

What is the Dharma? Gil Fronsdal

*The Dhamma well proclaimed by me is clear,
open, evident, and free of patchwork*

—The Buddha

The teachings of the Buddha are often referred to as the “Dharma.” This word is closely associated with “truth”—a truth that one can know for oneself. When he taught the essence of his Dharma, the Buddha consistently avoided metaphysical and speculative ideas in favor of practical teachings that serve the path of liberation. In being practical, he emphasized perspectives and practices that lead to the end of suffering. In referring to his teachings, he himself explicitly said, “I teach suffering and the end of the suffering.” His Dharma is also empirical in that it is something that can be experienced for oneself. He expressed this clearly by referring to the Dharma as “directly visible,” and by his frequent emphasis on knowing and seeing as integral to the path he taught. Believing, on the other hand, does not stand out as having a significant role in the Buddha’s core teachings.

In fact, when it comes to beliefs—at least those that could be called speculative views—the primary instruction the Buddha gave was to remove and uproot them. In a discussion where he contrasts his teaching with the speculative views others hold about the self, the world, and what happens after death, the Buddha stated,

The Buddha or a disciple of the Buddha [teaches] the Dhamma for the elimination of all speculative views, determinations, biases, adherences, and underlying tendencies, for the stilling of all mental constructs, for the relinquishing of all attachments, for the destruction of craving, for dispassion, for cessation, for Nibbana.

—Middle Length Discourse 22.20

Elsewhere he claims that he does not take any position on similar speculative views because doing so

Is not beneficial, does not belong to the basics of the holy life, does not lead to disenchantment, to dispassion, to cessation, to peace, to direct knowledge, to enlightenment, to Nibbana.

—Middle Length Discourse 63.8

What this means is that his teachings are pragmatically connected to a practice leading to the end of suffering, as well as something personally accessible and verifiable by our senses.

While the Buddha taught the Dharma in many different ways, we can get a clear sense of his primary teachings through the various summaries he gave. For example, the Dhammapada contains two verses in which he encapsulates “the teachings of the Buddhas.”

The first states,

*Doing no evil,
Engaging in what’s skillful,
And purifying one’s mind:
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.*

(Verse 183)

Though it lacks details, this verse gives a general overview of the teachings in terms of what “Buddhas” encourage people to actually do. Rather than referring to religious tenets that one must learn, this verse emphasizes ethical actions one should or shouldn’t engage in. The important role of ethics—i.e., principles of conduct—is also represented by the second verse from the Dhammapada:

*Not disparaging others, not causing injury,
Practicing restraint by the training rules,
Knowing moderation in food,
Dwelling in solitude,
And pursuing the higher states of mind,
This is the teaching of the Buddhas.*

(Verse 185)

Both verses end with an instruction to develop the mind. The Buddha’s teachings are more than instructions in how to live in the world; they include teachings on cultivating qualities and states of mind that are beneficial for the ending of suffering.

This focus on mental development is seen in a teaching the Buddha gave to his foster mother, Mahapajapati, (the woman who raised him), when she asked him to teach the Dharma in brief.

The Buddha replied:

As for those qualities of which you may know, “These dharmas lead to dispassion, not to passion; to being unfettered, not to being fettered; to simplifying, not to accumulating; to modesty, not to self-aggrandizement; to contentment, not to discontent; to independence, not to entanglement; to aroused persistence, not to laziness, to being unburdensome, not to being burdensome”: you may definitely hold, “This is the Dharma, this is the discipline, this is the Teacher’s instruction.”

—Numerical Discourses 8.53

In this passage the word “dharma” is used in two ways. In the first line “dharma” refers to qualities of mind and to practices one undertakes. In the last line it refers to the Buddha’s teachings, which is why the word is capitalized. This means that in the original language, the word dharma is easily associated with “teachings” that are concerned with developing the mind. The above quote can thus be paraphrased as follows:

Continued inside



SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

PRACTICING DHARMA IN PRISON

by Bill Kostura and Kim Moore

About thirteen years ago, Richard Shankman, an East Bay meditation teacher, founded a meditation group at a medium-security prison, the Correctional Training Facility, near Soledad. At present, ten volunteers take turns going in pairs to lead about twenty male inmates in meditation each Tuesday evening. We lead a thirty minute meditation, deliver a dharma talk, field questions, and end with qi gong or metta practice.

