

## Mindful Listening

The great value of mindfulness practice can be found in the ordinary activities of daily life. It is not necessary to engage in extraordinary pursuits to realize the full depth and breadth of Buddhist practice. Listening is one of the ordinary, daily activities that can serve as a powerful vehicle for cultivating mindfulness, insight, and freedom. Dharma practice is to develop the ability to “see clearly;” listening well is a way to do this. Through listening we can better appreciate what others are saying and gain greater self-understanding.

Imagine yourself standing in front of a great wall stretching far to the right and far to the left. In the middle is a closed door. You open the door, and step through. On the other side of the wall is a vast sky and a great panorama of mountains and valleys receding toward a far distant horizon. From this view you appreciate the great vastness and spaciousness of the world. Then you turn around and step back through the door to the other side of the wall. Standing on the other side you see that here is a vista of a vast ocean sprinkled with beautiful islands. In fact, on either side of the door there is an equally wide, large world to be explored and studied. Listening can be understood as the door between two vast worlds, the world outside of yourself and the world inside yourself. The first is what your ears can hear. The second is what is going on in your body, mind, and heart as you listen. To practice mindful listening is to reside in the doorway between these two worlds so you can be attentive and wise in both.

To listen well, it is helpful to distinguish listening from hearing. Listening is an active, deliberate activity while hearing doesn't require any effort or intention. With a loud sound, no effort is needed to hear it. However, one might need to intentionally listen to identify the source of the sound. If we were to mime someone listening we might cup a hand behind one ear and lean in the direction of a sound. It is much more difficult to mime ‘hearing’ because hearing is not an activity we do, it is a mode of receptivity to whatever sounds that might occur. By having a clear distinction between listening and hearing we can then choose one over the other. Sometimes, it can be deeply relaxing to make no effort to listen except to rest in the hearing, especially with meditation, music, or sounds of nature. More often in daily life however, we either listen actively or not very well, for example, when we don't fully listen to what others are saying.

One form of active listening is to listen mindfully, that is, with clear attention and interest. Listening mindfully is to intentional-

ly bring greater awareness to the experience of listening rather than listening habitually or perhaps half-heartedly. To make it a mindfulness practice we also give priority to listening for the purpose of listening rather than letting another purpose dominate. We attend to listening in such a way that we both listen better and are aware of our attitude while listening.

The better your understanding of what goes on within you as you listen, the better you can understand the obstruction to listening well and what you can do to listen more mindfully. Mindful listening requires a willingness to put aside, at least temporarily, the agendas, preferences, opinions, and judgments that interfere with being able to listen well. At the same time, it can involve actively noticing the internal impact and response you have to what is heard. Then, you can choose to keep your focus on the different dimensions of what you listening to rather than easily wandering off in thought. Not only can you listen more carefully to the content of what someone is saying, you can notice their facial expressions, tone of voice, posture, and attitude.

Without mindfulness, listening can sometimes be done with eagerness—even impatience—for someone who is talking to finish. An internal pressure to speak, or having anticipatory thoughts, can interfere with our full listening to what others are saying. In contrast, to listen mindfully is to be generous with our time; to live in the flow of time, each thing allowed its own time.

You know you are listening mindfully when you continue to listen after someone has stopped speaking. Listen to the silence. Or let the receptivity with which you listened become an additional occasion to notice what is happening within yourself or with the person to whom you are listening. Such a pause—even a two second pause—gives you time to digest what was said. It is also a time to discover what you want to say before you actually say it. Such self-awareness can protect you from saying things you later regret. The pause may also give others a chance to discover what is going on in their own minds and bodies.

Mindful listening is embodied listening. This means that you don't just listen with your ears. You can feel the physical impact of what you hear. What sensations arise in the body in response to what is heard? What parts of your body get energized in the hearing? What gets tense, what relaxes?

Embodied listening includes assuming a posture that supports better listening. Perhaps sitting up straighter with the chest



# SANGHA PROGRAMS & NEWS

## THE MIDDLE LENGTH DISCOURSES:

### ORIGINAL TEACHINGS OF THE BUDDHA

#### A Sati Center Online Course

The Sati Center's online class, "Studying the Middle Length Discourses of the Buddha (the *Majjhima Nikaya*)", taught by Gil Fronsdal, offers a stimulating and engaging course of study, with a carefully selected set of readings, in-depth study-guides covering both general topics and specific discourses, and group discussion in online forums.

