

The Dharma and the Path of Harmlessness

Gil Fronsdal

*A wise person does not intend harm to self or to others.
A wise person intends benefit for self, for others, and for
the whole world.*

—The Buddha

The full scope of Buddhist practice is conveyed through the word ‘Dharma.’ This word has a number of meanings that depend on the context in which it is used. Sometimes it refers to the teachings and practices of the Buddha, but its most significant meaning is the natural truths, laws and processes of the path of practice he taught. For many Buddhists the Dharma is the object of their greatest commitment and devotion. It is a source of refuge, guidance, and ultimate meaning, and, most importantly, it is what allows for the Liberation taught by the Buddha.

The Dharma is characterized by and expressed through non-harming, and the path of the Buddha is a path of harmlessness. The Dharma of the Buddha can help us discover a peace we only experience when we aren’t causing suffering to ourselves or others. This peace is called Liberation or Awakening when it includes, if even for a short time, a full cessation of suffering.

The Dharma is not something outside of oneself; it is not an external power working through our lives. Nor is it something personal that we can claim as our own. It is not a ‘thing’ that exists by itself. Rather, it is a process that exists only when activated. Just as a fist appears only when we clench our hand, so the Dharma only emerges when we behave in certain ways. However, unlike a fist, we don’t create the Dharma directly; we create the conditions that allow it to appear.

The way the Dharma arises can be compared to floating in freshwater. When we float, we may say the water supports us, but in fact the water alone is not sufficient to keep us from drowning. If we don’t know how to float, and we thrash around in fear or only relax and trust, the water won’t hold us up. Floating is a learned skill that depends on our having both the intention to float and the skill. Once the skill is mastered, being supported by the water can seem almost effortless. But since floating safely does not depend only on our skill and intention, it doesn’t make sense to take complete credit for it. The dynamic interplay of the water, our bodies, intention, and skill creates the floating.

As a support for our lives, the Dharma is like the floating. It appears in the interaction of the world, aspects of our human nature, and particular skills and behaviors we live by. As such,

the Dharma is neither separate from us nor something we are solely responsible for. Just as part of the skill of floating is relaxing and letting go of activities that interfere with floating, so too, the skill that allows the Dharma to arise and support us includes letting go of what undermines that support. But the Dharma is not found simply by letting go any more than floating safely in water simply requires relaxing. Certain skills and intentions need to be present for the Dharma to appear and to function. It is through the way we live that the Dharma can have a role in our lives.

The essence of this way of life is a devotion to non-harming. It is all too easy to harm others and ourselves with our thoughts, self-concepts and emotional reactions and quite difficult to overcome the causes of these mental activities. For this reason, it is important to have something that helps us minimize such harm and its causes. For Buddhists this something is the Dharma.

An important Dharma teaching is the Four Noble Truths. These pragmatic perspectives are based on a seemingly simple way of being in the world: if you stop doing something that is causing harm, the harming ceases. What makes this principle challenging are all the forms of self-harm which are not easy to stop. Addictions to desires, compulsions toward anger, obsessions with fear, and attachments to self can be so deeply rooted in the mind that they are hard to recognize, let alone stop.

In Buddhist shorthand, these addictions, compulsions, obsessions, and attachments are referred to as clinging or craving. When the contraction of clinging is pervasive it leads to stress, which makes us vulnerable to such human instincts as fear, aggression, and greed. When these qualities are activated it can be easy to behave in ways that lead to further harm to ourselves or others. Buddhism emphasizes that craving is a condition for further craving and that intentions to harm tend to motivate more of the same.

In contrast, letting go of clinging creates conditions for further letting go, and non-harming motivates more non-harming. Stress decreases with the lessening of clinging which then leads to relaxed states of being. Calm and relaxed states, in turn, activate our human instincts for empathy and caring and our capacities for creativity and wisdom, all of which support our practice on the Buddhist path and help bring forth the Dharma.