Most of the inmates who attend have been in prison for twenty to thirty years. Almost all are extremely attentive and are sincere in their desire to learn the dharma and to become better people. We find them to be unfailingly polite, self-possessed in how they present themselves, and grateful to us for making the long trip. The following comment by one of our regular attendees is typical:

"If I have bad thoughts in my mind, they have the power to make me feel angry, sad, or unhappy. These feelings then cause me to develop a distorted view of the world and of myself. My bad thoughts are the main source of my destructive actions that ruin my relationships with other people. My solution is that I don't have to believe my thoughts. Anytime I choose to hold onto my anger I am seriously harming my health and my social life."

On February 23rd, we had our first daylong at the prison. It was taught by Jacques Verduin and attended by 19 inmates and 9 volunteers. Jacques' talk was about how to "leave prison before you get out" by managing emotions such as anger, through "sitting in the fire" of our most painful experiences until the fire burns down to ash. He challenged us all to go through our pain and out the other side to become peacemakers in the world.

The warden now tells us that inmates in another wing of the prison, not currently served by Buddhist volunteers, have made a request for Buddhist or yoga teachers. We would like to recruit more volunteers and expand our program to this wing. If you have done several years of Buddhist practice and a couple of week-long retreats, or if you have some complementary experience (e.g. graduation from the Sati Center's chaplaincy program, or work as a therapist or yoga teacher), we would love to hear from you. Contact Bill Kostura (saddhadhamma@gmail.com) or Kim Moore (kimgrosemooore@gmail.com).



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

THE DHARMA OF IMC

with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella

Much about IMC is not apparent to both new people and to long-time participants who come here to sit and listen to teachings. Some of this is by design, since we have wanted the teachings and practice opportunities to be available in simple and accessible ways. Part of what is not obvious is that particular understandings of Buddhist values and practice underpin how IMC is organized and how the teachings and practice opportunities are offered. Slowly, over the years, these understandings have helped shape our community.

On **Wednesday May 11, 7:30 to 9pm**, everyone is welcome to attend this special event describing the unique approach that IMC has taken in forming itself as a Buddhist practice community. Gil and Andrea will speak about the history of IMC, where it fits in the Buddhist tradition, the values that guide it, how IMC is organized and run, and the ways people can participate in the practice and community. They look forward to sharing their vision for IMC.

ENTERING THE STREAM with Gil Fronsdal

Mondays, 9am to 4pm, October 3, November 7, December 5; **2017:** January 9, February 6, March 6, April 3, and May 15.

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 important in the Buddha's teachings, including aspects of liberation and awakening. Pre-requisites include 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. The program includes required monthly readings and short reflective essays. Applications available July 1 on IMC's website and due by September 1. Participation by selection.



SPRING FOOD DRIVE

April through June, IMC's Food Drive benefits Second Harvest Food Bank. Express your generosity and compassion by donating non-perishable foods. The collection canister is located in the back of the community hall. You may also give monetary donations at shfb.org.

Most needed foods: Meals in a can (stew, chili, soup), tuna and canned meat, peanut butter, canned foods with pop-top lids, low-sugar cereals, 100% fruit juices in single serving boxes, canned fruit packed in juice, and canned vegetables (low salt).

What is the Dharma?, cont'd. from front page

The Buddha's teaching and discipline (vinaya) are those things that lead to dispassion, being unfettered, simplicity, modesty, contentment, independence, persistence, and not being burdensome.

While this can be seen as a form of ethical teaching, it is also a teaching about doing those things that support the cultivation of a peaceful and liberated mind.

On another occasion when a confrontational person wishing to debate the Buddha asked him what he “proclaims,” the Buddha answered,

I assert and proclaim in such a way that one does not quarrel with anyone in the world... ; in such a way that concepts no longer underlie a person who abides free of sensual desire, perplexity, worry, and craving for any kind of identity.