The *Majjhima Nikaya*, a collection of 152 discourses—including Dharma talks, debates, and Q&A sessions with the Buddha—contains some of the most important sacred texts of Theravada Buddhism and some of the oldest surviving teachings of Buddhism. Among its many riches, it contains the oldest biographical material of the Buddha's own practice as well as the foundational teachings for mindfulness and insight practices. No other source has a comparable range and profundity of early Buddhist teachings couched in rich, human encounters and events.

The Sati Center online class arranges its exploration of the *Majjhima Nikaya* in thematic subject areas, devoting individual weeks of study to such topics as faith, paths of practice, the historical Buddha, karma and rebirth, training in community, meditation, attainments, and enlightenment.

The next class begins January 18, 2016. Registration will begin the first week of December 2015. More information can be found at [Sati.org](http://Sati.org). For further questions, feel free to contact David Lorey ([davidlorey@sati.org](mailto:davidlorey@sati.org)).

## CHILDREN'S BOOK DRIVE

In November we begin our annual children's book drive to benefit the Fair Oaks Community Center in Redwood City. As part of their holiday food distribution on December 11, IMC will donate new or nearly-new books for several hundred children. It's a delightful way for our sangha to offer dana to our under-resourced neighbors. Not only does it promote a love of reading, it brings smiles to many young faces as they select a special book for themselves and their siblings. Books from pre-school through high school ages are needed. If "nearly new," please be sure there is no writing in them or missing parts. Look for the collection box in the community hall in November. We will also need volunteers to sort the books on Thursday, December 12. To help or if you have questions, please contact Hilary Borison at [IMC.VolunteerDirector@gmail.com](mailto:IMC.VolunteerDirector@gmail.com).



Most teachings given at IMC are recorded and posted online at [Audiodharma.org](http://Audiodharma.org)

## THANK YOU FROM GIL

I was astounded by the phenomenal celebration of my 25 years of teaching at IMC. In a rare occurrence, the great joy I felt from the event managed to so silence me that I had trouble finding words to thank everyone!

Twenty-five years ago I could never have imagined what IMC has grown to become. Being part of the IMC community for all these years has been one of the bright lights of my life. I have been inspired by the goodness, dedication, and maturity of so many people who have participated in our community. I am delighted by the growth of the sangha and by the opportunity I have had to practice and serve within our sangha.

I am very thankful for all the donations that paid off the mortgage on the property next to IRC that IMC/IRC purchased recently. Because the welfare of our new retreat center is so important for me, the gift was perfect. Receiving the 27-inch golden, cardboard "key" to the house, was the gift of a lifetime!

The celebration, the book of good wishes and messages I received from people near and far, and the gift, have all infused me with even more enthusiasm for teaching in our community for another twenty-five years.

I also thank the phenomenal support that my wife, Tamara, has provided all these years that has made it possible for me to teach at IMC.

*Thank you all!*

Gil Fronsdal



## EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

### OCTOBER 2015 TO MAY 2016

This program is a chance to learn and practice one of the foundational set of Buddhist practices, i.e., those connected to the Eightfold Path. The program consist of monthly meetings at IMC, recorded teachings by Gil, readings, reflections and a monthly meeting with an Eightfold Path mentor. An online option exists. For more information see the Schedule in this newsletter.

## HELP IRC WHILE BUYING OR SELLING A HOME

Carol Collins is an IMC sangha member and longtime local real estate broker, now retired. If you are selling your home, she can refer you to a realtor who specializes in your area. If you are buying, she can refer you to a realtor who will help you identify properties, areas, loans, etc. Buying or selling, the realtor will make a donation in your name to our Insight Retreat Center.

Carol will be available as your consultant at no charge through the whole process. She has performed this service for sangha members in San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, and other Bay Area counties. If you have any questions or would like to discuss buying or selling a home, contact Carol at 408/348-1385 or [carolcollins888@gmail.com](mailto:carolcollins888@gmail.com).

## THE GREAT PASSING AWAY OF THE FIRST BUDDHIST NUN

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14

6:30 TO 7:30PM: RECEPTION

7:30 TO 9PM: DRAMATIZATION

IMC will host a grand dramatization of the great passing away of the first Buddhist nun and the Buddha's foster mother, Mahapajapati. The dramatization will be based on an ancient poem that confidently asserts the spiritual potential of women.

