

The Spectrum of Desire

Gil Fronsdal

Desire is so inherent to the human condition that life without it is almost inconceivable. It is probably more accurate to call us “human desiringings” than “human beings.” Anyone wishing to live a wise life needs to explore deeply the nature of his or her own desire.

A number of myths about desire circulate among Buddhists. A common one is that desire is bad, and a spiritually mature person has no desires. Another is that the Buddha taught that desire is the cause of suffering and therefore all desire, even the desire to practice for liberation, is a problem. But life without desire is not necessarily a good thing: for example, one symptom of depression is having no desires. The Buddha did not teach that desire was the cause of suffering. In fact, he encouraged his followers to arouse ardent desire for liberation.

A starting point for understanding desire is to differentiate between unhealthy and healthy desire. Unhealthy desire undermines psychological health, producing what Buddhism often calls “suffering” for short. Healthy desire can contribute to psychological well-being, happiness, and peace. If we place healthy and unhealthy desire on a spectrum, at one end we have the motivations that lead to some of the worst and most horrific things people do. But at the other end, desire expresses some of the most beautiful and noble aspects of human life.

One way to distinguish the two ends of this spectrum is to differentiate between craving and aspiration. When the Buddha pointed to the cause of suffering, he used the word *tanhà* or thirst. It represents desire that is in some way compulsive, driven, and therefore not easy to let go of. This kind of desire is often accompanied by clinging, contraction, tension, or pressure.

Craving has its costs. People have destroyed their lives by acting on their addictions. When craving has the upper hand, it is all too easy to make poor choices. Freedom, that is, free will and the ability to choose wisely, is easily compromised. Craving takes a toll on our bodies when it expresses itself as physical tension. And it can take an even bigger toll on our minds: constant wanting can exhaust the mind. Left unchecked, craving can lead to an alienation from our self. Unfulfilled, craving can all too easily turn into frustration and anger.

One of the surprising discoveries that we make in mindfulness meditation is how pervasively and constantly the mind is under the sway of craving. This thirst is the primary reason the mind chases after its own thoughts.

An important function of meditation is to calm down the incessant churning of desire so that we can discover at the other end of the spectrum our deeper wellsprings of motivation. When surface concerns and chatter quiet down, among the beautiful things we can find are our aspirations. The etymology of “aspiration” (like “spiritual”) is rooted in the Latin word for “breath” (*spirare*). This points to the close relationship between breath and aspiration. Craving tends to contract the breathing; aspiration surfaces most easily when our breathing is relaxed and open. In the same way that natural breathing can’t be an act of will, so too the motivations and sense of purpose that come with aspiration can’t be willfully generated. Staying aware of our breathing can keep us close to what inspires us.

The sensitivity and awareness that come from mindfulness practice support the discovery of our healthy desires and aspirations. Mindfulness not only helps us get in touch with our aspirations, but it helps prevent aspiration from becoming craving. Even though what we might want is healthy and appropriate, if we are not careful, this desire can manifest as craving. Noticing the physical and mental tension, pressure, and uneasiness that come with craving makes it easier to distinguish aspiration from craving.

One way aspiration becomes craving is through expectation. At its best, aspiration has an openness to possibility without a need for anything to happen. This doesn’t mean that we don’t act on our aspirations, but that we don’t cling to their success. There is something satisfying and wonderful in a healthy aspiration that is not dependent on outcome.

If we want to base our lives on aspiration rather than craving, we have to give ourselves time to discover our deepest wishes. Aspiration often arises from a non-discursive part of the heart and mind. Craving and clinging are often tied to the discursive world of planning, thinking, and fantasy, while aspiration is associated with inner stillness and relaxation. Sometimes it is only during long contemplative periods that people discover what they most want to base their life on.

It is also important to respect both ourselves and our aspirations. It is easy to dismiss both our aspirations and the search for them. Believing that we are not good enough, capable, or deserving can leave us feeling unfulfilled and regretful. In the world of aspiration, it is far better to try and fail than to never try.

Buddhism recognizes many beautiful aspirations, including wish-

Continued inside



SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

GUIDE TO IMC PROGRAMS

The core, ongoing programs at IMC are the weekly meditations, followed by a Dharma talk, offered Sundays through Thursdays. Everyone is welcome to attend these.

