

# Mid America Dharma News

Offering Insight Meditation to the Heartland | Fall 2016



## Thought-based and Sense-based Reality

by Rebecca Bradshaw

In March 2017 Rebecca Bradshaw will return to the St. Louis area to lead a 4 day residential Insight Meditation retreat for Mid America Dharma. For more information, please see page 8.

We live most of our lives in thought-created reality. This reality is really our best guess of what is going on in our lives. The mind takes sensory input and comes up with a story about the way things are, using lots of assumptions and shortcuts. So thought-based reality is an approximation of the way things are. A lot of it is “made up.”

Continued on page 2

## Can the Truly Humble Attain Greatness in World Affairs?

by Lila Kate Wheeler

In June 2017 Lila Kate Wheeler will come to St. Louis to lead a weekend non-residential Insight Meditation retreat for Mid America Dharma. For more information, please see page 10.

The man who eventually became known as the Buddha, which simply means ‘awakened,’ was born into the ruling class in northern India about 2,600 years ago. Exceedingly well-educated, he is said to have mastered all the skills of warfare and politics as part of his leadership training. However, he was not satisfied that assuming kingship would ultimately provide him with as vast a scope of influence as he desired—history has proven him correct on this count. Buddhist teachings, and the monastic society built to pass them on, survive to the present day in many differing social conditions and contexts, whereas the great kings and merchants of the Buddha’s time are remembered chiefly because of their association with him.

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We offer 2 ways to register for our retreats—online or by mail:

#### Online

- Visit [midamericadharma.org](http://midamericadharma.org)
- Click Mid America Dharma Retreats
- Register for your preferred retreat by clicking On-line Registration

#### By Mail

- Complete and mail-in the registration form on page 12



We post up-to-date info on our Facebook page. Comment or message us anytime – we love to hear from you!

## Thought-Based and Sense-based Reality

by Rebecca Bradshaw, *Continued from page 1*

When we are caught in thought-based reality we believe all of the stories of our mind. As Mark Twain said, “I’ve suffered many terrible misfortunes in my life, most of which never happened.” Even just to realize directly that we don’t have to believe our thoughts is a huge relief. They should’ve taught us that in kindergarten!

*“Meditation offers us an alternative to living lost in the stories of our mind...”*

Meditation offers us an alternative to living lost in the stories of our mind by teaching us to connect with our sense experience

in the moment, what we can call sense-based reality. We reclaim our direct connection with life through hearing, smelling, sensing in the body, tasting, seeing and directly experiencing the heart and mind. It is an embodied meeting with this world, more like “waking down” than “waking up.” We feel our feet touch the ground, taste the first peach of the season, smell leafy decay in the woods, hear the car pass by. (When Suzuki Roshi was asked a question about consciousness, he replied, “I’m just trying to teach my students to hear the birds sing.” He wanted them to connect directly with life through their senses, rather than think about life.)

Sensuous reality offers us not only the benefit of more connection and greater intimacy with life, bringing with it a deep sense of homecoming and belonging; it also allows us to see more clearly the way life truly is. Sensuous reality cuts through delusion and ignorance, this not understanding the way life is. Dropping into sensuous reality we are more in touch with the way things are, as this wild world we have taken birth into reveals itself.

We see the truth of constant change and what this means for how to live in harmony with life.

We drop into sense-based reality with patience. It cannot be commanded. We orient towards our sense experience and then it’s more a matter of allowing or receiving. It’s a kind of softening into life. Feeling the sensations of breathing, hearing a bird sing, seeing the vivid colors of autumn, tasting mint ice cream, touching grief in the heart.

*“Dropping into sensuous reality we are more in touch with the way things are...”*

Every moment offers a chance to awaken into our humanity through sense-based reality, to awaken out of the dream world of

thought-created reality. These awakenings offer us the gift of connecting directly with our sense experience, and an opportunity to let life teach us the way things are.