It also celebrates the role Buddhist nuns have for teaching the Dharma and displaying the attainment of liberation. It is likely this poem was originally composed to be dramatized. It is also likely that it was composed by women at a time when the nuns' order was quite strong, before the decline of the position of women in Buddhism. Thus, dramatizing the poem at IMC is a way of reviving an ancient form of teaching practiced among ancient Buddhist women.

The evening is a benefit for the Saranaloka nuns, a group of pioneering Theravada Buddhist nuns who are part of a modern movement reviving the nuns' order. These nuns have bought property to become their monastery. Any donations given at the benefit will go to helping them pay down their mortgage. The financial stability of the nuns will go a long way to support them in their important work. The dramatization will be hosted by women Buddhist teachers, including the Saranaloka nuns.

### WOMEN IN BUDDHISM SYMPOSIUM:

IN HONOR OF THE NUNS OF ALOKA VIHARA

NOVEMBER 14, 9AM TO 4PM AT IMC

The Sati Center is hosting a unique symposium highlighting the accomplishments of women scholars in the early years of Buddhist Studies in the West, on the one hand, and portraits of women as presented in the scriptures of early Buddhist literature on the other. We will celebrate the contributions of these women as part of a benefit to support the pioneering Theravada Buddhist nuns living at Aloka Vihara in the Sierra foothills. The symposium will consist of six short talks by scholars presenting on their original research, followed by discussion. The presenters include Grace Burford, Diana Clark, Meg Gawler, Jan Nattier, and Dawn Neal. Bring a bag lunch. Lunch will be at 11 am and include a meal offering for the nuns attending. No registration needed.

The symposium is a benefit for the Aloka Vihara nuns' community.

#### PARKING

Please do not park in the parking lot of The Abigail, the nursing facility across the street from IMC on Hopkins Ave. They need their parking space and find it challenging when participants at IMC park there.

#### Mindful Listening, *cont'd. from front page*

open. Perhaps turning toward the person who is speaking. It can be helpful to assume a posture or a gesture that indicates you are listening. Perhaps leaning forward slightly. Or nodding your head to the points the person is making. By being actively involved in listening we listen better. It also helps the speaker to know we are really listening.

A famous story from the *Ramayana*, an epic poem in the Hindu tradition, illustrates the power of careful listening. The story tells of Rama walking in the forest with some companions. When Rama starts hearing the faint whisper of a voice, he asks his companions if they can hear it. They say, "No." Rama begins to walk toward the whisper. As he gets closer he recognizes it is his name that is being spoken, "Rama...Rama." As the voice becomes louder, his friends still say they can't hear it. Finally Rama comes to a large boulder from which the sound comes. He then places his two hands gently on the boulder. At this point the rock breaks open and inside is a person who has been stuck in the rock through a magic spell. By listening to the whisper he was able to discover what was locked up and then release it.

In this way, to listen mindfully is to give care in order to hear the faint whispers inside others and ourselves and to discover the significant thoughts, feelings, and desires that may be shy or overlooked. Once discovered, the quiet whispers then have the opportunity to be heard.

Listening—as all forms of active attention—is an intentional act, and as such is connected to our desires, emotions, attitudes, values, and preferences. Because of this connection it can be helpful to use the following questions to help explore your listening. You might take your time with each question, perhaps giving yourself a week to reflect on it before exploring the next one.

- What purpose motivates your listening?
- What concerns and desires influence your listening?
- Are there emotions coloring what you hear?
- How interested and attentive are you to what you're listening to?
- When someone is speaking, how much are you listening to the person and how much are you engaged in your own thoughts?
- What expectations do you have when you listen?

In different situations, you will have different answers to these questions. The answers may point to how to listen more attentively, with greater wisdom.

Mindful listening is a great way to cultivate greater mindfulness in daily life. Listening is always a present moment activity; when we listen we are present. When we listen actively and receptively we are developing the faculties needed for the practice of mindfulness. Practicing mindful listening is a foundation for the more difficult task of speaking mindfully. Until we have a strong capacity to stay mindful while we speak, it is good to remember the saying that "we have two ears and one mouth so we can listen more than we speak."

—Gil Fronsdal

# Insight Meditation Center

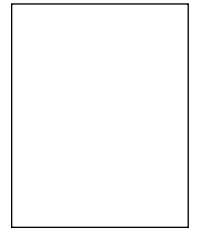
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### WAYS TO DONATE

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.