—Middle Length Discourses 18.4

In saying this, the Buddha makes clear that he will not engage in a debate over teachings. Instead, his teachings focus on the possibility of freedom from concepts, desire, perplexity, worry, and craving. Not finding the Buddha's statement a suitable topic for a debate, the aspiring disputant left.

The Buddha's Dharma is something available for people to see for themselves. This is expressed succinctly and powerfully in a quote that has become a standard part of Buddhist liturgy:

The Dharma is well proclaimed by the Blessed One; it is visible here and now, immediate, inviting to be seen for oneself, onward leading, and to be personally realized by the wise.

—Middle Length Discourse 7.6

In the same discourse the Buddha explains that the way to gain unwavering confidence in the Dharma is by seeing in one's own mind the presence of such afflictive states as covetousness, greed, ill will, anger, contempt, envy, and arrogance and then abandoning them. Knowing the mind is free of these states is how the Dharma is seen directly. This idea is also expressed in the following teaching of the Buddha:

When you know there is greed, hatred or delusion within you and when you know there is no greed, hatred or delusion within you then you know the Dharma is visible here and now, immediate, inviting to be seen for oneself, onward leading, and to be personally realized by the wise.

—Numerical Discourses 6.47

This suggests that writings about the Dharma, including this very article, only point to the Dharma; to really know the Dharma we must know our own mind.

Because Nibbana (Nirvana) is often presented as the ultimate goal of Buddhist practice, it's interesting to consider the most straightforward explanation that the Buddha gave for Nibbana:

The destruction of greed, hatred, and delusion: this, friend, is called Nibbana.

—SN 38.1

Here there is no claim of understanding the ultimate nature of reality or having some privileged knowledge about transcendent states of consciousness. While the full destruction of the very human tendencies of greed, hatred, and delusion may seem difficult to accomplish, any diminishment or temporary cessation of these states is something we can know for ourselves; it is the Dharma visible in ourselves.

That the ultimate goal of the Dharma is indeed seen in the ending of the psychological forces of greed, hatred, and delusion in one's own mind is reinforced by the various variations to the quote above:

The destruction of lust, hatred, and delusion: this is called the final goal of the holy life.

—SN 45.20

The destruction of greed, hatred, and delusion: this is called the unconditioned.

—SN 42.1

The destruction of greed, hatred, and delusion: this is called the deathless.

—SN 45.7

Here we see that concepts such as “the unconditioned” and “the deathless” that lend themselves to mystical interpretations are clearly defined in psychological terms. There is nothing mysterious about the Dharma.

In studying the teachings of the Buddha we should keep in mind the core principles of his teaching of the Dharma. To be the Dharma, teachings must be something we can know for ourselves. The Dharma is realized through practices connected to the destruction of greed, hatred, and delusion—or, in other words, to letting go of all clinging, to peace, and to Nibbana.

HELP IRC WHILE BUYING OR SELLING A HOME

IMC sangha member Carol Collins is a retired longtime local real estate broker with Realtor connections throughout the state. If you are thinking of buying or selling a home she can refer you to a conscientious, highly qualified Realtor who will, in turn, make a donation in your name to our Retreat Center.

Carol can serve as your consultant at no charge throughout the buying or selling process. She has helped facilitate this for sangha members in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz and other Bay Area counties. If you have real estate questions or are thinking of purchasing or selling a home, please contact Carol Collins. 408/348-1385, carolcollins888@gmail.com.

HELP OUR VOLUNTEERS IN JUST 5 MINUTES!

IMC and IRC have been using an antiquated database for our mailing lists, donations, tax letters and event registration. We are now converting to a new, more efficient database! If you haven't already done so, please create a profile on the IMC website so our volunteers won't have to manually transfer your contact information.

It's simple to create a secure profile:

1. On the IMC website, www.insightmeditationcenter.org click “**Create an Account**” on the lower left, then fill out the form. Make sure to click “**Create Account**” at the end to submit.
2. You will receive an email with a link to set up your password—please remember to save it!