**Rebecca Bradshaw** is the Guiding Teacher of the Insight Meditation Center of Pioneer Valley in Easthampton, Massachusetts, and one of the Guiding Teachers at the Insight Meditation Center in Barre, MA. See page 8 for details of her March retreat.



## Can the Truly Humble Attain Greatness in World Affairs

by Lila Kate Wheeler, *Continued from page 2*

The Buddha's interest lay not in aggrandizing himself or enlarging his kingdom, but rather in finding the most effective approach to allaying human distress. In the beginning, it was probably his own fright as a young man 'letting in' the understanding that he'd get sick and die. After discovering the solution and becoming a Buddha, he didn't go back and resume kingship, which could have seemed an elevated position from which to pass on his teachings. Rather, he chose to model a simple life as an itinerant teacher.

You might say the Buddha believed in human potential. What he taught was not to rely on divine intervention, but rather on a confidence in the possibility inherent in human life. Energy, reason, and insight are listed among virtues to be cultivated – qualities that have been cited by sages of many ages. An understanding of cause and effect is also critical for our well-being. His spirit of objectivity was directly connected to experiential reality in the moment – this is what distinguishes the Buddha's insight.

*"What he taught was ... a confidence in the possibility inherent in human life."*

the ensuing centuries. (Though Buddhism has accrued many if not all the trappings of religion, at core, it's a system of contemplative ethics, where practitioners take responsibility for developing themselves as a kind of personal science.) Morality is discussed in terms of becoming more and more skillfully compassionate and even Buddhist mysticism is based on the understanding that human nature and the world function best when the toxins of greed, hostility, and delusion are not allowed to hold sway over our actions and thoughts.

This spirit of objectivity within subjectivity still pervades even the most mystical and exotic-looking forms the tradition has taken over

A fascinating aspect of the Buddha's thinking is his acute awareness of time. When speaking of external affairs he often mentions good and bad timing, stressing timely interventions. Contemplating the nature of life, it is its impermanence that strikes him most. How shall we spend this interlude between birth and death? The Buddha speaks of fleetingness, working with and accepting the inevitability of change; and equally importantly, understanding that our behavior and thoughts are embedded in a network of cause and effect. Our actions have consequences, both for ourselves and the world.

Success could be measured in terms of well-being, personal and social. Buddhism does not restrict lay practitioners

*"Each person progressively refines her or his ethical behavior based on introspection..."*

from amassing great wealth and influence, it asks us to abide by basic ethical principles of justice and non-harming throughout – and to be generous. Lay Buddhists are enjoined not to 'squeeze' and destroy the sources of livelihood, as bees do not harm flowers. Whatever degree of prosperity one attains should be used to benefit oneself, family and friends, and society as a whole. There are specific instructions on philanthropy, supporting others so that they can engage full-time in beneficial endeavors that may not yield material profit—such as meditation or the arts. Though one's giving is never miserly, one also keeps in mind the basic well-being of oneself and any dependents.

*Continued on page 4.*

### Can the Truly Humble Attain Greatness in World Affairs

by Lila Kate Wheeler, *Continued from page 3*

If the word 'humility' is not traditionally part of the Buddhist lexicon, a working Buddhist definition of the term is not difficult to derive. Humility would imply an awareness that one is not omnipotent, that it is necessary to recognize that our actions are embedded in a wider network of cause and effect. In order not to become deluded about our capacity, a degree of introspection and pragmatic self-assessment is needed. Each person progressively refines her or his ethical behavior based on introspection, even mystical contemplation. These are all skills to be practiced, however, and will yield results to whatever degree each person wishes to take them up.

At the deepest level, the Buddha's humility is based on profound insight: There is no ultimately established self. Though the apparently natural intuition of humans is to think there's a 'me' in here, if you practice

insight you'll soon see that we are an experiential creature and that experience constantly changes. This insight disestablishes the basis on which much of our suffering is constructed. Current scientific understandings of the brain offer a similar view. To be deeply embedded within our embodiment means that our sense of self is an illusion, and our intuitive arrangement of world around a central core of self is erroneous and even somewhat unethical. Buddhist introspection will yield an understanding that the world and self are interdependent. This, it seems, is the humility that frees up generosity and the sense of internal freedom and ease we are all thirsting for.