**NEW! AMAZON SMILE:** A simple and automatic way to support IMC/IRC every time you shop through Amazon, at no cost to you. Go to [insightretreatcenter.org/smile](http://insightretreatcenter.org/smile).

You can also enter Amazon through IMC's **RECOMMENDED BOOKS** page to get this benefit when you make a purchase.

**DONATE YOUR CAR:** You can make a tax-deductible donation of a vehicle you no longer want, working or not. The *Center for Car Donations* will handle pick-up and all paperwork needed; IMC/IRC will receive 75% of the sale price. Tell them you want to donate to Insight Retreat Center. Call 877/411-3662 and a helpful representative will guide you through the process.

**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](http://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](mailto:legacy@insightmeditationcenter.org).

#### • GENERAL INFORMATION:

[insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com](mailto:insightmeditationcenter@gmail.com) or 650/599-3456.

• **NEWSLETTER QUESTIONS:** Contact the editor at [imc.newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:imc.newsletter@gmail.com).

• **CONNECT:** To be added or removed from the IMC mailing list or to update your address, phone, or email **-OR-** to sign up for our UPCOMING EVENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS emails, go to the IMC website and click on the CONNECT link.



# SCHEDULE OF EVENTS

October ~ December 2015

## WEEKLY MEDITATION AND TALKS

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### 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

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### 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, October 7 – November 4, 7:30 to 9pm with Gil Fronsdal
- 5 Wednesday afternoons, October 14 – November 11, 1 to 2:30pm, with Diana Clark & Andrea Castillo

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.

### BEGINNERS PRACTICE GROUP

- Wednesday, Nov 11, 17, Dec 2, 9, 7:30 to 9pm, with Diana Clark and Tanya Wiser

For beginners who have taken an introductory mindfulness meditation class and would like to take the next step in building and supporting their practice. With a 20-minute meditation, review of basic instruction and introduction to further teachings.

## DAYLONG RETREATS

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On Saturdays, unless otherwise noted:

- October 3, 8:30am to 5pm, **Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- Friday, October 9, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Dharma Practice Day—Mindfulness of Breathing** with Gil Fronsdal.
- October 24, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Exploring the Dhammapada** (Sati Center event) with Diana Clark
- Friday, November 6, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Dharma Practice Day – Mindfulness of Breathing** with Gil Fronsdal
- November 7, 1 to 4pm, **Teen Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal
- November 21, 9am to 4:30pm, **Embodying Lovingkindness** with Meg Gawler
- Friday, December 4, 9:30am to 3:30pm, **Dharma Practice Day – Mindfulness of Breathing** with Gil Fronsdal
- December 5, 9am to 4:30pm, **Mindfulness Daylong** with Gil Fronsdal
- December 12, 9:30am to 5pm, **Mindfulness, Identity, Culture and Ethnicity** with Nikki Mirghafori and Bruni Dávila

## RESIDENTIAL RETREATS

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### AT THE INSIGHT RETREAT CENTER (NEAR SANTA CRUZ)

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

- November 5–8, **Insight Retreat** with Ines Freedman and Lori Wong.
- November 28–December 4, **Mindfulness and Wisdom Retreat** with Andrea Fella & Alexis Santos.
- December 6–13 **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal and Andrea Fella
- January 15-18, **Insight Retreat** with Matthew Brensilver & Alexis Santos, Registration opens October 15.
- January 24–31, **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal, Susie Harrington & Brian Lesage, Registration opens September 24.
- February 23–28, **Insight Retreat** with Gil Fronsdal & Ines Freedman, Registration opens October 23.

## LONG PROGRAMS

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### DHARMA PRACTICE PROGRAM: MINDFULNESS OF BREATHING WITH GIL FRONSDAL

A 9-month program focusing on the development of *Anapanasati*, Mindfulness of Breathing. Meditation on breathing is one of the most common forms of meditation in Buddhism. The program will be based on the *Anapanasati Sutta* which details the Buddha's instructions for using the breath as a means to develop the entire path of meditation practice. A combination of meditation, teachings, and discussions. You may attend any part of the series. On the following Fridays, 9:30 am to 3:30 pm—**2015:** 10/9, 11/6, 12/4; **2016:** 1/22, 2/19, 3/18, 4/15, 5/13.

### EIGHTFOLD PATH PROGRAM

The Buddha's most explicit path of practice is the Eightfold Path; a set of eight practical approaches to bring Buddhist practice into the width and depth of our lives. This 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 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 at the Insight Retreat Center in Scotts Valley (date tbd).