Insight Meditation Center

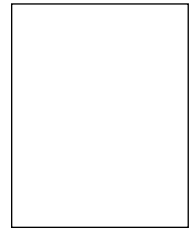
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WAYS TO DONATE

All teachings at IMC and IRC are offered freely according to the Buddhist tradition of *dana*. Our center and its teachers are supported entirely by your generosity.

CHECK: via mail, or in person at the donation box at IMC.

ONLINE: Visit the **DONATE** page on IMC's website.

AMAZON SMILE: A simple automatic way to support IMC/IRC when you shop through Amazon, at no cost to you. Go to insightretreatcenter.org/smile or enter through IMC's

RECOMMENDED BOOKS page.

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

EBAY GIVING WORKS: Recycle your unwanted possessions and support IRC at the same time - it's tax-deductible. Go to: insightretreatcenter.org/e-giving

E-SCRIP: Register your grocery club card and credit/debit cards with E-scrip and the participating merchants will donate a small percentage of your purchases to IMC/IRC. You keep all your credit card rewards. Register at www.escrip.com; Group ID is 238528.

DANA—All teachings at IMC are offered freely according to the Buddhist tradition of *dana*. Our center and its teachers are supported entirely by your generosity. Thank you.

PLANNED GIVING

A charitable bequest is a simple and flexible way that you can leave a gift to support the future of IMC and IRC for generations to come. It's easy to make a bequest by including *Insight Meditation Center of the Midpeninsula* as a beneficiary:

- in your will or living trust
- in your retirement plan or bank account
- in your life insurance policy

The Legacy Circle was created to recognize those who include IMC/IRC in their estate and financial plans by making a bequest. Members of the Legacy Circle are invited to an annual luncheon with the IMC/IRC Teachers.

For more information, visit the **DONATE** page on either the IMC or IRC website. For questions, or to arrange a consultation with a volunteer attorney, email legacy@insightmeditationcenter.org.

• GENERAL INFORMATION:

insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com or 650/599-3456.

• NEWSLETTER QUESTIONS:

Contact the editor at imc.newsletter@gmail.com.

• CONNECT:

To sign up for our UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS emails, go to the IMC website and click on the CONNECT link.



SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

April ~ June 2016

WEEKLY MEDITATION AND TALKS

MONDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

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

TUESDAY MORNING SITTING AND TALK

With Andrea Fella or guest teachers, 9:30 to 11am. A sitting followed by a talk and time for questions.

TUESDAY EVENING DHARMA EN ESPAÑOL

Con Andrea Castillo, 7:30 a 9pm. Meditación y pláticas de Dharma en Español.

WEDNESDAY MORNING HALF-DAY RETREAT

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

- 9:30am – Sitting • 10:15am – Walking Meditation
- 11am – Sitting • 11:45am – Dharmette (brief talk)
- 12pm – Temple cleaning

THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

With Andrea Fella or guest teachers, 7:30 to 9pm. A sitting, a talk and time for questions.

SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

With Gil Fronsdal or guest teachers, 8:30 to 10:45am.

- 8:30am – 1st Sitting • 9:10am – Walking Meditation
- 9:25am – 2nd Sitting • 10 to 10:45am – Talk

Sunday Community Tea—2nd Sunday of month at 11am.

Vegetarian Potluck Brunch—Last Sunday of month at 11am.

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

- First Monday evening of month, 6:15 to 7:15pm.
- First Thursday morning of month, 10:45 to 11:45am.
- Every Thursday evening, 6:15 to 7:15pm.

INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- 5 Wednesday Evenings, 7:30pm to 9pm, May 18 – June 15, with Andrea Castillo
- 5 Wednesday Afternoons 2 to 3:30pm, April 27 – May 25 with Tanya Wisner and Tom Fenner

The basic instructions in Insight meditation taught sequentially, starting with mindfulness of breathing, followed by mindfulness of the body, emotions, and thinking, then application of mindfulness in daily life. No pre-registration necessary.

PARKING AT IMC

When driving to IMC, please do not park in the parking lots of neighboring businesses. You risk having your car towed.

