegetarian Potluck Brunch — Last Sunday each month at 11am. All welcome. Contact Di or Dave Tatro 650/595-4260.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- Every Thursday evening 6:15 to 7:15pm, prior to the 7:30pm sitting and talk.
- 1st Monday evening each month, 6:15 to 7:15pm, prior to the 7:30pm sitting and talk.
- 1st Thursday morning each month, 10:30 to 11:30am.

INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

The basic instructions in Insight Meditation will be taught sequentially, starting with mindfulness of breathing, followed by mindfulness of the body, emotions, thinking & the application of mindfulness in daily life. No pre-registration.

- 5 Tuesday Mornings — June 10 - July 8, 9:30 to 11am, with Andrea Fella
- 5 Tuesday Evenings — June 10 - July 8, 7:30 to 9pm, with Andrea Fella
- 6 Wednesday Evenings — October 1 - November 5, 7:30 to 9pm, with Gil Fronsdal

NON- RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

FRIDAY DHARMA PRACTICE DAYS WITH GIL FRONSDAL

March 28, April 25 and May 30; 9:30 to 3:30pm. Final three classes of yearlong program on the mindfulness of breathing.

MONDAY HALF-DAY RETREATS WITH ANDREA FELLA

April 28, May 26, June 23, July 14, and September 15, 9:30am to 12:15pm. See 'Wednesday Morning Half-Day Retreats' above.

ONE-DAY MEDITATION RETREATS

- Saturday, April 12 **Mindfulness of the Dharma: The Liberative Process** with Gil Fronsdal, 9am to 4:30pm
- Saturday, April 19, 10 am to 5 pm. **The Tao & the Dharma, Qiqong Retreat** with Franz Moeckl.
- Saturday, May 10, 9am to 4:30pm **Daylong Retreat** with Richard Shankman
- Saturday, May 17, 9am to 4:30pm **Creative Mind, Meditative Mind** with Carolyn Dille
- Saturday, May 31, 10am to 4pm, **Spirit Rock 20th Anniversary Retreat: Emptiness and Compassion** with Gil Fronsdal and Guy Armstrong
- Saturday, June 7, 6am to 9pm **Intensive Daylong Retreat.** Interviews with Gil available, you may attend any part of the day. Bring breakfast & lunch. Light supper provided.

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

IMC-SPONSORED RETREATS

There is no cost for IMC retreats. Donations welcome. Contact as noted. All are mindfulness retreats except the April 27 retreat.

- April 27 - May 4. **Metta Retreat with Bhante Sujiva**, Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Curt Smith, curt_smith@mac.com or 408/842-0988.
- May 11 - 18 with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella. Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Cindy Crowe Urgo, brwthus@sbcglobal.net.
- Memorial Weekend, May 23 - 26 with Gil Fronsdal. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Frank Ryerson, frankrye@yahoo.com.
- July 2 - 6 with Andrea Fella and Pam Weiss. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Rainbow, rainbowspirit@earthlink.net.
- August 15 - 17 with Andrea Fella and Richard Shankman. Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Registration opens 4/15/08. Bill Kostura, saddhadhamma@gmail.com.
- September 14 - 28 with Gil Fronsdal. Hidden Villa, Los Altos. Contact Laura Crabb, lauracrabb2@earthlink.net, 408/380-3002, X80. Register anytime. If we receive more registrations than spaces, a lottery will be held May 7. For senior practitioners.
- October 19 - 26 with Gil Fronsdal and Steve Armstrong at Hidden Villa in Los Altos. Registration opens 6/19/08. Pat White, pewhite@stanford.edu, 650/462-1834.

OTHER RETREATS WITH GIL FRONSDAL

- August 8 - 17, Vipassana retreat at Vajrapani above Santa Cruz, with Gil Fronsdal, John Travis, and Mary Grace Orr. See www.spiritrock.org for info. Registration opens 4/1/08.
- August 24 - 29 **No Difference: Compassion and Freedom** with Gil Fronsdal and Furu Nancy Schroeder, at Tassajara Zen Monastery in the Big Sur Mountains. Call Tassajara reservations, 415/865-1899 or www.sfzc.org (reserve early).