On the following Sundays, 1 to 3:30pm—**2015:** 10/4, 10/25, 11/22, Dec 13; **2016:** 1/10, 2/14, 3/13, 4/10, 5/22

**To apply for a personal mentor:** fill out an online application found via a link under the Eightfold Path Mentoring notice on the Special Events page of IMC's website. Anyone (with or without a mentor) is welcome to attend the Sunday meetings above.

### SPECIAL EVENTS

#### DAYLONG RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 3, 8:30AM TO 5PM.** This retreat is meant for people who already understand the basic practice of mindfulness; no instruction will be given. Brief interviews with Gil will be available. Bring lunch.

#### MINDFUL SELF-COMPASSION PROGRAM

**WITH HILARY BORISON & JUDY LONG. 4 TUESDAYS, OCTOBER 3 – NOVEMBER 24, 1 TO 3:30PM** Cultivating self-compassion is a path to the alleviating of suffering, especially the suffering of painful self-criticism, shame, and feelings of unworthiness. This course will offer practices, reflections, and teachings for developing greater self-compassion, self-acceptance; as well as a helpful foundation for practicing insight meditation.

#### BUDDHIST SPIRITUAL CARE SYMPOSIUM

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 17, 9AM TO 5PM.** Welcoming Buddhist chaplains and anyone interested in deepening their practice of offering spiritual care for a day of learning and community-building. More info and pre-registration at [www.metta4.us](http://www.metta4.us) or call Bill Hart: 415/567-9823.

#### DHARMA-INSPIRED ARTISTRY NIGHT

**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 23, 6:30 TO 8:30PM.** Writers, musicians, and artists, including those featured in the newly released 2015 edition of *Passing It On: Lay Practitioners Share Dharma Wisdom*, will present their work and insights at IMC.

#### DHARMA AND THE CREATIVE PROCESS WITH DAWN NEAL

**TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27, 7:30 TO 9PM AT THE IMC ANNEX.** How does meditation practice influence creative expression and how we experience the identity of "artist"? How might the creative process inform our capacity to awaken? Meditation practitioners and creative types of all kinds are welcome for an evening of meditation, a short talk, and group discussion.

#### SUTTA STUDY AS A SUPPORT FOR PRACTICE WITH KIM

**ALLEN. WEDNESDAYS, OCTOBER 28, NOVEMBER 4 & 11, 7:30 TO 9PM AT THE IMC ANNEX.** The Pali Canon is a body of texts containing teachings that may be close to what the historical Buddha taught. Many practitioners find it meaningful to explore the teachings as practice instructions, discovering ways in which this ancient wisdom is still relevant in their modern lives. In this 3-week course we will read early Buddhist texts and learn in a group setting. Please register at <http://tinyurl.com/pfbq5la> due to limited space.

#### TEEN RETREAT WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 7, 1 TO 4PM.** Within Buddhism, meditation is one element of an integrated approach to living a wise and stress-free life. This retreat will include instruction and practice of meditation, and an introduction to the Four Noble Truths, which point to a happiness and peace not tied to our experiences in life. Discovering this happiness brings balance through all the changes life can bring. There will be time for peer discussion and exploration of the day's topics. All teens are welcome.

#### THE GREAT PASSING AWAY OF THE FIRST BUDDHIST NUN: A BENEFIT FOR THE SARANALOKA NUNS

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 6:30 TO 7:30PM: RECEPTION, 7:30 TO 9PM: DRAMATIZATION** IMC will host a dramatization of the great passing away of the first Buddhist nun and the Buddha's foster mother, Mahapajapati, based on an ancient poem.. (See *Sangha Programs & News* for details).

#### EMBODYING LOVINGKINDNESS DAYLONG

**WITH MEG GAWLER. SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 21, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** We will explore bringing a quality of lovingkindness to our mindfulness practice through three 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, will include sitting and walking meditation, a dharma talk, Qigong instruction, and guided meditations. Bring lunch.

#### THANKSGIVING DAY YOGA AND MEDITATION WITH TERRY

**LESSER. THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 26, 8:30 TO 10:30AM.** We begin with 1-1/2 hours of yoga followed by a break and silent sitting meditation. Beginners welcome. The class is a mixed level and everyone is encouraged to work in accordance with their own needs and abilities. Bring a large towel and sticky mat, if you have one.