~Thank you

ONE DAY RETREATS

On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- April 9, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness of Mind Daylong** with Andrea Fella
- April 16, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Working with the Five Hindrances** with Diana Clark and Andrea Castillo
- April 23, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation** with Ines Freeman
- May 7, 9am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness Daylong** with Gill Fronsdal
- May 14, 10am to 4pm, **Buddhism and Recovery** with Jennifer Lemas
- June 4, 6am to 9pm, **Intensive Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- June 11, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Embodying Compassion** with Meg Gawler
- June 18, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindful Communication** with Oren J. Sofer

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

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

- April 23–30, Insight Retreat with Andrea Fella and Greg Scharf
- May 27–30, Insight Retreat with Ines Freedman and Shelley Gault
- June 5–12, Insight Retreat with Gil Fronsdal and Paul Haller
- June 21–26, Insight Retreat in Spanish with Rebecca Bradshaw and Andrea Castillo
- July 16–30, Mindfulness of Mind Retreat for Experienced Students with Andrea Fella

SERIES PROGRAMS

SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING PROGRAM

FRIDAYS: APRIL 22, MAY 20, JUNE 24 — 9:30AM TO 3:30PM

SATURDAY: JULY 9 — 9:30AM TO 3:30PM

The last four days of the seven-month series. Only for people who are already registered.

EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

SUNDAYS, 1 TO 3:30PM: APRIL 10 RIGHT MINDFULNESS; MAY 22 RIGHT CONCENTRATION. DAYLONG RETREAT AT IRC: JUNE 18

The last three sessions of the yearlong Eightfold Path Program. Reserved for those already registered or who have taken the program previously.

DHARMA PRACTICE DAY – MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING

FRIDAYS, 9:30AM TO 3:30 PM — 4/15; 5/13. The last 2 months of a 9-month program focusing on the development of *Anapanasati*, Mindfulness of Breathing. Based on the *Anapanasati Sutta* detailing the Buddha's instructions for using the breath as a means to develop the entire path of meditation practice. Everyone welcome.

SPECIAL EVENTS

IMC TEMPLE SPRING CLEANING

SATURDAY, APRIL 2, 9AM TO 1PM. It's that time of year when the temple we all share receives our tender loving care. Please join in a concentrated cleaning practice to sweep away dust and dirt so that we can renew our practice with a fresh new breath. Feel free to come all or part of the time. Look for a sign-up sheet in the community hall. All are invited. Please contact Hilary at IMC.volunteerdirector@gmail.com with any questions.

DAILY LIFE PRACTICE WITH ANDREA FELLA

SUNDAY APRIL 3, 1 TO 4:30PM; MONDAY – FRIDAY (APRIL 4 – 8) 7:30 TO 9AM AND 7:30 TO 9PM; SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.

This retreat offers support for the challenging practice of integrating mindfulness into our everyday lives. If you would like to attend the retreat during the week, please attend the Sunday session. The Sunday and Saturday sessions are open to all; the Monday and Thursday evening programs are also open to all as usual—the retreat will integrate with these evening programs. *For more detailed information, see the calendar on the IMC website.*

MINDFULNESS OF MIND DAYLONG WITH ANDREA FELLA

SATURDAY, APRIL 9, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. Taught in the style of U Tejaniya. Retreats also are a wonderful environment for developing a continuity of awareness for an extended period. The day will alternate periods of sitting and walking with instructions and discussion, otherwise, primarily in silence. Recommended for beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION 8-WEEK COURSE

TUESDAYS, STARTING APRIL 5, 10AM TO 12:30PM at the IMC Annex. Mindfulness practice helps us cultivate non-judgmental awareness, however, many of us have negative judgments that are often self-directed. If you aspire to gain freedom from self-criticism, feel a deeper and more loving connection with yourself and others, and have the courage to mindfully meet whatever arises with compassion, please join us. Taught by Judy Long and Hilary Borison. To ensure a space: contact Hilary 650/ 575-2052 at hborison@sbcglobal.net or to pre-register.