As for Dharma practice, it is helpful to appreciate that empathy, caring, attention, and wisdom occur not only because we



SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

VISIONING THE FUTURE OF IMC

We are at a point where it seems useful to give some thought to the future of IMC, our urban meditation center, and IRC, our residential retreat center. What prompts this reflection is that both centers are now being used to full capacity.

There is virtually no room in the IMC schedule to add any more programs or activities. At the same time, there is momentum to grow by adding new programs and improving the options for existing programs. It is also clear there is much interest in what we offer; it would be wonderful if we could meet this interest.

IRC has reached full capacity for how many retreats we can offer. At the same time, the waiting lists for our retreats continue to grow. Two retreats this year had 260 people apply. After accepting the 40 people our center can hold, we had 220 people on the wait lists! It is quite unfortunate that we cannot accommodate all those who would like to attend.

Growth at IMC is also marked by an increasing number of very capable and well-practiced people being trained to teach. One of the next steps in IMC's growth is to give them more opportunities to teach.

In discussions about this, one of the most frequent conclusions is how useful it would be to have another property in order to offer more programs. But when we dream about what kind of property that might be and how we might use it, we come up with a half-dozen equally good ideas. For example, if we had use of a second building near IMC we could expand IMC's programs. If there were a second property elsewhere on the Peninsula we could serve more people in their local area. If we had a property suitable for residential retreats we could perhaps double the number of retreats we offer.

As we don't have funds to buy a new property and as we need to be very careful how we might expand, it is comforting to know we don't have to do more. We are fortunate that what we already have is quite special.

However, some of us will continue reflecting on the possibilities of expansion so that if it becomes feasible we will be prepared. Part of these discussions includes ways to increase our programs in new and creative ways. Most likely, the next step in IMC/IRC's growth cannot be predicted. As has often occurred in our history, we will probably be surprised by the opportunities that present themselves.

If you have any thoughts or suggestions about the future of IMC, please send a note to insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com.

—Gil Fronsdal

SUMMER FOOD DRIVE

During the month of June, IMC's LGBTQ Sangha is sponsoring a summer food drive that benefits Second Harvest Food Bank. Express your generosity and compassion by donating non-perishable foods or monetary donations at shfb.org. The collection canister is located in the back of the community hall.

EXPLORING THE TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA SATI CENTER ONLINE SUTTA-STUDY CLASSES

This year the Sati Center is offering two classes that explore the early teachings of the Buddha—one on the *Majjhima Nikaya* and one on the *Digha Nikaya* (the middle-length and the long discourses of the Buddha). The *Majjhima Nikaya* class is being offered in three five-week segments, with the next two segments coming up in July and September (you can take any or all segments in any order). A four-week class on the *Digha Nikaya* will be offered for the first time in April. Each course includes in-depth readings (study-guides on selected suttas and on key topics in addition to the suttas themselves), audio and video resources, and an online class discussion-forum in which students post reflections and comments.

Here's what a few past students have said about the Sati Center online-class experience:

- "I've always wanted to read the suttas and this was my first real exposure. With the selection of suttas and the study-guides I felt like I learned a lot."
- "Deepening my understanding of the suttas enhanced my Dharma practice significantly. It helps me to expand my viewpoints, matures my Wise View, and encourages me to explore ways to check in with my practice to see where I may be stuck."
- "The course...made the *Majjhima Nikaya* far more accessible to me than it was previously."
- "The written materials are fabulous and very helpful, giving me access to texts I've been hearing about for years so that my understanding of them has become richer, more multilayered...Definitely adds to practice, both in sitting and in the rest of life."
- "Overall, I learned an incredible amount, and am very appreciative of the teaching and coordination."

For details on upcoming class offerings, go to sati.org.

—David Lorey

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.