#### MINDFULNESS DAYLONG WITH GIL FRONSDAL

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 5, 9AM TO 4:30PM.** Recommended for both beginners and experienced practitioners. Bring lunch.

### **MINDFULNESS, IDENTITY, CULTURE & ETHNICITY**

#### **DAYLONG WITH NIKKI MIRGHAFORI & BRUNI DAVILA**

**SATURDAY, DECEMBER 12, 9:30AM TO 5PM,**

In the rich multi-cultural nature of American society, an important part of Buddhist practice is to take a deep look at our personal and collective identities, including those connected to ethnicity, race, culture, and many other factors. We will first use the container of Buddhism to examine our projections and identities, then examine how our collective identities shape our cultural experience of Buddhist practice within Buddhist communities in the West. With periods of meditation, guided reflection, small group exercises and large group discussions. Bring lunch.

#### **NEW YEAR'S EVE CELEBRATION WITH BERGET JELANE**

**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 31, 7:30PM TO 12:15AM.** Join us on New Year's Eve for an IMC tradition—celebrate the ending of 2015 and the beginning of 2016. We will enjoy sitting and walking meditation, time for reflection and sharing; refreshments (bring any holiday leftovers you wish to share); and end with chanting and ringing the bell 108 times. Please come whenever you can and stay as long as you like. The only thing we ask is not to leave and return. A schedule will be posted at the door. See you then!

### **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](mailto: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](mailto:jennlemas@comcast.net).

### **YOUTH 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](mailto:eapowell@aol.com) if you plan to attend, giving first names of each participant.

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

- Oct 11, Dec 13, 5 to 6pm at IMC, 108 Birch Street
- Nov 1, 9:20 to 10:50am at IMC Annex, 1040 Brewster, Suite D

**DHARMA BODHIS (MIDDLE SCHOOL 6TH–8TH GRADE)** (Sixth-graders have the option of attending 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](mailto:hborison@sbcglobal.net), or 650/575-2052.

**MINDFUL TEENS (HIGH SCHOOL)** Led by Nirali Shah and Bruni Davila. First Sunday of each month, 5 to 6:30pm. 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 that are alive and rich in us (typically around relationships with friends/family, stress, intentions, identity, etc.) and in general have some fun with life! More info at [www.mindfulteens.net](http://www.mindfulteens.net). RSVP: [Imc.MindfulTeens@gmail.com](mailto: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 local dharma teachers. Facilitated by Patty McLucas and Liz Powell. No pre-registration required. Oct 9: Guest Speaker, Tanya Wisner; Nov 13: discussion groups; Dec 11: speaker/ discussion groups.

### **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](mailto:imcqueersangha@gmail.com).

#### **PEOPLE OF COLOR SITTING GROUP**

**TUESDAYS, NOVEMBER 10 & DECEMBER 8, 7:15AM TO 9:15PM AT IMC ANNEX.** Connect with other POC dharma practitioners in a nourishing, fun, and safe environment, where any experience is welcome. All practitioners of color are invited to build sangha with periods of reflection and silence, group discussion, and talks on relevant themes. In practicing together, we create community, inclusivity and unity within our differences, claiming all of who we are and our cultural legacies. Facilitated by Bruni Dávila and other teachers. Contact Vickie Chang [vickieychang@gmail.com](mailto:vickieychang@gmail.com).

#### **YOUNG ADULT PROGRAM**

**AT HOME IN THE WORLD: DHARMA EVENINGS FOR PEOPLE IN THEIR 20'S AND 30'S. WITH MAX ERDSTEIN. Every Sunday except the 2nd 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.

## SCHEDULE PG. 4

### SATI CENTER

These events are presented by Sati Center and held at IMC, unless otherwise noted. Contact [sati.org](http://sati.org) or 650/223-0311, for more information.

#### EXPLORING THE DHAMMAPADA WITH DIANA CLARK

**SATURDAY, OCTOBER 24, 9:30AM TO 3:30PM**, The Dhammapada is one of the most popular Buddhist texts and is one of the great religious texts of the world. It is an anthology of inspiring and thought-provoking verses on Buddhist practice and liberation. Many people have been stirred to practice an ethical and mindful life by reading these verses.

Please join us as we read, discuss and explore this beloved text. We will use the translation by Gil Fronsdal for our reading with some comparison to other translations. The day will include lecture and discussions. Bring lunch.

