

Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee Newsletter – July Through September 2017

The Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee is a Buddhist sangha in the tradition of the Vietnamese monk Thich Nhat Hanh. We invite you to come and join others who share the value of mindfulness. We especially welcome those new to the practice of meditation.

The Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee is a spiritual community dedicated to the creation of a mindful culture fostering loving kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity. We study and practice teachings from Buddhism and other traditions in order to nurture individuals, families, society, and a healthy planet.

The Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee is a free will offering group. All scheduled meditation and practice meetings are free. There are no dues or obligations and all are welcome. We are self sustaining and, if you are able, your generous donation would be appreciated.

We are located at 1922 E. Park Place., Milwaukee, WI 53211 (between Murray & Cramer)
414-962-8678 milwmindful@gmail.com, www.milwaukee mindfulness.com/

Exciting news: Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee returns to the south side

There is now a Southside Center, 3333 S. 27th St., Suite 500. It is at the south side of the Southgate Mall, and most easily accessed through Morgan Street on the south. Regular Thursday night Sangha, as well as other programs, are being scheduled there. Please see our practice schedule below, and especially note the new Happiness group on Tuesday nights.

Practice schedule.

Activities at 1922 E. Park Place. (unless otherwise noted)

* **Every Sunday:** 8 am - 9:30 am: sitting and walking meditation, readings and discussion.

10 am – 11 am: sitting and walking meditation.

11 am – 12 noon: readings and discussion.

* 3rd Sunday: 10:00 am: Chanting of the Heart Sutra.

* 4th Sunday: Recitation of 5 Mindfulness Trainings.

* **Sunday evenings,** 6:30 pm - 7:45 pm: “The Eleventh Step”. For people involved or interested in 12 step programs, this meeting incorporates Buddhist perspectives on recovery from addiction.

***Morning meditation,** 6:30 am – 7 am: meditation. M,T,W,F sitting meditation at the Center.

***Monday evenings,** 7pm-8:30pm: Alternating periods of sitting and walking meditation repeated for the hour and a half meditation. No readings or discussion.

***Monday evenings,** The Dancing River Meditation group will be meeting on every other Monday evening at six at individual members home. For information, check the website or leave a voicemail and we will return your call.

***Tuesday evenings,** Happiness group. Tuesdays at 7pm at the Southgate location, 3333 S 27th, suite 500. As usual we will meditate, take a break and then read from a variety of sources, but all readings will focus on Joy and Happiness with discussion to follow. Learn to incorporate the processes that foster Joy and Happiness in your life. For more information contact Jim at jbarrett10@wi.rr.com.

***Tuesday evenings**, Meditation, reading and discussion at Unity Unitarian Universalist church, 506 N. Washington Ave. Waukesha. 7 to 8:30 PM

* **Wednesday evenings**, 7 pm - 7:45 pm: meditation; 7:45 pm - 8:30 pm reading and discussion, presently reading “No Death, No Fear” by Thich Nhat Hanh”

* **Thursday mornings**, 7:30 am – 9 am: Spirit-Mind-Body Study Group of Columbia/St. Mary’s Hospital. Half-hour of meditation, presentation by group members, and discussion. All are welcome.

***Thursday afternoon**, 12:15 pm – 1:15 pm: “Mindful Recovery”. For all people who want to live a life free from addictions.

***Thursday night**: Sangha at the southside location, 3333 S. 27th st., suite 500. Meditation, reading and discussion. 7 to 830 pm

***Friday morning**, 11:00 am – 12:30 pm: New day time sangha with meditation, readings and discussion.

* **Every Saturday**: 10 am - 12 noon. Meet for shorter meditation (25 minutes), reading and discussion, and fellowship with tea. Great opportunity to meet new and old friends and build our community.

* **Every Saturday**: Dharma Punx. A group based on the writings of Noah Levine. 8pm.

***Every first and third Saturday of the Month: Sutra Study**, 1:30 PM to 3 PM. Jeremy Packer and paul Brodwin will lead discussions from various sutras. Source book is “Awakening of the Heart” by Thich Nhat Hanh. --
-- (not meeting in August)

* **Every 4th Saturday of the Month**: Meditation half day retreat, 1 pm-5 pm.

* **Every 2nd Saturday of the Month** 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM: “Dharma and Science” (not meeting in August)

***Fifth Saturday of the Month** Potluck lunch at 12:15 PM ; Next times are July 29 and September 30

“Meditation instruction Sunday, July 15 and Sunday, October 16, 1230 at the mindfulness Center.
Especially for beginners.”

Quarterly notes

Sunday readings for the Summer

July: Jeanne Lowry will lead readings from “The Engaged Spiritual Life”, by Donald Rothberg

August: Paul Norton will lead readings from “Peace is Every Breath”, by Thich Nhat Hanh

September: Paul Brodwin will be leading readings from the Tao Te Ching , from a book by Witter Bynner

Upcoming events and classes (for information or to register, call 414-962-8678

“Grace in Aging: First and Third Mondays, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM. Carolynn Theodorah will lead a discussion of this book by Kathleen Singh. All are welcome.

Metta Meditation, We will enjoy a book study/meditation group using Sharon Salzberg’s “Loving Kindness, the Revolutionary Art of Happiness” as our guide. The class will meet for twelve Tuesday’s beginning September 26th (tentative) from 7PM to 8:45 PM at our Park Place location. There will be in class meditation based on exercises from the book and participants will be encouraged to practice between classes. Purchasing the book for advanced reading is encouraged. A donation to the Center of \$120 is suggested. No one will be turned away. Dave Zeman will be your facilitator. You can contact me at zemand@wi.rr.com with questions or to register.