SPECIAL EVENTS

METTA CLASS SERIES WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Monday nights, April 7, 14, 21, & 28. Four talks on lovingkindness.

IMC BOARD MEETINGS

Tuesdays, May 6 and June 3, 7 to 9pm.

BUDDHIST PRECEPTS CLASS WITH ANDREA FELLA

5 Thursdays: April 3, 10, 17, 24 & May 1, 7:30 to 9pm

This series will explore the 5 Precepts — guidelines for virtue and ethical behavior formulated by the Buddha, not based on ideas of good and bad, but on the observation that some actions lead to suffering and some to happiness and freedom.

- April 3 - Overview and the 1st precept: Refraining from killing
- April 10 - Refraining from taking what is not given.
- April 17 - Refraining from sexual misconduct
- April 24 - Refraining from false speech
- May 1 - Refraining from intoxicants that confuse the mind

MEDITATION RETREAT DISCUSSION

Sunday, April 6, 11:15am to 12:45pm with Ines Freedman.

For those who have never sat a retreat, or those who have but are interested in extended retreat practice. We will discuss :

- Typical retreat day, “etiquette”, interviews, accommodations, food
- Vipassana, metta, monastic, study, abroad, & self-retreats
- Preparing for a retreat and post-retreat integration
- Helpful physical hints, including physical challenges

MINDFULNESS OF THE DHARMA: THE LIBERATIVE PROCESS

With Gil Fronsdal, April 12, 9am to 4:30pm. The focus of the day will be the 4th foundation of mindfulness which includes awareness of the inner process which leads to liberation. This will be a standard IMC daylong retreat with instruction and some guided meditation with alternating periods of 35 minutes sitting and walking meditation separated with brief teachings. Bring lunch.

THE TAO & THE DHARMA, QIQONG RETREAT

Saturday, April 19, 10 am to 5 pm. With Franz Moeckl. In Qigong we experience our body as a pulsating field of energy, through slow, gentle movements in harmony with the breath. In Vipassana we see thoughts and emotions as simple energetic structures. Learn simple movements for strengthening immunity, increasing vitality and well-being.

Franz has practiced Qigong & Taiji for more than 25 years, is a longtime practitioner of Vipassana and teaches internationally.

WHOLESONE & UNWHOLESONE ROOTS SERIES:

Greed, Hatred and Delusion and their Opposites. With Susan Ezequelle, Jim Bronson and Maria Straatmann. 3 Thursdays, May 8, 15 and 22, 7:30 to 9pm. The *kilesas* are known as the defilements or torments of the mind, they are greed, aversion or hatred, and delusion. These are central forces that Buddhist practice is meant to overcome. The series will focus on these unwholesome roots and their opposites.

FOCUSED AND FEARLESS

A Meditator's Guide to States of Deep Joy, Calm, & Clarity

by Shaila Catherine. Reading and book-signing Friday, May 9, 7:30 to 9pm. In her new book Shaila shares insights and offers a wise approach to establishing ecstatic meditative states that lead to liberating insight. This is a rich step-by-step guide to the *jhanas* — a powerful meditative technique that leads us to fearless and deep joy, radiant calm and a truly abiding happiness.

Shaila Catherine has been practicing meditation since 1980, with seven years of accumulated silent retreat experience. In recent years she has focused on developing concentration, completing a one year jhana retreat at the Forest Refuge.

DAYLONG RETREAT WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN

Saturday, May 10, 9am to 4:30pm. A retreat emphasizing both concentration and mindfulness, with alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation. There will be direction in mindfulness of the breath, body, emotions, and thoughts. The day will be held mostly in silence with one or two short talks. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

TAKING REFUGE: CLASS AND CEREMONY WITH GIL FRONSDAL

Class—4 Wednesdays, May 21 - June 11, 7:30 to 9pm.

