

Mid América



Dharma News

Winter/Spring Issue

<http://www.midamericadharm.org/>

November 2003

Bringing Acceptance to Death and Dying -

by Ginny Morgan

Ginny taught in St. Louis in September 2003 on the theme of Death and Dying. These are excerpts from one of her retreat talks.

Don Juan said "Keep death at your left shoulder." I have a woodcut of a skeleton sitting on my left to remind us of the fact of impermanence - that things change, that things end, that this body will die, that this life will come to an end. In this retreat we will contemplate the gift of dying into life, of being present in each moment, with all our heart, with this awakens that we teach ourselves. Our meditation practice teaches us to be fully present in each moment, awake to the truth as it is. There are several reasons that people don't do this. First, we have been habituated not to be present or awake. Second, there is fear of looking deeply, fear of seeing, fear of fully apprehending death as it is - the death of things as we wanted them to be. There is a story about a woman from the Buddha's time. Her deepest, most profound wish was to become a mother. She had been married for quite some time and had not given birth, so she kept praying to different gods asking for a child to be born. Finally, she became pregnant and gave birth to a baby boy. It was a wonderful, joyful experience. Not long after that her baby died and she became hysterical with grief. She refused to bury the body and wandered, searching for someone to restore her baby to life. She heard about the Buddha and ran to him. Offering him the baby's body she said, "Please, if you would just bring this baby back to life. I know you can do it." The Buddha did an interesting thing. He spoke to her out of both compassion and wisdom - out of a heart that deeply felt her pain, balanced with the sword of truth, of clear discriminative wisdom. He said to her, "Go to the village and knock on every door. If you find a home where death has not touched the people who live there, get a mustard seed from that house and bring it back to me. Then I will heal your baby, I will bring him back to life." She went to the village, and you already know what happened. Every single villager had been touched deeply by the fact of death and dying. There was no home which death had not visited. When the woman saw this, suddenly her centrality, her sense of being alone in the center of a desolate universe was gone. There was still sadness and grief, but she knew that this was not her grief alone, that each being has suffered the same as she. She went back to the Buddha, bowed to him three times and said "I understand." And as these stories go, she asked to become a nun, shaved her head and, of course, got enlightened.

We don't realize that our minds create this same centrality. We go about our days thinking of "me" and "mine." It's habituated, it's not our fault. We didn't set out to become "self-centered" in a pejorative sense and, therefore - according to some Buddhist measuring stick - horrible, worthless people. That's not truth. The truth is that we are born into a culture in which this is the habituating matrix of our lives. And we come into this without even knowing it, so that, when fear strikes, we're terrified it's us. I was once working at a "Death and Dying" retreat years ago with two teachers of mine, Stephen Levine and Ram Dass, and things weren't going my way. I was about 26 years old and very intent on doing things right and being good and having some solid notion of what that was. I was becoming more and more angry and frightened. I went out for a walk in the desert with another person who was at the retreat - it wasn't a silent retreat. My companion was a Zen Master. I was complaining and moaning and shaking and being quite vociferous about all the horrible...

continued on page 2

Bringing Acceptance to Death and Dying - *continued*

things that were happening to me on this retreat, and how I didn't like any of the teachers anymore and on and on. We stopped and all of a sudden, he looked down at the ground and said, "Oh my God, Ginny, jump back!" I thought he saw a scorpion or a rattlesnake. I jumped and said "What is it?" He said, "Ginny you are standing in a very, very dangerous spot. It's called the center of the universe." (Laughter). It took me years to understand what he meant. I was so sunk into the centrality, so unconscious of it that, at the time, I thought, "Huh! another person who doesn't understand." It's this centrality that we work with when we keep death at our left shoulder. We're working with the sense of I, ME, MINE - that sense of suffering that comes when we believe that we have this self that we have to defend and we can never be wrong, we always have to be right.