**Lila Kate Wheeler** teaches and practices in the Vipassana and Tibetan Nyingma Buddhist lineages. She is also a published writer. See page 10 for details of her June retreat.

### Are You Willing to Serve?

by Marnie Hammer and John Flaherty

The Buddha was asked by Ananda, his cousin and attendant, what was the value of spiritual friends. The Buddha replied that true friends that shared the path were the whole of the path.

Twenty-four years ago a small group of meditators, including the two of us, met over several months to figure out how we could support our own practice and that of other Midwestern meditators. The outcome was Mid America Dharma. Since then Mid America Dharma has provided well over a hundred Insight Meditation retreats, supported the development of local teachers and sanghas, and provided thousands of dollars in scholarships to make sure that the practice was available to all who wanted to explore it.

This happened because for each member of that first board the Dharma was precious and we wanted to share it. We wanted to see if Mid America Dharma could attract teachers from across the country and support students from around the Midwest.

Those intentions have continued over the years including with the current board. Of the current board only the two of us participated in those first organizing sessions. We are now ready to step off the board and let others shape Mid America Dharma's direction. It has been a privilege to serve and support your meditation practice.

We are left with a question: Who is willing to join the board, to do the volunteer work that makes retreats happen, and devote four Saturdays a year to guiding Mid America Dharma? Are you one of the 'true friends' who will help to provide the whole of the spiritual life for the Midwest?

To express your interest or for more information, please contact Phil Jones at [phil@midamericadharm.org](mailto:phil@midamericadharm.org) or 573-874-0881.

### Doubt and Faith

by Philip Jones

The experience of doubt and doubting is classified as one of the five hindrances, the qualities of mind and heart that obstruct our abilities to settle and focus our minds and to see and be with things as they are. The Buddha said “These five hindrances are makers of blindness, causing lack of vision, causing lack of knowledge, detrimental to wisdom, tending to vexation, leading away from Nibbana.”—SN 46.40.

How easily do you recognize that you’re caught up in doubt? Do you notice when your mind is free of doubt? Do you know what causes it to arise and how to remove it and keep it from arising once again? These are the tasks that the Buddha recommends in the Satipatthana Sutta, the Discourse on the Establishments of Mindfulness. When you recognize you’ve been caught in doubt are you able to apply these understandings?

The Abhidhamma tells us that doubt is a form of delusion and that when it is present our minds waver back and forth. It tells us that when we’re entangled with doubt we’re perplexed, indecisive and skeptical in a way that harms our ability to practice. Do these qualities of mind seem familiar?

Doubt is a sneaky and corrosive kind of thought that can bring our ability to do the practice to a standstill. Doubt can undermine our faith in the Buddha’s own awakening, in our own potential for awakening, in the teachings, teachers and practices. Doubt can undermine our confidence in ourselves, in our own abilities to do this practice, to be present for our own lives and to meet our lives with goodwill, compassion, joy and equanimity.

Some forms of doubt aren’t overcome until the last stage of awakening, so we will have lots of opportunities to practice with doubt. Can you bring a quality of careful, kind, mindful and curious attention to doubt?

The Pali word *saddha* represents a quality of mind that is an antidote to doubt. It is usually translated as faith, though it can also be translated as trust, conviction or confidence. All of these English words point to facets of *saddha*. Faith, trust and confidence are part of a group of mental factors (the five faculties and the five powers) that need to be well-developed and balanced so that we can settle our minds, see with clarity how things are and free ourselves from the craving and clinging that lead to our sense of dissatisfaction with life, our alienation from our lives.