Ceremony—Wednesday, June 18, 7:30 to 9pm.

For those who would like to formally take refuge in the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha, we will have four classes exploring the meaning of “taking refuge.” On the evening of June 18, we will meet for a sitting, dharma talk, and refuge ceremony. Those who have been in the refuge ceremony before are encouraged to come again to provide support and inspiration. Taking refuge is one of the most common rituals a lay practitioner performs in Theravada Buddhism.

CREATIVE MIND, MEDITATIVE MIND RETREAT

with Carolyn Dille, Saturday, May 17, 9am to 4:30pm. During this day we'll explore some of the mental faculties used in meditation and in art-making through meditation, writing and drawing, and inquiry. We'll focus on the Buddha's Four Noble Truths and on creative insights. Please bring materials for writing and drawing, and a lunch if you like.

COOKING YOUR LIFE WITH EDWARD ESPE BROWN

Sunday, May 18, 1 to 4pm. Food is mystery, source, and sustenance. Cooking is seeing, smelling, tasting, touching, and meeting oneself, food, and others. To eat with enjoyment is a blessing. This class will be a way to enhance your capacity to cook, to trust and develop your own sensibilities. We will make a few dishes, perhaps bake bread, study cutting techniques, and partake in structured tastings. We will share what it is to do spiritual practice in the kitchen. Class limited to 20, contact Surja, plmn4@aol.com.

Edward Espe Brown is a zen priest and author of The Tassajara Bread Book and Tomato Blessings and Radish Teachings. A teacher of meditation and cooking, he is also a student of Vipassana, yoga, and chi gung, as well as a lover of poetry. Most recently he is featured in the movie How to Cook Your Life, directed by Doris Dorrie, released in 2007.

SCHEDULE pg. 3

SPIRIT ROCK 20TH ANNIVERSARY RETREAT

Emptiness and Compassion —With Gil Fronsdal and Guy Armstrong. May 31, 10am to 4pm, a Benefit for Spirit Rock's scholarship fund. See 'Sangha Programs & News' for details.

IMPROV THE BUDDHA WOULD LOVE

with Nina Wise and Jim Bronson, Friday, June 13th, 7:30 to 9:30pm
An evening of games and philosophy that focuses on improvisation as a mindfulness practice. When players improvise on stage they agree to support each other wholeheartedly, to pay careful attention to what is happening in the moment, and to act constructively. Not about comedy, but about mining the moment. You need no special talent, training or ability to take part. Just show up, dressed to move comfortably and be ready to laugh.

Nina Wise is known for her provocative and original performance works. Her pieces have garnered seven Bay Area Critics' Circle Awards, and she has received, among other prestigious honors, three NEA fellowships. Her written pieces have appeared in numerous magazines and anthologies and Nina has presented many workshops at Spirit Rock.

RETIREMENT AND THE SECOND HALF OF LIFE

with Maria Straatmann, June 14, 9:30am to 3:30pm. This will be an interactive day exploring the questions that arise at this transition: "Who am I now that I am no longer [fill in the blank]?"

Where do I find meaning in my life?" What are we retiring from and what do we retire toward? In coping with the natural challenges of an aging body to the possibilities of elderhood, encompassing loss and unexpected joys, how does Buddhist practice shape/encourage the answers to these and other questions? A day of quiet reflection, discussion, meditation and exercises of discovery and sharing with others in this stage. Bring a lunch.

Maria Straatmann is a former scientist and businesswoman. A graduate of the Sati Center Buddhist Chaplaincy and Metta Institute End of Life Counselor programs, she volunteers with Zen Hospice Project, West Marin Senior Services and the Commonwealth Support Group for People with Heart Disease. She longs to write more poetry.