Acceptance is the number one skillful mental factor that we work with when we are working not only with physical death but also with dying into life, dying into each moment, dying into what's really here. What are the components of acceptance? The first component is compassion. No matter what comes into our mind, we meet it with this kind of loving, caring compassion. Compassion is useless without wisdom, the second component. Wisdom and compassion need to be balanced. Without wisdom, compassion can become a kind of balm that takes us too deeply into delusion. When we balance compassion with wisdom, we're able to look clearly at truth as it is in each moment. We see the truth with this heart of love and can be with it no matter how difficult or painful. This takes courage, the third component of acceptance - courageously seeing what's clearly true - not turning away. Allowing our meditation practice to really teach us to look clearly with this open-hearted, wise attention takes courage. The fourth component is inquiry - we look to see what's really true, inquiring. In meditation practice we will notice how amazing our minds are. For me, I've noticed the mind putting me on my death bed, over and over again. It says, "Whoa, you've got a twinge here!" - then runs with it all the way to the end of my life. When we notice our minds what we notice is that they go running out into the future or back into the past, over and over again. We do this inquiry - we inquire flatly, what's really true now. This takes tremendous courage and steadfastness of practice, to just look and see what's here. When fear is present we work with it. Most of us have been present for lots of fear in our lifetimes.

We often deal with fear either by clinging to it as "mine" - with centrality, with self, with grasping - or by pushing it away with aversion - "I don't want it, I don't like it, it's unpleasant, make it go away." Notice that both times we have held on to it. You can't grasp something or push it away without first holding on to it. We can work with fear in another way, by just coming back to what's really here and now, by opening up, seeing clearly and being with the fear. When we use this path to work with fear, death, or any difficult mental state, it opens us up to, what is known in the Jungian tradition as, our shadow - all the dark stuff that we don't want to let in, that creates fear, that we don't want to open to. What happens in our practice is that it all comes to the surface and we just meet it with tenderness, acceptance, compassion, wisdom. We open to it rather than push it away. One day at the cancer treatment center, a group of us were sitting in a circle with our IV's going and our bald heads and there's this guy there, Terry, who said, "You know Ginny, I used to be a real "____." But now I realize I'm gonna die and I can't even stand the thought of harming even so much as a fly. I used to be a business man who would stomp on people and push 'em down and take over their businesses if I could. Now I know there's enough for everybody." When he opened to himself with compassion, he was opening to the rest of the world with compassion. He said, "I also learned that I only have this moment. So I go out on my patio and I feel the sun touching my face. It's a complete joy to be in this moment." What he learned to do is to come into the present moment - he just comes back to the sun touching his face on the patio.

In a very simple, quiet, almost boring way, that is what we do in this practice. When our minds cling to centrality, we are lost, wanting things to be different, not being present in this moment with each sensation of body, with each feeling, emotion or thought. We learn to come back to the present moment over and over again - with gratitude, curiosity, interest, delight, with a kind of single-minded-ornerness-of-patience. By seeing through the delusion of our habituated centrality, our sense of separateness, we come to know our own extraordinary nature.

What is a "Metta" Retreat?

Sharda Rogell will be leading a non-residential metta retreat in July 2004 and we invited her to share her experiences about metta-

Metta is practiced in all the Buddhist traditions and is a Sanskrit word that means "lovingkindness." Personally, the translation I like better is "a deep friendship with all things." I think that if we reflect on these words for a few moments we will understand where the power of the metta practice lies and that is in its inclusiveness - embracing all things without exclusion. With metta, we experience friendship with all things external - our relationships, the situations we are in, our possessions, our planet earth and all its creatures. And we experience friendship with all things internal - our body, our mind states, our emotions, every feeling and sensation that we have. Nothing is excluded. Can you imagine living with this kind of love towards all things?

2500 years ago, the Buddha taught the practice of metta to the monks and nuns who were wandering homeless in the forest as a way to protect their hearts from fear since identification with fear is what blocks our capacity to love. This formal practice is available to us today and many people have adapted it into their daily lives. On a metta retreat, we practice deepening into this lovingkindness through the formal practice, but also by being together in a silent, supportive environment to explore our personal relationship to love and kindness in our life. We learn that this love is not something that arises from an empty heart. Our heart is full already, but for the most part, we have lost connection with ourselves. Metta practice helps us to awaken the loving heart that is always there.