SUPPORTING SELF AND OTHERS WHEN FACED WITH ILLNESS AND HEALTH CHALLENGES

IMC has been offering facilitated group support for people with illness and health challenges for over ten years. The founder of the group, Mick Bennett, served the group from the very beginning till his retirement in August 2017. I am humbled to continue Mick's service since his retirement. This support group is a place for people who are going through health challenges to share their stories, inspirations, and most importantly, love and support for each other. I often found the group meetings open, honest, intimate, and heart-warming. I'm glad to have an opportunity to share some perspectives about the group.

Life-threatening illness and chronic conditions can be challenging in many ways. They can impact one's life physically, emotionally, relationally, financially, and spiritually. However, when these conditions are met with an attitude of openness, loving acceptance, compassion, and wisdom, healing can happen. The IMC support group intends to create such a healing environment for whomever shows up.

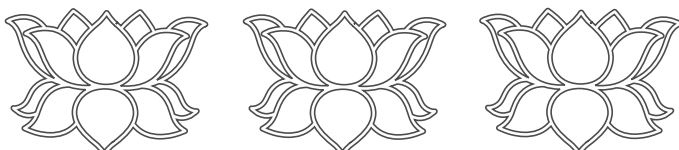
The support group meets twice a month. The group meetings usually are structured around 3 key elements: reflections, check-in, and gratitude practice. A short reflection period at the beginning of each meeting is for individuals to meditate and share thoughts about an inspiring quote shared before the meeting. This is a period for everyone to settle in together. The bulk of the meeting time is dedicated to individual members' check-ins. This is when each member has a chance to share their stories, while others practice compassionate listening. The sharing is often rich, diverse, and heartening. This is also where natural and mutual support sometimes happens. Compassionate listening is a big part of our practice as well.

At the end of each meeting, a gratitude practice is offered to the group. No matter how challenging things may be, it has been amazing for me to see that each of us can always turn to gratitude in our hearts, whether we are grateful for the space, the weather, friends and family, or without a reason at all! It is truly inspiring.

The support group also has a tradition of enjoying potluck lunches a few times a year in a social setting. These are additional opportunities for members to get to know each other. In the past, we had lovely potlucks in member's backyard or parks. In November 2017, the group also had wonderful year-end potluck lunch hosted at IMC.

The support group has brought a rich and rewarding experience for me. I hope this is a healing place for many who are coping with illness as well.

—Ying Chen



The Dharma & the Path of Harmlessness, *cont'd. from front page*

consciously decide to have them occur, but also because conditions are in place to activate them. When we practice the Dharma we create the conditions for the best of our personal qualities to function. As these beneficial faculties are expressed more actively in our lives, we discover that our lives are being supported by forces independent of our self-conscious efforts and self-centered attachments. As these forces protect, guide and liberate, people often feel increasing confidence in the power of the Dharma in their lives.

The Buddhist practices of non-harming that bring forth the Dharma in our lives are encapsulated within the Eightfold Path. These eight practices include wise understanding of what causes suffering, living ethically so we don't cause harm, and developing mental capacities such as mindfulness and concentration so that we can let go of the deep mental roots of clinging. Initially, these are trainings we intentionally undertake. With practice, these become less something we undertake and more who we are. They become how we naturally act. When someone has fully matured in the Dharma it is said they become the Eightfold Path, they become the Dharma.

The more our practice reveals the Dharma, the less sense it makes to take credit for the Dharma working through us, just as we don't take credit for a refreshing breeze on our palm when we open our fist. It is our task to open the fist in our heart so we can be refreshed by the Dharma, by the winds of compassion, wisdom, and freedom.

First published October, 2010

THE EQUIVALENCE OF ETHICS & ENLIGHTENMENT

This eight-month program with Gil Fronsdal 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 study and discuss core principles of the Buddha's teachings on ethics to understand the ethical nature of his teachings. We will discover how the Buddha's path to awakening is an ethical path, that awakening itself is an ethical awakening, and that the awakened life is an ethical life. The program includes required monthly readings and writing short reflective essays.