IMC COMMUNITY MEETING

Wednesday, June 25, 7:30 to 9pm. Everyone who participates at IMC is welcome to our community meeting. Gil will speak for ten minutes on being part of a Buddhist community and on news at IMC, followed by an open discussion about issues related to our IMC community.

POLISHING THE MIRROR: RELATIONSHIPS AS PRACTICE

with Donald Rothberg and Larry Yang, July 19, 9 to 4:30pm
What helps us to take our relationships—with friends, at work, in our communities, with our partners—as spiritual practice? How do we cultivate the qualities of mindfulness, wisdom, compassion, and skillful action in the midst of interaction? We will explore how our relationships can nourish our awakening. Along with periods of silent practice, we will introduce a number of relational practices that participants can take home, involving speech; mindfulness of self, other, and the relationship itself; working with interpersonal challenges; and community.

SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center, www.sati.org or 650/223-0311 for more information. Held at IMC.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHISM

Saturday, April 5, 9am to 5 pm with Tony Bernhard and Carolyn Dille. This class will lead beginning and experienced meditators through the tenets of Buddhist teachings, history and tradition. The aim is to provide students with a basic overview and grounding in Buddhist teachings that will help deepen their meditation practice. Topics include: the life of the Buddha, core teachings, history and development of the different schools, the Pali Canon, and traditional meditation practices.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM

A year-long training in Buddhist Chaplaincy and spiritual caregiving. One Friday a month starting September 19, 2008 to July 2009. Info: www.sati.org, or karuna@sati.org 650/223-0311

SUTTA STUDY PROGRAM WITH GIL FRONSDAL

A 10 month course studying the Middle Length Discourses, one of the important records of the Buddha's original teachings.

2007-2008 series: final class meetings, Fridays 4/4, 5/2, 6/6, 6/27.
Majjhima Study Discussion Group with Tony Bernhard: 3/28, 4/18, 5/23.

2008-2009 series: first class Friday 9/12.

TEACHINGS WITH BHANTE GUNARATANA

Saturday July 12 - *The Discourse on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness*. Sunday afternoon July 13, *The Dhammapada*.

'Bhante G' has been a Buddhist monk for 60 years. He is the author of *Mindfulness In Plain English* and its companion *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness*.

YOUTH AND PARENTS FAMILY PROGRAM

DHARMA ROCKS YOUTH PROGRAM (3RD - 8TH GRADE)

Second Sunday of the Month, 5:15 to 7:15pm. Includes fun, interactive, community building games & crafts, pizza, and a half-hour of practice and dharma. Lorraine Desser Schulze, 650/773-4167.

PARENTING & TEACHING FROM THE INSIDE OUT

Workshop: Sunday April 27, 1 to 4pm with Lesley Grant. An afternoon workshop on mindfulness for parents and teachers on sharing mindfulness practice and Dharma with children.

Lesley Grant directs and teaches a mindfulness-based and Waldorf inspired co-operative program for children and parents.

Talk & Discussion: Sunday June 1, 7 to 9pm with Amy Saltzman MD. An evening to explore the application of mindfulness in the, sometimes overwhelming, daily life with children, and to review what is happening nationally in the field of mindfulness and education. *Amy Saltzman is a pioneer in developing mindfulness programs for children.*

SCHEDULE PG. 4

YOGA

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

MONDAY EVENING YOGA

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

THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

8 to 10:15am.

SUPPORT GROUPS

(A) THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES

Wednesdays, 3:30 to 5:00pm

(B) THOSE EXPERIENCING LIFE-THREATENING ILLNESSES

Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3pm

(C) CAREGIVERS Wednesdays, 1:30 to 3pm

Meetings of all three groups include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics, but the primary purpose of each group is to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation. Before attending any group for the first time, please contact that group's facilitator: (A & B) Mick Bennett at 650/368-2518, hmbennett@sbcglobal.net; (C) Rob Rossel at 650/559-1562, rosselrob@aol.com.