In order to develop a connection to ourselves, we must explore the obstacles that hinder this connection. Drawing on the practice of mindfulness as the tool of investigation, we begin to see aspects of ourselves that can often be painful to see, like ways that we get angry, judgmental, hateful, jealous or resentful. An essential aspect of metta practice is allowing these patterns to surface so that the light of our love can shine onto these difficult patterns. This is the pathway to healing even though we will usually do anything to avoid this kind of honesty with ourselves. Yet, when our anger or hatred remains buried, we are bound by the events of our past history. The Buddha's teaching shows us the way to free ourselves from the tethers of our past. And metta practice can be a powerful aid in this healing.

People can engage in a daylong, a weekend or a longer intensive metta retreat. No matter how much or little we practice lovingkindness, every moment we experience the presence of metta in our heart is a transformative moment, not only for ourselves but everyone in our lives.

To find out more about lovingkindness practice, see *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art of Happiness* by Sharon Salzberg. For metta retreats, see www.spiritrock.org, www.dharma.org or www.midamericadharm.org

Announcements

Newsletter Going On-line

Mid America Dharma will be offering its newsletter on-line. Instead of receiving a paper copy of the newsletter through "snail" mail, you will receive an e-mail message with a link that will allow you to automatically download a .pdf file containing the newsletter. Getting the newsletter on-line has two advantages. It will reduce in a small way the consumption of paper/trees and it will lower printing costs for Mid America Dharma. If your email program will not allow you to use the link, you can cut and paste the website address into your internet browser to access the newsletter. To receive the Summer/Fall 2004 newsletter on-line, please send an email to johnpflaherty@earthlink.net with the following information:

- Full name
- Address with Street, City, State and Zip
- Email address
- Indicate if you want to continue receiving the hard copy of the newsletter.

2004 Public Board Meeting

Our annual public board meeting will be held on February 7, 2004 at the home of Ginny Morgan, 717 Hilltop Drive, Columbia, MO 65201. Please let us know if you plan to attend by contacting Bridget Rolens by phone, 314-426-4238, or email, bridgetr@brick.net.

Sangha News

If you wish to include your group in the next edition of *Mid America Dharma News*, contact Bridget Rolens, 10165 Cabana Club Drive, Apt. 1F, St. Ann, MO 63074; (314) 426-4238; email bridgetr@brick.net. The next edition will come out in May, 2004. Deadline for articles April 1, 2003.

Ann Arbor, MI

Deep Spring Center offers a variety of classes for beginning, intermediate, and experienced students; metta class, short courses on specific topics, weekly drop-in sittings, monthly day of meditation, residential and non-residential weekend retreats 3-5 times/year, week-long summer retreat in June. The guiding teacher is Barbara Brodsky. For a complete schedule see our website. The center continues to grow. In 2003, we moved into a new home with a larger meditation hall, meeting room, office and 'tea room'. We now have our library and bookstore and most of our classes and programs under one roof. We're offering more classes, programs and retreats at a variety of levels. Introductory and metta classes are especially popular in the larger community. Sharing the practice and the Dharma, our sangha grows in many ways! *Retreat opportunities include:*

Spring Retreat - March 5-7, 2004 at Howell Nature Center in Howell, Michigan
Basics Retreat - March 26-28, 2004 at Howell Nature Center in Howell, Michigan
Summer retreat -- June 18-26, 2004 at Emrich Center in Brighton, Michigan
Contact information: Deep Spring Center, 3003 Washtenaw Ave., Ste. 2, Ann Arbor, MI 48104; (734) 477-5848; info@deepspring.org www.deepspring.org

The Arbor Insight sitting group meets bi-weekly on Sunday evenings. They also offer day-long and non-residential retreats. Contact information: Sandra Berman, 734-769-9948; www.arborinsight.org.