Participation is by selection. Pre-requisites: at least five years of committed insight meditation practice, five seven-day (or longer) silent vipassana retreats, and completion of IMC's Eightfold Path Program or its equivalent. To apply go to the IMC website Special Events page in June. Applications due by August 21. Notification of acceptance by August 31.

9am to 3:30pm on the following dates: 2018—Friday September 7, Monday October 1, Monday October 22, Monday November 26; 2019—Friday January 18, Monday February 4, Monday March 4, and Monday April 8.

For info email imc.3Eprogram@gmail.com.

Insight Meditation Center

108 Birch Street

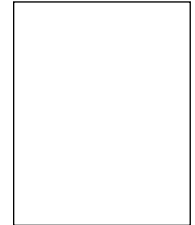
Redwood City, CA 94062

www.insightmeditationcenter.org

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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 a vehicle you no longer want, working or not. CARS will handle pick-up and all paperwork. IRC gets 75% of the sale price. Tell them you want to donate to Insight Retreat Center. Call 855-500-RIDE to schedule your pick-up appointment or answer any questions.

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.

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 IRC. Carol can serve as your consultant at no charge throughout the buying or selling process. She has performed this service for sangha members in the Bay Area and Santa Cruz. Contact Carol at carolcollins888@gmail.com, or 408/348-1385.



• 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 2018

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

WEDNESDAY AFTERNOON HAPPY HOUR: LOVING KINDNESS PRACTICE

With Diana Clark and Nikki Mirghafori, 6 to 7pm. Guided meditation, teaching and discussion on loving kindness.

THURSDAY EVENING SITTING AND TALK

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

SUNDAY MORNING SITTINGS AND TALK

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

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

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

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

MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

BASIC MEDITATION INSTRUCTION

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

INTRODUCTION TO MINDFULNESS MEDITATION

- 5 Wednesday afternoons, April 11 to May 9, 1:30 to 3pm with Diana Clark and Ying Chen
- 5 Wednesday evenings, June 6, thru July 11 (except July 4th), 7:30 to 9pm with Liz Powell.

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

ONE DAY RETREATS

On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- April 14, 8:30am to 5pm, **Mindfulness Daylong** with Matthew Brensilver
- May 5, 8:30am to 5pm, **Mindfulness Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- May 12, 9am to 4:30pm, **Daylong for Self-Identified POC and Non-White Practitioners** with Bruni Davila and Dawn Scott
- May 19, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness of Mind Daylong** with Andrea Fella
- June 2, 6am to 9pm, **Intensive Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- June 9, 9:30 to 3:30pm, **Buddhism and Recovery Daylong Event** With Jennifer Lemas & Laura Burges

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

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

- June 16 – 21, 6-Day **Insight Retreat in Spanish (Español)** with Andrea Castillo and Bruni Dávila
- July 21 – August 4, 2-Week **Mindfulness of Mind Retreat for Experienced Students** with Andrea Fella
- August 9 – 12, 4-Day **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Nikki Mirghafori
- August 15 – 19, 5-Day **Insight Retreat** with Andrea Fella and Pamela Weiss
- September 9 – 29, 3-Week **Experienced Students Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal
- October 4 – 8, 5-Day **LGBTQI Insight Retreat** with John Martin and Bruni Davila
- October 18 – 21, 4-Day **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Max Erdstein

SPECIAL EVENTS

MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH MATTHEW BRENSILVER

SATURDAY, APRIL 14, 8:30AM TO 5PM. Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. The simplicity, silence and support of retreats contribute to letting go of many of the distractions that get in the way of clear seeing. For those who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, and a Dharma talk at the end of the day. Brief interviews with Matthew will be available. Bring lunch.

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.

SANGHA SERVICE & PRACTICE DAY

SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM. We invite the community to come together for a day of sangha service and practice. There will be work periods to care for the building and grounds, interspersed with sittings, teachings, and a potluck lunch. It is a day to interweave our practice on the cushion with the practice of service to one another and to the center that shelters us. Please come for all or part of the day.