“Mindfulness in Everyday Life” returns: Paul Norton will be teaching this class and it will begin on Wednesdays (7 to 9 p.m.) and Saturdays (9:30 to 11:30 AM) at the Southside Center, 3333 S. 27th St., Suite 500. It will begin on the week of September 20 and 23rd. It will go for 11 weeks, with a break for Thanksgiving.

The cost of the class is \$225 for participant (\$375 for couples) or \$30 for any individual week. Check out the flyer on our website. To register, send us a note by mail to the mindfulness center, or leave an email at milwmindful@gmail.com.

Instruction for Meditation Teachers: On September 10, 17th, and 24th there will be instruction for meditation teachers. It will be from 3 to 5 in the afternoon and all are invited. Paul Brodwin will lead the first two weeks, and Paul Norton will lead a session on neuroscience for meditation teachers on the 24th. No specific charge, but dana is gratefully accepted.

Retreat News

Retreat at the Christine Center, Willard Wisconsin, August 6 to 11, 2017 (Sunday night to Friday afternoon) “Living Happily in the Present Moment, Transforming our Store Consciousness”. The Senior teachers of the Mindfulness Community of Milwaukee will be leading this retreat in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. The site is the Christine Center, a wonderful rustic retreat center in north central Wisconsin. The cost is \$260 to \$420, depending on your accommodations. Meals included are included. Registration is now open. You can access a form on our website (www.milwaukee mindfulness.com) or pick up a form in the Center.

Transforming Poison into Medicine; The second stage of Buddhist Meditation, Presented By: Frank Berliner
Dates: Sept. 29-Oct.1

Times: Friday 7PM- 9PM (free talk)
Saturday 9 AM- 5PM
Sunday 9AM- 4 PM

Location: Sisters of St. Francis of Assisi-Clare Hall

COST: \$95

Day of Mindfulness in Racine, July 15, 9 am to 4:30, pm at The Dekoven Center. Led by Jack and Laurie Lawlor. \$35. Flyers are available. **Sangha Meetings**

Engaged Buddhism meeting: Sunday, August 20, after the 10:00 Sunday morning sangha

Practice Committee meeting: Sunday, September 25, after the 10:00 Sunday morning sangha. Share your ideas about upcoming topics and classes. All are welcome.

Quarterly business meeting: There will be a general business meeting of the Sangha, on October 8th from 10 PM to 12 PM. As always this is also a time to consider membership. During that day, meditation will be from 9 AM to 10 AM

For other events: Check the bulletin board at the Center!

Transforming Seeds with Right Diligence

By Dave Zeman

In Buddhist psychology we are given the ideas of different levels of consciousness. At this time I will only mention two, store consciousness and mind consciousness. Store consciousness exists at our core and includes many emotions and qualities that are referred to as “seeds”. Some would be wholesome, positive seeds like joy, understanding, compassion and kindness. Others are unwholesome, negative seeds such as anger, fear, resentment and despair. Once we are aware of these seeds we can begin to work with them and bring them into our mind consciousness, which are the seeds that we are experiencing now, in this present moment.

Thich Nhat Hanh in his commentary on “The Sutra on Knowing the Better Way to Catch a Snake” gives us the following words. “Even the blocks of pain, sorrow and despair hidden in the depths of our consciousness are impermanent. If we know how to practice, we can bring about deep self transformation. We have learned that there are two ways to transform our pain. The first way is to invite it up and look deeply into its nature. The second way is to water the seeds of the opposite nature, and know that they will bring about transformation at the base of our consciousness.”

So how do we work with our seeds? We find the answer in the Buddha’s Eight Fold Path, Right Diligence or Right Effort. Some people think that right diligence simply means that we should try harder. If I only meditated more, for longer periods, went to Sangha more often or read more books things would get better. According to the Buddha and Thich Nhat Hanh this is not correct. What it really means is we should be diligent about the seeds that we are “watering” or bringing up in to our mind consciousness. We should put our effort into bringing up positive and wholesome seeds in ourselves and others. If we are experiencing anger and despair can we recognize we are caught by our negative seeds and perhaps try to bring up positive seeds?

I was in prison last week talking with an inmate. He was very angry about his experience with attempting to get paroled. His original sentence had been for twelve years and now he had been in for twenty two. He was twenty five when he entered the system and now is forty seven. He has tried to do everything he is told to further his chance for parole or at least a change to a medium security prison. Anger, frustration and despair are overwhelming him. He is a seasoned practitioner and has had periods of peace in confinement. I could see the pain in his eyes. How could I not feel great compassion for this man whom I respect and consider a brother? I suggested some possible Buddhist practices he could consider. He knew them all and rejected them all. He had completely given his consciousness over to his negative seeds and continued to water them every minute of every day. I then thought of Thich Nhat Hanh’s quote from above about trying to water the seeds of the opposite nature to the ones we are experiencing. I suggested he try to find a seed of kindness and compassion in himself. He looked at me as if I was crazy and I said “Maybe not for other people right now, but for yourself.” He still looked at me as though I was nuts. As we parted for the day he looked back at me and said “Thanks for coming” and I could tell he meant it sincerely.

I said “Take care of yourself, no one else will” as he walked down the hall and back to his cell.

It can be a great leap for us to become aware of the negative seeds that are controlling our life. The positive seed of meditation can help us with our awareness. The process of transforming those negative seeds by bringing up the opposite positive seeds can be a difficult. But with Right Diligence we can do it. Transformation is possible. Happiness and joy are possible.