Do you have faith in these teachings and in these practices? Do you trust your teachers? Do you have confidence in your own ability to do this practice?

We may begin the practice out of inspiration, desperation or a combination of the two. But to continue with it our initial faith has to be verified. We need to see for ourselves in our own direct experience that practicing the way that we do does make a difference in our lives and in the lives of those we connect with. Seeing this helps generate the energy to continue practicing.

*Continued on page 6*

### Shaila Catherine: Mastering the Jhanas

Shaila Catherine was interviewed by the Wisdom Publications podcast in 2016. To learn more about Shaila’s own practice background, to hear her explain the roles of concentration and insight on this path to liberation, and to hear her discuss the practice of mastering the concentration states of absorption or *jhana*, listen to the podcast at <http://learn.wisdompubs.org/podcast/shaila-catherine/>.

**Shaila Catherine** offers online Dharma courses ([bodhicourses.org](http://bodhicourses.org)) and leads a Buddhist meditation center in Silicon Valley ([imsb.org](http://imsb.org)). See page 9 for details on her May retreat with Philip Jones.

## Doubt and Faith

by Philip Jones, *Continued from page 5*

But this quality saddha isn't just important in a general sense, it is something that is necessary in each moment that

*"Confidence . . . develops step-by-step as we see the goodness of these practices . . ."*

we do the practice. In order to do the practice we have to trust that we are on the right path in life. We have to have confidence that what we are doing in this moment is wholesome, that it is skillful, that it will lead us on towards happiness, towards peace. This develops step-by-step as we see the goodness of these practices and of their results. It also develops as we see more clearly how doubt undermines our lives and what a difference it makes when our minds are supported by trust and confidence, free of doubt.

We don't develop deep trust, confirmed confidence in the Buddha's own awakening, in our own potential to awaken or in the teachings until the first stage of awakening.

## Support for Your Sangha

Mid America Dharma is unlike some meditation organizations as we have no permanent and abiding home. We seek out places to hold our retreats that are located in and around Missouri and that are relatively low cost. Because we do not run the centers, we do not have the need for retreatant help in the kitchen or for building maintenance. As a result we have limited opportunities for retreatants to offer service during a retreat, but there are some.

If you would like to attend a retreat and want to support our sangha, consider volunteering to help set up the retreat or to pack up at the end of the retreat. You might also volunteer to be a bell ringer or to help with the tea table or to help with small tasks in the meditation hall.

If you are interested in giving even more, consider learning how to manage a retreat.

We don't completely overcome doubt until the last stage of awakening, when we completely see through the sense of an independent, separate I and become free of the tendency to compare and to judge. But each time we do the practice and see the results we strengthen the power of faith and weaken the tendency to doubt. This verified faith and trust carries us along this path until we find freedom for ourselves.

Notice when the mind is free of doubt, what is that like for you? Notice when you are living and practicing with confidence, with trust. What is that like? Look for yourselves and see.

**Philip Jones** leads a sangha in Columbia, MO ([silentmindopenheart.org](http://silentmindopenheart.org)) and offers retreats in the Midwest. See page 9 for more details about his May retreat with Shaila Catherine.

This critical role helps to provide the safety and supportive environment for a retreat to be successful. It gives you an opportunity to develop your practice during informal meetings with the teacher and when assisting your co-meditators. And you attend the retreat free of charge.

If you want to do even more to serve the sangha consider joining the Mid America Dharma board. Most of the work of putting on retreats occurs behind the scenes at the board. The duties include offering guidance on policies and procedures, planning and advertising retreats, and managing all of the things required for any organization to function effectively. The board meets quarterly in Columbia, MO.

If you would like to volunteer or want more information, contact Phil Jones at [phil@midamericadharmadharma.org](mailto:phil@midamericadharmadharma.org) or 573-874-0881.