IMC COMMUNITY MEETING WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 11AM TO 12PM

All who come to IMC are welcome at our Community Meeting, after the dharma talk to ask any questions you may have and discuss topics of interest about our sangha with Gil Fronsdal and members of the IMC Board. Everyone is invited.

REFUGE CLASS & CEREMONY WITH GIL FRONSDAL

WEDNESDAYS, APRIL 25 THRU MAY 23, 7:30 TO 9PM

The Three Refuges, the Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha represent the primary Buddhist values and supports for Buddhist practice. "Going for Refuge" is a way of acknowledging a person's intention and dedication to the Buddhist practice of liberation. For those interested in learning more about the refuges and their own relationship to them, as well as those who would like to formally "go for refuge." The class will end with a refuge ceremony on the evening of Wednesday, May 23. .

MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY, MAY 5, 8:30AM TO 5PM Practicing mindfulness meditation on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and a Dharma talk. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

DAYLONG FOR SELF-IDENTIFIED POC AND NON-WHITE PRACTITIONERS WITH BRUNI DAVILA AND DAWN SCOTT

SATURDAY, MAY 12, 9AM TO 4:30PM. The terms "people of color" and "non-white" can suggest a group with common experience and identity. While we may have experiences in common, we also are a tapestry of many colors, backgrounds, life experiences, and identities. During our day together, we will meditate and explore the teachings and practices of the Buddha while opening to the unique experiences of practicing in community. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, and discussions of the Dharma. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

DAILY LIFE PRACTICE RETREAT WITH ANDREA FELLA

SUNDAY, MAY 13, 1 TO 4:30PM • MONDAY THRU FRIDAY, MAY 14 – 18, MORNINGS 7:30 TO 9AM AND EVENINGS 7:30 TO 9PM • SATURDAY, MAY 19: 9:30AM TO 4:30PM.

We will integrate formal practice and Dharma discussion with our daily life by surrounding our usual workweek and workdays with

practice and discussion. Begins with a half-day retreat with instructions and discussion, and ends with a daylong retreat. During the week we meet each morning and evening to inspire and support our daily life practice. To attend the retreat during the week, please attend the Sunday session. Sunday and Saturday sessions are open to all.

MINDFULNESS OF MIND DAYLONG WITH ANDREA FELLA

SATURDAY, MAY 19, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. Taught in the style of U Tejaniya. Practicing mindfulness on retreat is one of the foundations for maturing insight meditation. We will explore a relaxed open awareness with an emphasis on exploring qualities of mind, and the attitude towards one's experience. Such an open awareness practice supports both the formal meditation of sitting and walking, as well as awareness of our normal daily activities. With alternating periods of sitting and walking, with instructions and discussion. Aside from the instruction and discussion periods, the day will be primarily in silence. Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

IMC BOARD MEETING OPEN TO COMMUNITY

TUESDAY, MAY 22, 7 TO 9PM. All who come to IMC are welcome to attend the IMC Board meeting, in the community room. This is a good opportunity to interact with board members and Directors.

INTENSIVE DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 6AM TO 9PM. This is a great opportunity for a full day of immersion in silent Dharma Practice. Fifteen minute interviews with Gil will be available on a sign up basis. You are welcome to come for the entire day or drop in for any part of the retreat. If you come for only part of the day, please enter the meditation hall only at the beginning of a scheduled sitting. If you come while a sitting is in progress, sit in the outer hall. Bring lunch. Breakfast and light supper provided.

BUDDHISM & RECOVERY DAYLONG WITH JENNIFER LEMAS

SATURDAY, JUNE 9, 9:30 TO 3:30PM. The Buddha said that craving is the cause of suffering. Twelve Step programs work with the deepest forms of craving. How can these two traditions come together to deepen our spiritual life?

Through a combination of Buddhist meditation practices, interactive exercises, lecture and discussion, we will explore the ways that Buddhism and the 12 Steps complement each other. Beginners are welcome! The day is open to all those interested—you need not be in a Twelve Step program, nor have a background in Buddhist meditation. The day will include introductory meditation instructions.