WORKING WITH THE FIVE HINDRANCES WITH DIANA

CLARK AND ANDREA CASTILLO. SATURDAY, APRIL 16, 9AM TO 4PM. The Five Hindrances can envelop and colonize the mind, making meditation and living our wisest life difficult. We will explore how to skillfully work with sensual desire, aversion, sloth & torpor, restlessness & worry, and doubt using mindfulness and antidotes. We'll practice how to turn these potential stumbling blocks into stepping stones to greater ease and happiness. Bring lunch.

INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH INES

FREEDMAN. SATURDAY, APRIL 23, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM. The day will include direction of mindfulness of the breath, body, emotions, thoughts, walking and eating with time for sitting meditation, walking meditation and discussion. Suitable for both beginners and those wanting to review the basics of practice. Bring lunch.

DAYLONG RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY, MAY 7, 9AM TO 4:30PM. Practicing mindfulness meditation on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and a Dharma talk. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

THE DHARMA OF IMC

WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND ANDREA FELLA

WEDNESDAY MAY 11, 7:30 TO 9PM

See Sangha Programs & News for details.

BUDDHISM AND RECOVERY DAYLONG RETREAT

WITH JENNIFER LEMAS, LAURA BURGES AND MICHAEL TORRES.

SATURDAY, MAY 14, 9AM TO 4:30PM. Through a combination of Buddhist meditation practices, interactive exercises, lecture and discussion, the day will explore the ways that Buddhism and the 12 Steps complement each other. Beginners are welcome! You need not be in a Twelve Step program, nor have a background in Buddhist meditation. Bring lunch.

VESAK CELEBRATION WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SUNDAY, MAY 22, 10 TO 10:45AM

Dharma talk and celebration commemorating the life of the Buddha.

INTENSIVE DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY, JUNE 4, 6AM TO 9PM. Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. The simplicity, silence and support of retreats contribute to letting go of many of the distractions that get in the way of clear seeing. You are welcome to come for the entire day or drop in for any part of the retreat. If you come while a sit is in progress, sit in one of the chairs in the outer hall. Fifteen minute Interviews with Gil will be available on a sign up basis. Bring bag lunch. Breakfast and a light supper provided.

EMBODYING COMPASSION WITH MEG GAWLER

SATURDAY, JUNE 11, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. This day will explore intimately meeting suffering with compassion. We will offer compassion to our bodies, our minds, our hearts, and to all beings through three complementary practices: insight meditation, qigong (embodiment and movement meditation), and opening the heart (*Brahma Vihara* meditation). This mostly silent retreat, for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

MINDFUL COMMUNICATION WITH OREN J SOFER

SATURDAY, JUNE 18, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. We will explore how to bring more mindfulness and care to our communication: our listening, our speaking, and even our thinking. The tools shared will be a combination of the core guidelines for Wise Speech offered by the Buddhist tradition, as well as the contemporary discipline of Nonviolent Communication. These practices form a powerful foundation for cultivating insight, awareness, self-understanding, and empathy. Bring lunch.

YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

MEMORIAL DAY WEEKEND FAMILY RETREAT IN SPANISH & ENGLISH

K-8TH GRADERS & PARENTS MAY 28–30, with Richard Shankman, Andrea Castillo, Liz Powell & Bruni Dávila. Jikoji Retreat Center. Enjoy a weekend of Family Practice, Parent Practice, Hiking, and Community. Registration by lottery is open on the IMC website. **Retiro en Español e Inglés para niños de kinder a sexto grado y sus padres.** Del 28 al 30 de Mayo de 2016 en el Centro de Retiro Zen Jikoji con Andrea Castillo, Bruni Dávila, Liz Powell y Richard Shankman. Disfrute de un fin de semana de meditación con su familia y la comunidad. Los formularios para la inscripción estarán disponibles en el Internet.

DHARMA SPROUTS (K–2ND GRADE) Led by Liz Powell and Carla Rayacich. First Sunday of each month, 11:15am to noon. Meditations and mindfulness practice through stories, songs, art, movement, and games. Parents/caregivers participate with their children. Contact Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend, giving first names of each participant.

DHARMA ROCKS (3RD–5TH GRADE) Led by Carla Brooke. Fun, interactive mindfulness games, crafts, and meditations. RSVP to Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend.