Chicago, IL

Insight Chicago (part of the Prairie Sangha Network,) offers practice, Dharma class and discussions led by Sandra Hammond at the Seneca Hotel, 200 E. Chestnut, Chicago, one Friday a month from 7:30-9:30 PM. Additional mentoring/teaching time with Sandra Hammond available on some Saturday mornings by appointment. Contact Nancy Randleman**

Monday Night Sitting Group in Rogers Park in Chicago from 7:30-9:30 PM, hosted by Erick Howenstine and Nancy Randleman. This sit may change to Thursdays in early 2004. Contact Nancy Randleman** for dates. *Monday Night Sitting Group* in Wooddale, IL, hosted by Deb Wright. Contact Deb Wright at debwright@earthlink.net.

Sunday Morning Sitting Group, Evanston, IL, 9:00 AM. Contact Ralph Marol at 847-675-0282.

Extended Days of Practice (EDP) - One Saturday each month (October 11, November 8, December 6) from 1:00 pm to 6:00 pm at Heartwood Center for Body Mind Spirit, 1599 Maple, 2nd Floor, Evanston. Open practice format led by Sandra Hammond.

Individual Practice Development Program (IPD) - A new program focusing on one's individual practice concerns with feedback in groups from Sandra Hammond. This program held on same Saturdays as the EDP's. Contact Sandra Hammond at sandrahammond@earthlink.net.

New Year's Vipassana Retreat in Chicago with Andrew Getz - Sponsored by Insight Chicago, 10 AM January 1, 2004 to 12 PM January 4, 2004, at the Cenacle Retreat and Conference Center, 513 West Fullerton Parkway, Chicago. Three meals (vegetarian) and all expenses (except dana) included: \$260 (single room resident), \$210 (double room resident), \$180 (non-resident); add \$35 after October 1, 2003. Contact Ann Leeds at apleeds1@comcast.net.

****Nancy Randleman, e-mail: nrandleman@hotmail.com; phone, (773) 697-6871, extension 2.**

Information for other groups in the Prairie Sangha Network as well as retreats, classes and other events can be found at www.prairiesangha.org. In Illinois: Insight Chicago 773 697-6871, ext. 2; Matteson Plank Trail Sangha 708 957-78-7; Urbana Prairie Sangha for MM 217 356-7413. In Indiana: Lafayette Sangha 765 447-4922.

Columbia, MO

Show Me Dharma is experimenting with offering an introductory course during the Beginner Practice Group on Tuesdays. Each week through the Fall there will be a different theme building on the previous weeks offerings and yet open to newcomers at any time. We continue to offer our Experienced Practitioners Group on Wednesdays as well as half-day retreats each month. Other activities include two weekly Committed Practice classes, the book/practice discussion group and the sangha support network. For more information, please visit our web site at <http://dharma.missouri.org>.

Downers Grove, IL

Accidental Sangha meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday night of each month at 7:00 PM. Our format includes a period of sitting meditation, a period of walking meditation, another period of sitting meditation, ending with a dharma discussion. We have an affiliation with Thich Nhat Hanh but are non-denominational and welcome all. Contact information: Jack Hatfield, email: jackhat1@aol.com; 630 375 0676 x. 5.

Evansville, IN

Mindful Heart Buddha Sangha is a small (about 20) but committed group that has been meeting for 6 years. Most of the practitioners focus on the Theravada tradition but all are welcome. To meet the sittings needs of all, there are five sittings times. A study group meets on Saturday morning to read the suttas and sit for 40 minutes. Occasionally weekend retreats are held for sangha members and others in the area. Introduction to meditation classes are taught as the need arises. MHBS has supported a prison sangha at Branchville Correctional Facility in Tell City, IN, for three years. Someone goes weekly to sit with the men. Contact information: PO Box 3231, Evansville, IN 47736; phone, 812-426-1318; email, Hutton@evansville.net.