In addition, we have a wide range of programs for beginners, intermediate students and more experienced students. While most of these programs are open for anyone to attend, it is helpful if practitioners gain a foundation with the basic programs before attending those for intermediate or experienced practitioners.

BASIC PROGRAMS

- Five-week **Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation** course offered a number of times a year in English, Spanish and online.
- Four-week **Beginners' Practice Group** sometimes offered as a follow up to the Introduction to Mindfulness course.
- Weekly **Basic Instructions**: an introduction to mindfulness practice—usually every Thursday.
- **Introduction to Loving Kindness Course**, offered once every year or two.
- **Introduction to Mindfulness Daylong**; offered on a Saturday once or twice a year.

INTERMEDIATE

- Saturday **Daylong Meditation Retreats**, offered monthly.
- Saturday daylong thematic retreats.
- **Dharma Practice Days** exploring a Buddhist theme for an entire year, meeting once a month on Fridays 9:30 am to 3:30 pm; usually from September through June.
- **Eightfold Path Program**—monthly two-hour class and monthly individual meetings with a mentor; usually from October through June.
- **Seven Factors of Awakening Program**—exploring this important aspect of meditation practice; meets Fridays once a month for seven months, June through July, 9:30am to 3:30pm.
- **Sati Center** classes for studying Buddhist teachings; often offered as Saturday day-long classes several times a year.
- Two- and three-day **Residential Retreats** at the Insight Retreat Center in Santa Cruz.
- **Refuge Class and Ceremony** once every two or three years.

EXPERIENCED

- **Daylong Intensive Retreat** in June every year; 6am to 9pm.
- **Week-long Retreats** at the Insight Retreat Center in Santa Cruz offered monthly.
- **Entering the Stream**—Eight-month program focused on in-depth study of Buddhist teachings, personal practice, and community. Meets Mondays once a month, 9:30am to 3:30pm, usually beginning in the Fall.
- **Sati Center's Online Course** on the teachings of the Buddha, usually from January to May.

DHARMA SERVICE PROGRAMS

- Volunteering at IMC or IRC
- Sati Center's Buddhist Chaplaincy program
- IMC/Sati Center's Dharma Mentoring Training Program

In addition, we have ongoing yoga classes, programs for children and youths, a young adult program, support groups and social gatherings. See the newsletter schedule for dates and times.

CELEBRATING THE EARTH

"Love is the greatest motivator: our deepest and most powerful action comes out of love: of this EARTH and of each other. The more people can connect with and feel love for the EARTH, the greater the likelihood that their hearts will be moved to help to prevent harm."

—Excerpt from Core Dharma Principles of Dharma Teachers Collaborative on Climate Change (10/21/13)

Following a successful Earth Care Faire at IMC on April 10, the IMC Earth Care Committee met on May 15 to discuss and explore how to carry forward our nurturance of the environment in alignment with Core Buddhist Principles.

We invite you to consider ways that you personally connect and feel love for the earth, such as carpooling to IMC when you can, taking a hike in your neighborhood, or noticing new beauty in your surroundings. Attend and share at our next Earth Care planning meeting at IMC on Sunday, July 24 at 11am.

EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

The Buddha's most explicit path of practice is the Eightfold Path. This is a set of eight practical approaches to bring Buddhist practice into the width and depth of our lives. The Eightfold Path Program is an introduction to each of the Eightfold factors so that participants can discover how to apply each set of practices in ways that are personally meaningful. Pre-requisite: completion of IMC's 5-week Introduction to Meditation course or the equivalent. The program has the following elements:

- 2-1/2 hour monthly group meetings that include teachings, meditation, and discussions.
- Readings, reflections and practices for each month.
- A monthly one-hour personal meeting with an Eightfold Path mentor to discuss one's practice and reflections on the Eightfold Path factors.
- Ends with a one-day Eightfold Path retreat.

See the Schedule for dates and information about mentors.

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

The Spectrum of Desire, cont'd. from front page

es of goodwill and kindness for others, and the desire for happiness and other wholesome qualities of mind for ourselves. Central to Buddhist practice are the aspirations for liberation and for the alleviation of the sufferings of others. However, Buddhism does not require us to desire either of these; when the heart is open and relaxed, these wishes often bubble up. Both aspirations can flow through us without egotism or craving. They can seem so natural that they appear impersonal. Just as water flows downhill, so the unimpeded heart flows to freedom and service. The healthy desire for freedom and compassion can flow like a mighty river that finds its rest in reaching the vast ocean.