### Exploring Awareness: The 2016-17 New Year's Retreat

by Robert Brummet

*Over the 2016-2017 New Year Robert Brummet will once again lead a 5 day residential retreat at Conception Abbey for Mid America Dharma. For more information, please see page 8.*

The New Year has traditionally been seen as a time of death and rebirth, a time of symbolically letting go of the past and opening to the freshness of a New Year. For many, a silent meditation retreat is the perfect setting for this to occur.

This year's retreat is titled Exploring Awareness: Foundations of Mindfulness Practice. Framed by the Buddha's teaching on the Four Foundations of Mindfulness (Satipatthana Sutta) we will explore how factors such as the degree of concentration and the continuity of mindfulness impact the quality of awareness. We will investigate varying approaches to

meditation based upon the content of awareness and the method (dual vs. non-dual) of practice. This retreat is open to beginners and advanced practitioners alike. The schedule includes instruction, sitting and walking meditation, Dharma talks and small-group conferences. Loving-kindness and compassion practices are also included in the schedule. (Those interested may also join the Benedictine monks in the Basilica for some of their daily periods of prayer.)

**Robert Brummet** leads the Unity Sangha in the Kansas City area and offers meditation retreats throughout North America. See page 8 for details of his New Year retreat.

### Retreats Are For Everyone

by Marnie Hammer

One meaning of scholarship is a grant or payment made to support a student's education given by merit or need and/or learning or knowledge acquired by study.

Mid America Dharma has offered scholarships for many years so that everyone can attend our retreats. But some of our board members hear that you won't apply for a scholarship. As a long time board member, I wonder why? Is it embarrassment at needing help? Is it not wanting to take a financial resource that someone else might need? Is it not wanting someone to know that you need a boost in order to attend a retreat?

Our mission is to provide retreats in the Midwest so that the Dharma and the sangha are available to everyone. We want to spread around the opportunities to practice. We want to make our retreats available to everyone. Thanks to generous donations, there is plenty of money in the scholarship fund to support

those who need some financial help.

There are a couple of options that you might want to consider. Over the last year Mid America Dharma has changed the way we price our retreats. We now offer a "reduced rate" option for those who find that our actual cost of offering a retreat (our Sustaining rate) is more than they can manage. We are offering this because we want you to attend our retreats. — Please select this rate if you need it.

If the reduced rate is still more than you can manage, ask for a scholarship. We want you to attend our retreats. We never want finances to stand in your way of doing so. We will not question your lifestyle or ask you to account for every penny in your budget. Your information is kept confidential and the scholarship award is shared only with a few board members who need to know to manage our operations. — Ask for one of Mid America Dharma's scholarships.

We want you to attend our retreats.

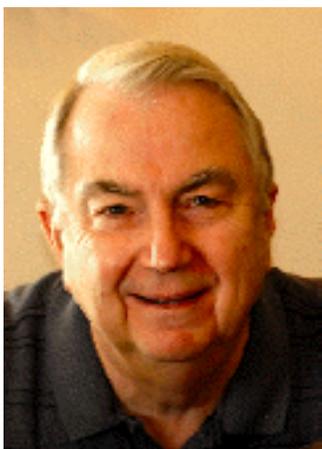
## Mid America Dharma Retreats

### Robert Brumet | December 29, 2016 - January 2, 2017

*Conception, MO - Residential*

*Fee: \$300 reduced / \$400 sustaining / \$500 supporting.*

*Registration opens September 30, 2016; closes Dec. 15, 2016*



Robert Brumet has practiced Insight Meditation since 1988. He has been leading a local sangha and conducting meditation retreats throughout North America since 1995. In the early 1990s he received vipassana facilitator training from Shinzen Young. In January 2000 he graduated from the Community Dharma Leader training program, sponsored by Spirit Rock Meditation Center. Robert is one of the founding members of Mid America Dharma. He lives in Kansas City and teaches at Unity Institute and Seminary near Lee's Summit, MO.

**LISTEN** to Robert's retreat recordings at [www.midamericadharmadharma.org/audio.html](http://www.midamericadharmadharma.org/audio.html).