DHARMA FRIENDS

Dharma Friends encourages spiritually-based friendships and a sense of community in our sangha. All sangha members are welcome to our events and may bring friends. If you are interested in joining the Dharma Friends Steering Committee, contact Anne Foster afoster@rawbw.com 650/591-1285.

- **Edgewood Trail Hike**—Sun April 16 (1.93 mi). Edgewood and Old Stage Roads, Redwood City. Leave IMC at 11:30. Dwight, zydeholic@yahoo.com.
- **Wildflower Hike** at H W Coe State Park—Sat April 26th (6 or 8 mile option). Carpool from IMC at 8:30am (leave Park HQ 10:15 am). Marianna 650/367-7325, taraihito@yahoo.com.
- **Dharma Friends Steering Committee** Planning Meeting—May 4, Sunday, 11:15-12:30. Plan events for July-Sept 2008. IMC conference room. Anne Foster afoster@rawbw.com 650/591-1285.
- **First Day of Summer Game Night/Potluck**—Sat June 21, 5-10pm at IMC. Celebrate first day of Summer with your favorite games and vegetarian potluck. Wendy ninjetgirl@yahoo.com
- **Vegetarian Cooking** with Surja Tjahaja—May 4, July 20, Sunday, 12:30 -3:00 pm. IMC. RSVP Dianne Tatro DiTatro@aol.com 650/595-4260.

Recurring Dharma Friends Events

- **North Bay Fiction Book Group**—Once/Month, Sundays, 6:30-8:30pm Meet at the home of a member. Contact Rainbow rainbowsprite@earthlink.net.
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—3rd Sundays at IMC, 11:15-1pm after temple cleaning. For details, Cindy cyn@coastside.net 650/712-0231.
- **Dharma Friend's Brunch**—1st Sundays. Meet at IMC by the kitchen at 11:15am to choose a local restaurant for brunch. Dwight zydeholic@yahoo.com.
- **Cinema Sanity** (occasional weekend evenings)—Know of a movie with a Dharma message you'd like to see with some dharma friends? Jim Podolske James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov 650/968-6168.
- **Socially Engaged Buddhism/BPF Discussion Group**—Once/month, Wednesdays, 4/2 and 5/7, 7:30-9 pm. Marianna Tubman, taraihito@yahoo.com 650-367-7325.

RELATED SITTING GROUPS

COASTSIDE VIPASSANA MEDITATION GROUP

Meets Wednesdays in Montara, 7:00 to 8:30 pm. For information and location, www.coastsidevipassana.org.

INSIGHT MEDITATION SOUTH BAY WITH SHAILA CATHERINE

2094 Grant Rd., Mtn View. Weekly Sitting & Talk—Tuesdays, 7:30 to 9 pm. www.imsb.org, e-mail: doug.forehand@sun.com.

LGBT SITTING AND DISCUSSION GROUP—PALO ALTO

Once a month, Saturdays, 10:30am to 1pm. Meets at members' home. For date & location: Drew Oman drewoman@gmail.com.

OAKLAND DROP-IN MEDITATION GROUP

Mondays. Instruction 5:15pm; meditation/discussion 5:30 to 6:30 pm. Unitarian Church, 14th/Castro. Rebecca Dixon 510/482-2032.

PALO ALTO: DROP-IN MINDFULNESS GROUP

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

SAN JOSE SANGHA

1041 Morse Street, San Jose. Contact Berget, 408/255-2783 bbjelane@gmail.com. Website: www.geocities.com/sjsangha
Offered on a dana basis.

- **Wednesday Evening Sitting & Teaching**, 7:30 to 9 pm
- **Refuges Series** 5/21, 5/28 & 6/4
- **Half Day Sitting**—Saturday, May 17 & June 21, 9:30am to 12:15pm
- **Introductory Class**—6 Monday nights March 3, 10, 17, 24, 31 and April 7; 7:30 to 9pm
- Saturday, April 5, 9am to 2:30pm—Includes basic meditation instructions and basic Buddhist practice.