2015 IMC FINANCIAL SUMMARY

All of IMC's programs are freely offered. The programs and the operation of our center are funded by donations and supported by volunteers.

2015 INCOME

Regular Donations to IMC	\$153,927
Year End Fund Drive	\$43,106
Total Income	\$197,033

2015 EXPENSES

General Operations	\$117,196
Building Operations	\$9,886
Total Expenses	\$127,082

With the year-end fund drive, we achieved a surplus of \$69,951 for 2015. This surplus is planned to be used toward a number of IMC projects: replacing the meditation hall higher windows along both long walls, improving our sound and recording equipment, reprinting *The Issue of Hand* and repairing sidewalk pavement once we have obtained the approval of Redwood City. Expenses for 2015 include maintaining Audio Dharma and the IMC website, rent for the Annex, newsletters, and donations toward health insurance for our teachers, Gil and Andrea. Insight Retreat Center donations and expenses are accounted for separately; hence not included in this summary.

We want to thank you for your continuing generosity and support to IMC. All donations to IMC or IRC may be fully tax deductible. (Our tax ID number is 77-0450217).

—With gratitude, Lydia Ridgway, IMC Treasurer

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.

THE DHARMA OF SERVICE: THE PRACTICE OF VOLUNTEERING AT IMC

WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND MAX ERDSTEIN

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7

7PM—RECEPTION • 7:30 TO 9PM—PROGRAM

IMC is run entirely by volunteers. The generosity and goodwill of our volunteers sustains the teachings, practice opportunities, and community life at IMC. Volunteering and being part of the volunteer teams are important areas in which both to apply the practices taught at IMC and to develop supportive relationships with others in the community. During this evening Gil will first offer brief teachings on the practice of volunteering and then lead a discussion about opportunities, challenges and joys of volunteering. We can also discuss any concerns about IMC and volunteering at IMC. All IMC volunteers are invited as well as anyone who might be interested in volunteering.

WALK TO FEED THE HUNGRY

October 15 in San Francisco; October 22 in San Jose

Buddhist Global Relief invites you to join us by participating in Walks to Feed the Hungry in San Francisco or San Jose. This year Buddhist Global Relief (www.buddhistglobalrelief.org) has granted more than a half million dollars in funding 33 projects in 15 countries, including the USA, to relieve chronic hunger and malnutrition through food aid, education, jobs training for women, and sustainable farming; helping thousands of the world's poor to rise out of deep poverty. For more information on the walks, visit www.karunabv.org/off-the-cushion.html.

IMC'S 2016 KARUNA AWARD CEREMONY

FOR JACQUES VERDUIN AND GRIP PROGRAM FACILITATORS

Friday, November 4: 7pm—Reception; 7:30 to 8:30pm—Award Ceremony; 8:30 to 9pm—Festivity

IMC is pleased to celebrate the extraordinary work of Jacques Verduin and his inmate facilitators of the Guiding Rage into Power (GRIP) program, at an IMC Award Ceremony and Fundraising Benefit. Mark your calendars to join us in honoring their service to inmates at San Quentin and other state prisons, in promoting the transformation and healing of men whom society has otherwise disregarded. Mindfulness and emotional intelligence are at the heart of the curriculum of GRIP. It is one of the most powerful opportunities within CA Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation for actual rehabilitation and healing, and hundreds of men are on the wait list to get in. Jacques has interest in expanding GRIP to additional prisons, including Soledad, where currently a number of IMC members volunteer weekly. We are inspired to bring our community together in support of this vision, to help more incarcerated men have the opportunity to learn the tools and practices to “become free from prison before they leave prison.”