### Rebecca Bradshaw | March 24 - 27, 2017

*St. Louis, MO - Residential*

*Fee: \$300 reduced / \$360 sustaining / \$540 supporting.*

*Registration opens December 24, 2016; closes Mar. 10, 2017*



Rebecca Bradshaw, is the Guiding Teacher of the Insight Meditation Center of Pioneer Valley in Easthampton, Massachusetts, and one of the Guiding Teachers at the Insight Meditation Center in Barre, MA. She has been practicing Vipassana meditation since 1983 in the United States and Myanmar (Burma) and teaching since 1993. She completed her dharma teacher training at Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, where she is part of the three month retreat teacher team, leads retreats for young adults, and serves as a member of the diversity committee. She also teaches at other locations in the United States and abroad, including Spanish language retreats, bringing a style that explores the convergence of love and wisdom. Rebecca has a master's degree in Counseling Psychology and is a Licensed Mental Health Counselor (LMHC).

**LISTEN** to Rebecca's retreat recordings at [www.midamericadharmadharma.org/audio.html](http://www.midamericadharmadharma.org/audio.html).

## Mid America Dharma Retreats

### Shaila Catherine & Philip Jones | May 15 - 21, 2017

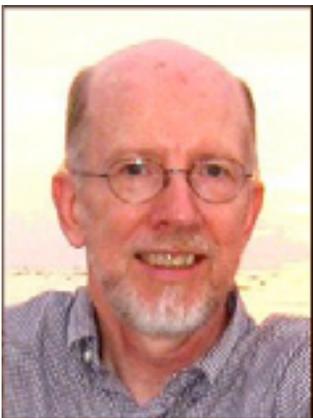
Leavenworth, KS - Residential

Fee range: \$625 - reduced / \$675 single or \$525 double - sustaining / \$1000 supporting

Registration opens February 15, 2017; closes May 1, 2017



**Shaila Catherine** is the founder of Bodhi Courses, an on-line Dhamma classroom ([bodhicourses.org](http://bodhicourses.org)), and Insight Meditation South Bay, a Buddhist meditation center in Silicon Valley in California ([imsb.org](http://imsb.org)). Shaila has been practicing meditation since 1980, with more than eight years of accumulated silent retreat experience. She has taught since 1996 in the USA and internationally. Shaila has dedicated several years to studying with masters in India, Nepal and Thailand, completed a one year intensive meditation retreats with the focus on concentration and jhana, and authored *Focused and Fearless: a Meditator's Guide to States of Deep Joy, Calm, and Clarity* (Wisdom Publications, 2008). She has extensive experience with the practice of metta, including seven months in retreats exploring metta as the meditation subject. Since 2006 Shaila has been practicing under the direction of Venerable Pa-Auk Sayadaw. She authored *Wisdom Wide and Deep: A Practical Handbook for Mastering Jhana and Vipassana* to help make this traditional approach to Samadhi and vipassana accessible to Western practitioners.



**Philip Jones** has practiced meditation since 1987 and has been teaching Insight Meditation since 1996. He has studied with teachers from Spirit Rock and the Insight Meditation Society and graduated from the first Community Dharma Leader training program in 2000. He also studied for a number of years with Matthew Flickstein and more recently has been practicing with Shaila Catherine. He has served on the board of directors of Mid America Dharma, the regional retreat organization, since the mid-1990's. Many of his talks and writings can be found at [silentmindopenheart.org](http://silentmindopenheart.org).

**LISTEN** to Shaila's retreat recordings at <http://dharmaeed.org/teacher/163/> and Philip's retreat recordings at [www.midamericadharm.org/audio.html](http://www.midamericadharm.org/audio.html).