Grand Forks, ND

Lotus Meditation Center, 2908 University Ave., hosts a sitting group for experienced meditators on Monday evenings at 7 p.m. Beginner Classes begin every Sept. and January. Special events such as videos, speakers, and extended sittings are scheduled on Sunday afternoons. A non-residential Insight Meditation Retreat with Donald Rothberg is scheduled for March 26-28, 2004. Contact Information: Lora Sloan, 701-787-8839; lorasloan@msn.com; www.und.edu/dept/oip/html/lotusctr.htm.

Houston, TX

Citta 101 meets for weekly sittings, Mondays 7-8:30 PM, Wednesdays 11 AM-12:30 PM and Thursday 7-9 PM (ADDult Meditation). Upcoming activities will include a daylong sitting and course on February 21, 2004 in Brazoria (and roughly bi-monthly in different locations), a weekend non-residential retreat in Houston on January 16-18, an 8 week course February/March, and a six week course April/May. Special population courses and groups in 2004 include programs for Adults with Attention Disorders and Mental Health Professionals. Contact information: Citta 101, Box 20161, Houston, TX 77025; 713-662-2743; maryrees@wt.net, mary@citta101.org; www.citta101.org.

Jackson, MS

Conscious Living Project offers a number of ongoing opportunities for practice: Wednesday Night Inner Peace Study Group, 7:15 PM, Jackson Zen Dojo, 4308 Old Canton Road; Sunday Morning Open Meditation Sit 9:00 -10:00 AM and Sunday Morning Transmission Meditation 10:30-11:30AM, 2807 Old Canton Rd., Suite B; Contact information: Luke and Charlotte Lundemo, 601-981-6925, luke@computercoop.com, 2807 Old Canton Rd., Suite B, Jackson, MS 39216

Kansas City Metro Area

The Unity Village/Lee's Summit Sangha meets Mondays, 7:00 PM at Unity Village Administration Building Room #229. Our format consists of a 40 minute sit followed by 45 minutes of sharing/discussion. We conduct a three-day, non-residential retreat twice a year (Apr & Oct). For more information contact Robert Brumet, phone 816-941-4603 or email brumetj@unityworldhq.org.

Heart of America Sangha meets Thursdays at 7:30 pm in Classroom C at Unity on the Plaza, 707 W 47th St. Our focus is on bringing the practice into daily life. We sit for 30 minutes, read a passage (currently Bhante Gunaratana's *Eight Mindful Steps to Happiness*) and then we discuss our understanding of the dharma in our lives. The group is lead by 3 long-time meditators (Bill Bunn, John Flaherty and Marnie Hammer) who facilitate the discussion in a community of spiritual friends, honoring the Buddha's statement that the Sangha is the whole of the spiritual life. Call John or Marnie at 816-523-5061; email, johnpflaherty@earthlink.net
Mindfulness Meditation for Helping Professionals Sangha meets Wednesdays from 5:30 to 7 pm at Baptist Lutheran Medical Center, in the Curry Education Center, Classroom D or G (check the Board). Contact Donna Forgey at 913-831-1944.

Kansas City Bhavana Group meets on Sunday evenings at Pilgrim Chapel, 3801 Gillham Rd. (mid-town area), at 6:30 PM. We do Metta practice, sit for about 45 minutes, and have discussion afterwards of dhamma/meditation topics. We are a friendly and caring group, and the space has a great "energy." Contact information: Mike McFarland, phone, 816-914-9732; email, karma_704@yahoo.com.

Lawrence, KS

The Free State Sangha (a.k.a *Maximum Sangha*) gathers at 7:30 PM on Wednesdays at the Oread Friends Meeting House, 1146 Oregon in Lawrence. The group will be studying the Four Foundations of Mindfulness and the 7 Points of Mind Training. Contact information: Bob Mikesic, phone, 785-749-7249; email, bobmikesic@aol.com.