Insight Meditation Center

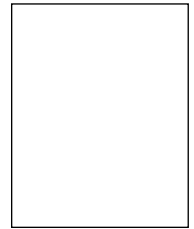
108 Birch Street

Redwood City, CA 94062

www.insightmeditationcenter.org

Email: insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com

650/599-3456



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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

July ~ September 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, July 13 – August 10, 7:30pm to 9pm, with Diana Clark and David Lorey
- 5 Wednesday Evenings, October 12 – November 9, 7:30 to 9pm, with Gil Fronsdal

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:

- July 16, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Day of Mindfulness & Appreciative Joy** with Max Erdstein
- August 6, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Daylong Retreat for Deaf Community** with Nikki Mirghafori
- August 27, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Aging, Dying, and Awakening** with Anna Douglas
- September 10, 9am to 4:30pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- September 17, 9:30am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness and Wisdom Retreat** with Andrea Fella
- Saturday, October 1, 8:30am to 5pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal

RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

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

- August 17–21, **Insight Retreat** with Nikki Mirghafori and Richard Shankman (Waiting list)
- October 7–10, **Insight Retreat for People in their 20's and 30's** with Max Erdstein and Matthew Brensilver (Registration opens July 7)
- November 3–6, **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Max Erdstein (Registration opens August 3)
- November 13–20, **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Bob Stahl (Registration opens July 13)
- December 11–18, **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella (Registration opens August 11)

SERIES PROGRAMS

SEVEN FACTORS OF AWAKENING PROGRAM

FINAL CLASS: SATURDAY: JULY 9, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM. Bring lunch.

DHARMA PRACTICE DAY SERIES: THE TEN PERFECTIONS WITH GIL FRONSDAL. FRIDAYS 9:30AM TO 3:30PM, SEP 9, OCT 7, NOV 4, DEC 2, JAN 13, FEB 10 (ENDING 2:30PM), MAR 10, APR 21, MAY 26. A ten month program of study, exploration and practice of the ten perfections (*paramis*)—the ten qualities of character which, when developed, support both Buddhist practice and compassionate involvement with others. These 'perfections' are core Buddhist values. The Dharma Practice Day series is one of the core programs at IMC. People are welcome to attend any or all of the Friday programs. Bring lunch.

SUMMER PICNIC AT RED MORTON PARK • SUNDAY, JULY 10 • 11AM TO 2PM

1120 Roosevelt Ave, Redwood City (on Valota Rd. side)

Join your fellow sangha members—adults, teens, children, and babies—in sharing friendship and favorite summer foods at IMC's summer vegetarian potluck picnic. This is a great chance to meet others who practice mindfulness. Everyone is welcome. If you can, bring a dish for 4 to 6 people to share. If you can't bring a dish, please bring yourself!

EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

TAUGHT BY CHRIS CLIFFORD AND OTHERS

- **SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2 TO 3:30PM—INTRODUCTION TO THE PATH**
- **SUNDAYS 1 TO 3:30PM. 2016: OCT 9, NOV 6, DEC 4; 2017: JAN 8, FEB 5, MARCH 5, APRIL 2, MAY 7**
- **SATURDAY, JUNE 17, 2017, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM—CONCLUDING DAYLONG RETREAT AT IMC**

Pre-requisite: completion of IMC's 5-week Introduction to Meditation course or equivalent. Application required by September 15 (found on IMC's website's Special Programs page). Contact eightfoldpath@insightmeditationcenter.org with questions. See *Sangha Programs & News* for more information.

ENTERING THE STREAM PROGRAM

MONDAYS, 9AM TO 4PM. 2016: OCT 3, NOV 7, DEC 5; 2017: JAN 9, FEB 6, APR 3, MAY 15, JUN 12

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. The program includes required monthly readings and short reflective essays.

Pre-requisites: at least five years of insight meditation practice, five seven-day (or longer) silent vipassana retreats, and completion of IMC's Eightfold Path Program or its equivalent.

Participation by selection. To apply go to IMC's website Special Events page. Applications due by September 1. Notification of acceptance in mid-September.

Questions: email imc.enteringthestream@gmail.com.

SPECIAL EVENTS

SUMMER MORNING MEDITATION AT IMC

LED BY DIANA CLARK. JULY 11 – AUGUST 19, MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY, 7 TO 7:45AM. Special opportunity to meditate at IMC weekday mornings. Includes 40 minutes of meditation and a brief introduction to a dharma topic. Everyone welcome to participate any day or for all 30 days.