## Mid America Dharma Retreats

### Lila Kate Wheeler | June 23 - 25, 2017

*St. Louis, MO - Non-Residential*

*Fee range: \$60 sustaining / \$90 supporting - Other fee options coming soon.*

*Registration opens April 23, 2017; closes June 15, 2017*



**Lila Kate Wheeler** wanted to be a saint when she grew up. Nowadays she's aiming for a more open heart and a moment-to-moment encounter with reality. As 'Kate' she's a fiction writer, essayist, and travel journalist with books and prizes to her credit. As 'Lila' she teaches and practices in the Vipassana and Tibetan Nyingma Buddhist lineages. She is married to a poet/professor/anthropologist, lives in the Boston area, hopes to contribute to the welfare of all beings.

**LISTEN** to Lila's retreat recordings at <http://dharmaseed.org/teacher/109/>.

#### Retreat Basics: The Five Precepts

We ask everyone participating in our retreats to make a commitment to follow the Five Ethical Precepts, a foundation for our practice.

The precepts create the community of harmony and safety necessary for our work of turning inward. The self-restraint we show by following the Precepts is essential to settle the mind.

Through this we develop confidence in our worth and ability to do the practice. Following the Precepts bestows a sense of happiness with our own goodness.

- ◇ I undertake the training of refraining from taking the life of any living being.
- ◇ I undertake the training of refraining from taking what has not been given.
- ◇ I undertake the training of refraining from any form of intentional sexual activity.\*
- ◇ I undertake the training of refraining from false and harmful speech.
- ◇ I undertake the training of refraining from intoxicating drink and drugs that lead to heedlessness.

\* A more general form of this precept is "I undertake the training to refrain from sexual misconduct," but at retreat we commit to the version stated above.

## Retreat Registration

**Insight Meditation** offers an easily accessible way to free the mind from the distortions of self-centeredness, negativity and confusion. Through concentrated awareness, we see that our experience is a constantly changing process, in which all aspects of life are accepted with increasing balance and equanimity. This insight leads to the possibility of living each moment fully, with compassion and genuine freedom. Insight Meditation requires no belief commitments and is compatible with religious affiliations. Unless specified, no previous meditation experience is required.

**Retreat Format:** Periods of sitting meditation and/or Dharma teachings alternate with walking meditation. Retreats are held in silence, with talking only during specified teaching periods. Beginners should be present from the start of the retreat to receive initial instructions.

Please bring a meditation cushion or bench and a soft floor pad for meditation. Standard chairs are available and may also be used. Wear comfortable, loose fitting clothes. Please do not wear or bring strongly scented lotions, perfumes or incense.

**Residential retreats** begin with check-in at 4 PM on the first day and run through lunch on the last day. Participants are guided through group or private interviews and daily general lectures. Meals are plain vegetarian. A tea table is provided.

**Registration:** Information about retreat site, starting times, etc., is available online or will be sent after you register.

**Fees:** Retreat costs are listed under each retreat heading and on the mail-in registration form at the end of this newsletter.

**Sliding Scale:** Costs for each retreat are listed as a range. For non-residential retreats, the lowest fee listed is the actual cost of providing the retreat for each retreatant. For residential retreats, the “sustaining” fee

is the actual cost. Any amount paid above the actual cost will be regarded as a tax-deductible contribution used to defray retreat expenses, scholarships and other activities.

**Residential:** a minimum deposit of \$75 must accompany registration; full payment is due before the start of the retreat. Non-residential retreats: please pay the full fee when you register.

**Registration Opening Dates and Deadlines:** ... are listed on the specific retreat pages. Registrations are not accepted prior to the beginning date for each retreat. If the registration fee for a residential retreat is not received by the deadline, there is a \$25 late fee.

**Refunds:** We will refund fees if requested before the deadline. Refunds requested later than this are made at the discretion of Mid-America Dharma’s Board of Directors.

**Scholarships:** We do not want inability to pay to prevent you from attending. We are experimenting with a reduced rate on residential retreats. If further financial support is needed to attend residential and non-residential retreats, we offer scholarships and a deferred payment plan. Learn more about these options when you register online or the registrar can send you written materials. Applications must be received by the registrar no later than three weeks prior to the retreat.