#### WOMEN IN BUDDHISM SYMPOSIUM

**SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 14, 9AM TO 4PM**. A unique symposium highlighting the accomplishments of women scholars in the early years of Buddhist Studies in the West, and portraits of women as presented in the scriptures of early Buddhist literature on the other. See *Sangha Programs & News* for more information.

### 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.

- **IMC Singles Sitting Group**—First Friday of the month, Oct 2, Nov 6, Dec 4, 7 to 9pm. We will meet once a month for meditation and discussion led by a guest teacher, exploring various dharma topics related to being single. Contact [wendyalger@gmail.com](mailto:wendyalger@gmail.com).
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Practice Sessions**—Sundays, Oct 4, Nov 8, Dec 6. Please join us as we strum our way to samadhi...with ukuleles! We are a group of sangha members who get together to sing and play ukulele. For info & to RSVP: Paul at [sonasstrummers@gmail.com](mailto:sonasstrummers@gmail.com).
- **Mindful Hike at Wunderlich Park**—Saturday, Oct 10, 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](mailto:brendamaste@att.net), (650) 581-8641.
- **Sona's Dharma Strummers Playing at Hopkins Manor**—Sundays, Oct 11, Nov 22 and Dec 13. We make music with the residents of Hopkins

Manor, a residential care facility for the elderly next to IMC. No prior musical experience is necessary. Basic ukulele instruction provided. For info & to RSVP: Paul at [sonasstrummers@gmail.com](mailto:sonasstrummers@gmail.com).

- **EcoSattva Training**—Two onsite group sessions: Thur, Oct 15 and Wed, Nov 11, 7 to 8:30pm, IMC Annex. We will discuss ideas arising from the EcoSattva Training, as well as a focus for IMC Earth Care. Please come even if you are not following the course. Info: Anne Schmitt [schmitt@pacbell.net](mailto:schmitt@pacbell.net) or Shelly Gordon [sgordon@g2comm.com](mailto:sgordon@g2comm.com).
- **Dharma-Inspired Book Group**—Fridays, Oct 16, Nov 20, Dec 18, 7 to 8:30pm. IMC Meditation Hall. Check the Dharma Friends page of the IMC website for our current book. Anne Foster [afoster@rawbw.com](mailto:afoster@rawbw.com), 650/591-1285.
- **Dharma Friends Brunch**—Sun, Oct 18, 11am. Gather by the kitchen following the morning sitting. We will choose a local restaurant for brunch. Wendy Alger [wendyalger@gmail.com](mailto:wendyalger@gmail.com).
- **Dharma Friends Event Planning Meeting**—Sun, Nov 1, 11am to 12pm. Plan events for Jan, Feb, Mar 2016. IMC conference room, directly following the Sunday morning meditation and Dharma talk.
- **Fall Gratitude Gathering & Vegetarian Potluck**—Sat, Nov 21, 6:30 to 9:30pm. Remember and share with fellow Sangha members the benefits and good fortune you have experienced over the past year. Bring a vegetarian dish to share. IMC Community Hall. Contact Shelly Gordon [sgordon@g2comm.com](mailto:sgordon@g2comm.com) or Jim Podolske, [James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov](mailto:James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov) to help create this festive evening.
- **Interfaith Creek Cleanups** (check the Dharma Friends web page for dates and times). Stop the refuse in Redwood Creek from flowing out to the Bay and Ocean. Meet folks from other faith-based communities. Destination: Docktown Marina, 1548 Maple St., RWC. For more information contact Mary at [interfaithpeacecoalition@gmail.com](mailto:interfaithpeacecoalition@gmail.com) or John Beviacqua at (650) 872-3910.
- **NEW! Low Carbon Living for Happiness and Health**—Starting in January and meeting every other week for a total of 4 sessions, the Earth Care group will meet to learn from the workbook "Low Carbon Diet" by David Gershon. Contact Anne Schmitt [schmitt@pacbell.net](mailto:schmitt@pacbell.net) or Shelly Gordon [sgordon@g2comm.com](mailto:sgordon@g2comm.com).
- **Women's Circle of Mindfulness**—2nd Thursday of each month, 10:45am to 12:15pm. 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 1:00. Facilitated by Alicia McLucas, [mclucasalicia@gmail.com](mailto:mclucasalicia@gmail.com), and Hilary Borison, [hborison@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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](mailto:James.R.Podolske@nasa.gov), 650 968-6168 or Shelly Gordon, [sgordon@g2comm.com](mailto:sgordon@g2comm.com).

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