DAY OF MINDFULNESS & APPRECIATIVE JOY

WITH MAX ERDSTEIN. JULY 16, 9:30AM 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

DAYLONG RETREAT FOR THE DEAF COMMUNITY

WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI. AUGUST 6, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM

A mindfulness retreat for members of the deaf community who rely on ASL for communication. The day will be ASL-interpreted by RID-certified interpreters. Instruction will be given on mindfulness meditation with an emphasis on understanding the hindrances to mindfulness. Bring lunch.

AGING, DYING, AND AWAKENING WITH ANNA DOUGLAS
SATURDAY, AUGUST 27, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM. Especially recommended for those 55 and over. Join a group of your peers for a mindful exploration of the universal experiences of aging, dying, and awakening as they are revealing themselves to you. The day will include silent sitting and walking, dharma teachings, interactive contemplations, and discussion.

THE DHARMA OF SERVICE: THE PRACTICE OF VOLUNTEERING AT IMC WITH GIL FRONSDAL AND MAX ERDSTEIN. WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 7, 7PM RECEPTION, 7:30 TO 9PM PROGRAM

For a detailed description, see *Sangha Programs & News*

MINDFULNESS OF THE BODY DAYLONG RETREAT

WITH GIL FRONSDAL. SEPTEMBER 10, 9AM TO 4:30PM. With alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation, instruction in mindfulness practice, guided meditation, and a Dharma talk. It is recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Focus will be on mindfulness of the body and physical experience. Bring lunch.

MINDFULNESS & WISDOM NON-RESIDENTIAL RETREAT

WITH ANDREA FELLA. SEPTEMBER 17 – 23. During this week-long non-residential retreat 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.

This retreat begins with a non-residential weekend retreat on Saturday, 9/17, 9:30am to 4:30pm; and Sunday, 9/18, integrating with the Sunday morning program and continuing in the afternoon from 1 to 4:30pm. For those who attend the entire weekend program, the retreat can continue during the week with meetings Monday through Friday from 7 to 9am each morning. These meetings will include instructions and Dharma discussion. To support the community continuing to practice together during the week, Andrea asks that you commit to attending every morning during the week.

MINDFULNESS AND WISDOM DAYLONG RETREAT

WITH ANDREA FELLA. SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 9:30AM TO 4:30PM

The schedule for the retreat will alternate periods of sitting and walking with instructions and discussion. Aside from the instruction and discussion periods, the day will be primarily in silence. It is recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners.

This daylong retreat begins the first day of a week-long non-residential retreat, for more information, see above. Please bring a bag lunch.

DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1, 8:30AM TO 5PM. For those who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. Brief interviews available with Gil. Bring lunch.

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.** Fun, interactive mindfulness games, crafts, and meditations. RSVP to Liz at eapowell@aol.com if you plan to attend.

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.

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.

SATI CENTER

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

TRAINING ON THE GRADUAL PATH: THE BUDDHA'S DESCRIPTION OF PRACTICE WITH LEIGH BRASINGTON.

SATURDAY, JULY 23, 9:30AM TO 4:30 PM. The "gradual training" is the path of practice taught by the Buddha that leads from first setting out on one's spiritual journey all the way to final liberation. This course will take a comprehensive look at the various texts in Pali Canon that speak to such gradual training and how it might resonate with our own journey on the path to liberation. Special attention will be given to the *Samannaphala Sutta*: The Fruits of the *Spiritual Life* which discusses in detail the factors enumerating this training. Please bring lunch.

BUDDHIST CHAPLAINCY TRAINING PROGRAM

TAUGHT BY JENNIFER BLOCK, PAUL HALLER, AND GIL FRONSDAL
SEPTEMBER 16, 2016 – JULY 2017. An 11-month training program introducing a Buddhist perspective on spiritual care skills needed for being a chaplain or Buddhist teacher, or providing spiritual support for people in times of major life transitions and challenges. Registration required.

THE NOBLE EIGHTFOLD PATH WITH THANISSARO BHIKKHU
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 9AM TO 4:30PM. The Noble Eightfold Path was the Buddha's first and last teaching, the framework for everything else that he taught. This course— through readings, talks, discussion, and meditation—will focus on the useful things that can be learned by asking some very basic questions about this teaching: How is the path noble? Why is it called a path? What are its eight factors, and in what way are they "right"? How are they interconnected, and how do they aid in abandoning the causes of suffering?