- Sunday, April 10, 5 to 6:30pm at IMC
- Sunday, May 1, 9:20 to 10:50am at the Annex
- Sunday, June 12, 5 to 6:30pm at IMC

DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH–8TH GRADE) (6th graders can attend Dharma Rocks and/or Dharma Bodhis). Led by Hilary Borison. **Fourth Sunday of each month, 5:15 to 7:15pm.** A time to explore how the Dharma can support challenges and opportunities pertinent to middle schoolers through group discussions, mindfulness practice, creative activities, interactive games, pizza dinner, and more. RSVP for dinner plans. Contact Hilary, hborison@sbcglobal.net, or 650/575-2052.

MINDFUL TEENS (AGES 13 TO 19) Led by Nirali Shah and Bruni Davila. **First and third Sunday of each month, 5pm to 7pm.** We aspire to create a safe and joyful space where teens learn mindfulness to nurture inner-discovery, clarity and a deeper connection with others. After a guided meditation, we discuss issues around relationships with friends/family, stress, intentions, identity, etc, and in general have some fun with life! For info go to www.mindfulteens.net. Please RSVP Nirali or Bruni at Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com.

MINDFUL PARENTS SERIES

SECOND FRIDAY OF THE MONTH, 7 TO 8:30PM. An opportunity for parents to practice in community and to hear from senior practitioners about their path with parenting mindfully. Facilitated by Patty McLucas and Liz Powell. No pre-registration required. April 8–Andrea Castillo; May 13–Hilary Borison.

SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center and held at IMC, unless otherwise noted. Info: sati.org or 650/223-0311.

SAMADHI: EXPLORING THE RANGE OF TEACHINGS AND CONTROVERSIES ON CONCENTRATION & JHANA WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN. SATURDAY, APRIL 30, 9AM TO 4:30 PM. This day of practice and teaching will explain the various ways *samadhi* is taught and clarify its place in insight meditation. After an in-depth examination of *samadhi* in the source texts, we will discuss some of the most important questions and controversies related to concentration practice by comparing different views and approaches to *samadhi*. Bring lunch.

BUDDHIST POETRY DAYLONG WITH DIANA CLARK SATURDAY, MAY 21, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM. Poetry, as a means to capture, explore, express and celebrate the Buddhist tradition, is an integral part of the earliest teachings. In addition to discourses containing a mixture of prose and verse, the early Buddhist literature contains anthologies of poems, many of which are attributed to women. The poems may be very short and describe the moment of awakening, or they may be longer, expounded on a dharma topic or recording a conversation between the Buddha and an esteemed individual. Whatever their content, poems provide an opportunity for us to listen with our hearts to the words of the earliest Buddhists. Please join us as we read and discuss different poems from the earliest Buddhist texts. Bring lunch.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY WITH JENNIFER LEMAS AND OTHERS. SATURDAY, JUNE 25, 9:30AM TO 12:30PM. An overview of a chaplain's work of providing spiritual care and support for people in hospitals, hospices, prisons, and a wide variety of other settings. The work is wonderfully challenging and satisfying. In recent years, Buddhist practitioners have been experiencing chaplaincy as a powerful opportunity to practice engaged Buddhism, and for some, as a vocation and profession. Information about the Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training and the Institute for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy Degree Program will also be provided.

TRAINING IN THE GRADUAL PATH: THE BUDDHA'S DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE WITH LEIGH BRASSINGTON SATURDAY, JULY 23, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. The "gradual training" is the path of practice taught by the Buddha that leads from first setting out one's spiritual journey all the way to final liberation. The day-long course will take an in-depth and comprehensive look at the various texts in the Pali canon that speak to this gradual training.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM TAUGHT BY JENNIFER BLOCK, PAUL HALLER, AND GIL FRONSDAL SEPTEMBER 16 TO JULY 2017. An 11-month training program introducing a Buddhist perspective on spiritual care skills.