SUMMER POTLUCK PICNIC

SUNDAY, JUNE 24, 11AM TO 3PM at Stafford Park on Hopkins Ave, Redwood City.

Please join us for a delightful summer picnic in the park following the dharma talk. All ages are welcome. We will be grateful if you can bring a dish for 4 to 6 people to share.

SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center and held at IMC. Visit sati.org or contact 650/223-0311, for more information.

ONLINE SUTTA STUDY: LONG DISCOURSE OF THE BUDDHA, PART A WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND DIANA CLARK 4 WEEKS, APRIL 16 THRU MAY 14. “The Long Discourses of the Buddha” is a collection of discourses filled with colorful stories, compelling characters and important teachings. We will explore how the Buddha responded to religious and existential views prevalent in ancient India and relevant today, including beliefs about the beginning of the world, what happens after death, and the nature of “Self.” The course will include study guides, videos and online group discussions.

INTRODUCTION TO BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY WITH JENNIFER LEMAS, JAKU KINST & OTHERS. SATURDAY, MAY 5, 9:30AM TO 12:30PM, Institute of Buddhist Studies, 2140 Durant Avenue, Berkeley.

A half-day 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. In recent years, Buddhist practitioners have been experiencing chaplaincy as a powerful opportunity to practice engaged Buddhism, and for some, as a profession. Information about the Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy Training and the Institute for Buddhist Studies Chaplaincy Degree Program will also be provided.

KINGIAN NONVIOLENCE & THE DHARMA WITH KAZU HAGA AND NIRALI SHAH. SATURDAY, JUNE 16, 9AM TO 4:30PM. Both the Buddha and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. were dedicated to the practice of nonviolence. The Buddha emphasized learning to see and then free the roots of violence that exists in each of us. Dr. King emphasized nonviolent action to engage skillfully with the conflicts in our lives and society, and to speak powerfully in the face of systems of injustice. Drawing on the wisdom of the Dharma and the teachings of Dr. King, this daylong will offer teachings and trainings in the principles of non-violence, the nature of conflict, working with intense emotions that conflict evokes, and channeling concern for justice in order to skillfully bring about positive personal and social changes.

ONLINE SUTTA STUDY COURSE: MIDDLE LENGTH DISCOURSES OF THE BUDDHA, PART 2 WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND DAVID LOREY 5 WEEKS, JULY 9 – AUGUST 19. The Middle Length Discourses (*Majjhima Nikaya*) is one of the most important anthologies of the teachings and religious practices attributed to the Buddha. The course consists of weekly readings of suttas from the Middle Length Discourses plus short videos, audio recordings and study guides written by Gil Fronsdal.

THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS ON MEDITATION; A 2-PART SERIES

PART 1: THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS ON MINDFULNESS WITH DIANA CLARK; SATURDAY, JULY 14, 9:30AM TO 3PM

For this first daylong we will explore the sayings of the Buddha with regard to mindfulness meditation. With an eye toward its practical applications, we'll examine the richness of how mindfulness was described, taught and practiced at the time of the Buddha.

PART 2: THE BUDDHA'S TEACHINGS ON CONCENTRATION WITH RICHARD SHANKMAN SATURDAY, JULY 28, 9:30AM TO 4PM

In this second daylong we will explore the various ways *samadhi* (concentration) is presented in the foundational texts, the range of ways it is practiced and taught today, and how to incorporate it into our meditation practice.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING

With Jennifer Block, Gil Fronsdal, and Paul Haller

Next 11 month training: September 2018–July 2019. For more information visit Sati.org

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

- 6:15 to 7pm (Note new time). Join us for yoga before evening meditation.

THURSDAY MORNING YOGA AND SITTING MEDITATION

- 8:30 to 10:30am.