Bring lunch. There will be an opportunity to offer food to Thanissaro Bhikkhu and attending monastics.

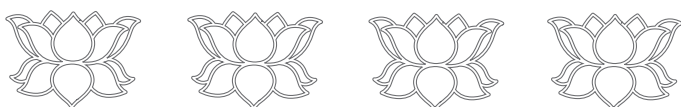
AFFINITY GROUPS

LGBTQUEER SANGHA

2ND SUNDAY OF EACH MONTH, 7:30PM TO 9PM (IMC). 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, with new Guiding Teacher John Martin. 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.



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.

- **Mindful Hike at Edgewood Park**—Sat, July 2, 9am. Moderate 5-6 mile hike, in sun and shade; includes walking meditation period. Dress in layers, wear sunscreen. Heavy rain cancels. Carpool from IMC. Brenda Maste, brendamaste@att.net, 650/581-8641.
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—Fridays: July 15, Aug 19, Sept 16. 7 to 8:30pm. IMC Meditation Hall. We are reading *The Buddha's Brain*, by Rick Hanson. Anne Foster, afoster@rawbw.com, 650/591-1285.
- **Earth Care Solo Cooking Demonstration & Picnic**—Sun, July 17, 11am to 3:30pm. Enjoy solar cooked food prepared in a variety of commercial and homemade cookers. Try making a simple cooker or bring one to share. Solar thermal cooking saves fuel and water, keeps the house cooler, and is a fun way to learn about science. Contact Marianna Tubman for location, taraihito@yahoo.com, 650/906-1409
- **Mindfulness Hike Across San Francisco**—Sat, July 23, Meet at 9am at IMC. Approx. 8 miles. Starting at the Golden Gate Park Windmills we'll traverse the City and end up at the Ferry Building on Embarcadero. Dress in layers, wear sunscreen. Heavy rain cancels. Contact Shelly sgordon@g2comm.com for details on driving, stops, etc.
- **Dharma Friends Event Planning Meeting**—Sunday, July 31, 11am to 12pm. Plan events for October, November, December 2016. IMC conference room, directly following the Sunday morning meditation and Dharma talk.
- **Collage as Inquiry**—Sat, Aug 6, 1pm to 4pm in IMC Meditation Hall. Insightful collage making; no art-making experience necessary. RSVP to Ryl Brock Wilson, ryl@artasaccess.com, 510/384-4795.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Practice Sessions**—Sundays, Aug 7, Sep 11 and Oct 9, 1 to 2:30pm. Join fellow Sangha members for an afternoon of fun and connection in Palo Alto. Sing and play the ukulele as we practice for our Hopkins Manor gigs. For info, contact Paul at sonasstrummers@gmail.com.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Playing at Hopkins Manor**. Sundays, Aug 21, Sep 25 and Oct 23, 1:30 to 2:30pm. For a wonderful chance to put your spiritual practice into action, please join us as we make music with the elderly residents of Hopkins Manor care home. Ukulele players, singers and merrymakers welcome. For info, contact Paul at 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 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.

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.

CHARITABLE EVENTS

AIDS WALK SAN FRANCISCO • JULY 17TH

On July 17, a team of members from IMC/IRC will walk the walk. Our intention is to help relieve suffering in our community by raising funds through donations. The funds will benefit dozens of organizations working to stop new HIV infections and support people living with HIV/AIDS. Here's how you can help:

- Donate directly to AIDS Walk SF through our team here: sf.aidswalk.net/Team/View/22792/IMCIRC-Compassion-Team
- Register & join our team, Insight Meditation Center Compassion Team, and help us raise funds. Walk with us in person or as a virtual walker.
- Register here for our team #1065: sf.aidswalk.net/Account/Register

Tell your friends & family about our Compassion Team and share us on social media. For info: joe@insightretreatcenter.org.



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.

- Wednesdays, September – October 19, 6 to 7:15pm, Vipassana meditation with Berget Jelane
- Wednesday evening sitting, 7:30 to 9pm.
- Half-day Retreat, Saturday, July 16, 9:30 to 12:15pm
- Segaki ceremony with Floating Zendo, Saturday, October 15, 9am to 12pm

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