AFFINITY GROUPS

LGBTQUEER SANGHA

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

YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM

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

SUPPORT GROUPS

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

FOR THOSE EXPERIENCING CHRONIC HEALTH CHALLENGES THURSDAYS 3:30 TO 5:30PM. At least 4 days before attending either group for the first time, please contact Mick Bennett, hmichael.bennett1@gmail.com or 650/368-2518.

BUDDHISM AND 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP

SECOND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 7:30 TO 9PM. Group discussion and study exploring the 12-Step program and the teachings of the Buddha. Includes a 30-minute meditation, short talk and open discussion on the Buddha's teachings selected for the evening. Everyone welcome. Facilitated by Jennifer Lemas, jennlemas@comcast.net.

YOGA WITH TERRY LESSER

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

MONDAY EVENING YOGA

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

THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

- 8:30 to 10:30am.

DHARMA FRIENDS

Dharma Friends encourages spiritually based friendships and a sense of community in our sangha. To receive email updates on upcoming Dharma Friends events, go to the IMC website, click on **DHARMA FRIENDS** and follow instructions to subscribe.

- **Benefit for Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community**, Friday, April 1, 7:30pm to 9pm at IMC. Screening of Tashi and the Monk, a film about the Jhamtse Gatsal Children's Community, founded by Lobsang Phuntsok, for orphaned and neglected children in the foothills of the

Himalayan mountains in Northeastern India. Gloria Schultz, gbschulz@earthlink.net.

- **Mindfulness Hike** at El Corte de Madera Open Space Reserve, Saturday, April 9, 9am. Meet at IMC. Dress in layers, bring plenty of water. Rain cancels. Brenda Naste, brendamaste@att.net.
- **Earth Care Faire**, Sunday, April 10, 11am to 12:30pm. Come show us what you're doing to help our planet. Tables available to bring literature, talk to Sangha members, enlist volunteers, learn about Earth Care at IMC. Anne Schmitt, schmitta@pacbell.net.
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**, Fridays, April 15, May 20, June 17, 7pm to 8:30pm. IMC Meditation Hall. We are reading *Unhindered: a Mindful Path through the Five Hindrances* by Gil Fronsdal. Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.
- **Mindfulness Hike** at Pulgas Ridge Open Space Reserve, Sunday, May 22, 11am, after the sitting. Dress in layers, bring plenty of water. Rain cancels. Marianna Tubman, taraihito@yahoo.com or 650/906-1409.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Practice Sessions**, Sundays, April 3, May 15, June 12, July 10 and August 7, 1 to 2:30pm. We are a group of sangha members who are getting together to sing and play ukulele. For info: Paul, sonasstrummers@gmail.com.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Playing at Hopkins Manor**, Sundays, April 10, May 29, June 26, July 17 and August 21, 1:30 to 2:30pm. We are making music with the residents of Hopkins Manor, a residential care facility for the elderly, next to IMC. No prior musical experience necessary. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For info, contact Paul, sonasstrummers@gmail.com.
- **Women's Circle of Mindfulness**, 2nd Thursday of each month, 10:45am to 12:30pm. A gathering for women who wish to deepen practice by exploring together how to bring principles of mindfulness into our daily lives. You're welcome to bring lunch or have tea until 1pm. Facilitated by Alicia McClucas mcclucasalicia@gmail.com, and Hilary Borison, hborison@sbcglobal.net.
- **Cinema Sanity**, At least 1 film during the quarter. Know of a movie with a Dharma message you'd like to see with some Dharma friends? Contact Jim Podolske, James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov, 650/968-6168.

OTHER LOCAL SITTING GROUPS

LOS GATOS SITTING GROUP WITH KIM ALLEN

Sunday, 11am to 12:15pm, meditation and dharma talk. Meet at Yoga Source, 16185 Los Gatos Blvd. Drop-in; no membership needed. Contact Kim Allen, kimall@mindspring.com.

SAN JOSE SANGHA

1041 Morse St. Contact Berget Jelane, 408/255-2783, bbjelane@gmail.com, website sanjoseinsight.org.

- Wednesday evening sitting, 7:30 to 9pm.
- Half-day Retreat, Saturday, May 21, 9:30 to 12:15pm

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