LGBTQUEER SANGHA

4th Sunday of each month, 5pm to 6:30pm. We are led by Guiding Teacher John Martin and open to all who identify under the LGBTQ+ umbrella. Contact co-facilitators sue bachman and Joe Hayes at imcqueersangha@gmail.com with questions or to be added to our mailing list.

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.



YOUTH & FAMILY PROGRAMS

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. **Third Sunday of each month at IMC, 11:15am to 12:45pm.** Interactive mindfulness meditations, games, art/ crafts, and movement. RSVP to Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend, including the first name and age of each participant.

DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH–8TH GRADE) (6th-graders can attend Dharma Rocks and/or Dharma Bodhis). Led by Hilary Borison. **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 Vy Le & Gregor Levy. **First and third Sunday of each month, 5pm to 7pm.** We aspire to create a safe and joyful space where teens learn mindfulness to nurture inner-discovery, clarity and a deeper connection with others. After a guided meditation, we discuss issues around relationships with friends/family, stress, intentions, identity, etc, and in general have some fun with life! For info: www.mindfulteens.net. Please RSVP Vy or Gregor at Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com.

LABOR DAY WEEKEND FAMILY RETREAT

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 1 – MONDAY SEPTEMBER 3 at Jikoji Retreat Center, Los Gatos. Practice together as a family during a relaxed weekend that will offer structured retreat practice and small group sharing with other parents and children in grades K- 5, along with hiking and appreciation of the forest, grasslands, and views from the top of the Santa Cruz mountains. The site features camping and a limited number of shared dorm rooms. More info and applications on the Youth and Family Programs page on IMC's website. Applications will be due by late June.



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

SUPPORT GROUPS

SUPPORT GROUP FOR PERSONS WITH ILLNESS AND HEALTH CHALLENGES

First and Third Thursdays of the month, 12:30 to 2:30 pm. Meetings of this group include brief sittings and consideration of pertinent Dharma topics, but the primary purpose of the group is to provide each participant an opportunity to share personal challenges, triumphs, hopes, and fears with individuals facing a similar situation. At least four days before attending the group for the first time, please contact the group facilitator, Ying Chen at 408/802-6430 or yingchenb@yahoo.com.

BUDDHISM AND 12-STEP SUPPORT GROUP

Second Sunday of each month, 7:30 to 9pm. Group discussion and study exploring the 12-Step program and the teachings of the Buddha. Includes a 30-minute meditation, short talk and open discussion on the Buddha's teachings selected for the evening. Everyone welcome. Facilitated by Jennifer Lemas, jennlemas@comcast.net.

OTHER GROUPS

WOMEN'S CIRCLE OF MINDFULNESS

2ND THURSDAY OF EACH MONTH, 10:45AM TO 12:30PM.

A gathering for women who wish to deepen practice by exploring together how to bring principles of mindfulness into our daily lives. You're welcome to bring lunch or have tea until 1pm. Facilitated by Hilary Borison (hborison@sbcglobal.net).

DHARMA-INSPIRED BOOK GROUP

FRIDAYS, MARCH 16, APRIL 20, MAY 18. 7PM TO 8:30PM

IMC Meditation Hall. We are reading *The Book of Joy: Lasting Happiness in a Changing World* by His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Archbishop Desmond Tutu with Douglas Abrams. Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.

SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS PRACTICE SESSIONS

SUNDAYS, APRIL 8, MAY 6, JUNE 10, 1PM TO 2:30PM. Please join us as we strum our way to samadhi...with ukuleles! We are a group of sangha members who are getting together to sing and play ukulele. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For more information contact Martha Chickering at marthachickerting@gmail.com.

SONA'S DHARMA STRUMMERS PLAY AT HOPKINS MANOR

SUNDAYS, APRIL 29, MAY 20 JUNE 24, 1PM TO 2:30PM. We are making music with the residents of Hopkins Manor once a month. Hopkins Manor is a residential care facility for the elderly next to IMC. No prior musical experience is necessary. If you don't play the ukulele, you can come and sing along. For more information contact Martha Chickering at marthachickerting@gmail.com.