**Dana (or generosity):** Our retreats are led by teachers who freely give the teachings without payment. All retreat fees go for retreat expenses, such as facility rental and meals. It is central to this tradition that students support teachers through their donations. There is no expected amount, but please give to the extent you are able. Dana is completely voluntary.

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## Mail-in registration form

Retreat registration is available online or via mail.  
To register online, go to [www.midamericadharmadharma.org/retreats](http://www.midamericadharmadharma.org/retreats).

To register for the New Year retreat by mail, send this form with a check payable to: **Mid America Dharma, c/o John Flaherty, 455 E. 80th Terrace, Kansas City, MO 64131.**

To register by mail for any other retreats, send this form with check payable to: **Mid America Dharma, c/o Phil Jones, 200 E. Parkway Dr., Columbia, MO 65203.**

If registering for multiple retreats, please send a separate copy of this form with payment to the registrar for each retreat. A \$75 deposit is required for all residential retreats. Please register as early as you can, as this greatly helps our planning.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dec 29, 2016 - Jan. 2, 2017  
Robert Brumet, Residential  
Conception, MO  
Registration Open  
Registration Closes: Dec. 15, 2016  
Fee Range: \$300 / \$400 / \$500  
Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ Mar. 24-27, 2017  
Rebecca Bradshaw. Residential  
St. Louis, MO  
Registration Opens: Dec. 24, 2016  
Registration Closes: Mar. 10, 2017  
Fee range: Full, \$300 / \$360 / \$540  
Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ May 15-21, 2017  
Shaila Catherine & Philip Jones  
Residential. Leavenworth, KS  
Registration Opens: Feb. 15, 2017  
Registration Closes: May 1, 2017  
Fee Range: \$625 / \$675 single or  
\$525 double / \$ 1000  
Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ June 23-25, 2017  
Lila Kate Wheeler  
St. Louis, MO  
Registration Opens: April 23, 2017  
Registration Closes: June 15, 2017  
Fee Range: \$60 / \$90  
(Other Fee Options Coming Soon)  
Fee Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Required of ALL Retreatants:**

1. Please check the box below to indicate you agree to honor The Five Precepts during your retreat. The Five Precepts assure everyone has a safe & wholesome retreat experience.

Yes, I have read the Retreat Basics on page 11 and agree to honor The Five Precepts during retreat.

**For Residential Retreats only:**

- 1. Gender: M F Other
- 2. Will you arrive after 7 PM on the first day? Y N
- 3. Is this your first Insight Meditation retreat? Y N
- 4. Do you snore? Y N

If you have special needs, please contact the registrar at [registrar@midamericadharmadharma.org](mailto:registrar@midamericadharmadharma.org) or (816) 523-5061 for New Year retreat, or (573) 874-0881 for other retreats.

Mid America Dharma  
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## Mid America Dharma Upcoming Retreats

- Dec. 29, 2016 - Jan. 2, 2017 ..... Residential retreat, **Robert Brumet**, Conception, MO
- Mar. 24-27, 2017 ..... Residential retreat, **Rebecca Bradshaw**, St. Louis, KS
- May 15-21, 2017 .....,..... Residential retreat, **Shalia Catherine and Philip Jones**, Leavenworth, KS
- June 23-25, 2017 ..... Non-residential retreat, **Lila Kate Wheeler**, St. Louis MO
- Sep. 8-10, 2017 ..... Non-residential retreat, **Bridget Rolens**, Springfield, MO
- Oct 15-22, 2017 ..... Householder Retreat, **Robert Brumet**, Kansas City, MO
- Nov. 10-12, 2017 ..... Non-residential retreat, **Spring Washam**, St. Louis, MO

For the latest retreats and a full listing of Midwestern Buddhist groups, please visit our website:  
[www.midamericadharm.org](http://www.midamericadharm.org)