Minneapolis, MN

Common Ground Meditation Center holds sitting groups Wednesdays, 7:30 - 9:00 PM and Sundays, 7:00 - 9:00 PM. Other activities include monthly retreats (half-day, day-long, weekend and long weekends), six week Introduction to Insight Meditation courses, Buddhist Studies classes and open sitting sessions every day. All programs led by Mark Nunberg. Contact information: Mark Nunberg, Common Ground Meditation Center, 3400 East 26th Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406; 612-722-8260; nunbe@tc.umn.edu; www.commongroundmeditation.org.
Rivers' Way Insight Meditation & Joyful Living has weekly, ongoing sitting groups for Vipassana/Mindfulness meditation practice, Mondays 7:30-8:45pm & Fridays 8:00-9:15am. It also offers half day mindfulness retreats. Contact information: Merrra Young, 3357 36th Ave. S., Mpls., MN 55406; 952-253-5228; rivwaymed@aol.com

Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative (TCVC) is a community of people interested in developing and deepening their meditation practice. We provide opportunities to hear and practice the teachings of vipassana (insight) and metta (lovingkindness) meditation primarily in the Theravada Buddhist tradition. To learn more about the newsletter GrassRoots Dhamma and retreats in 2004 see the website listed below. Contact information: Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative, P.O. Box 14683 Minneapolis, MN 55414; Website: <http://www.tcvc.info>; TCVCoop@hotmail.com; Info Line: 651-229-3139

Oklahoma City, OK

The Oklahoma City Insight Meditation Group is currently in transition as it looks for a new site for group meetings. The coordinator, Arpita Brown, is a Community Dharma Leaders 2 (Spirit Rock) participant. There will be a one-day retreat on June 19 with Ven. Santikaro Bhiklkhru preceded by a Dharma talk the evening of June 18. Contact information: Arpita Brown: e-mail, arprob@flash.net; 405-478-8407.

Omaha, NE

Insight Omaha meditation practice group meets the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month from 6:30-8PM in a private home in the vicinity of 58th and Leavenworth. We sit for 40 minutes and then have an informal discussion. We also have a mid-week sitting each Wednesday from 12:00 noon to 12:45PM at the First United Methodist Church, 7020 Cass Street (Mead Chapel). For more information contact Patti Benker, phone, (402) 496-3249; email: benker@tconl.com.

Springfield, MO

BOWWOW Insight Meditation Group ("We sit and we stay") meets on Saturdays at 9:30 AM at the Body of Works Studio, 205 W. Walnut, Springfield, Missouri. We combine sitting and walking meditation with a group discussion about basic Vipassana Meditation concepts. Come join us...It's the leash you can do! Contact Neil or Cheryl Nathan for info (417) 736-9333 or e-mail cherylnathan@att.net

Stillwater, OK

Buddhist Association of Oklahoma State University. A non-denominational meditation group meets weekly on Wednesday mornings at 7:00 a.m. to 7:45 a.m. on the campus of Oklahoma State University in room 420 of the Student Union. Contact Information: Barbara Carozzi, 1624 Chiquita Court, Stillwater, OK 74075; phone: 405 377-8612; email: carlozz@okstate.edu

St. Louis, MO

St. Louis Insight Meditation Group meets on Sundays, 7:00 - 8:30 PM, at the Big Bend Yoga Center, 88 N. Gore, Webster Groves, MO. The group is open to meditators at all levels from beginners to experienced yogi's. The format is flexible but we usually begin with a 40 minute vipassana sitting meditation guided by the facilitator, then continue with a short dharma talk and discussion, and often end with tea. Those new to the practice may arrange for a brief orientation to the practice by contacting Bridget Rolens (see below). We recently began a peer-led book/study group. Elizabeth Fryer, Insight Meditation teacher and psychotherapist, is teaching a Committed Practice Group focusing on the Noble Eightfold Path. Other activities include a 3-week Introductory Class, a Mindfulness Process Group facilitated by Elizabeth Fryer and day-long non-residential retreats. Contact information: Bridget Rolens, 314-426-4238; email: bridgetr@brick.net. See website www.insightstlouis.org for more on classes and events.

Mid America Dharma Winter/Spring 2004 Retreat Schedule



Dec. 30 - Jan. 2, '04: Residential with Ginny Morgan, Conception, MO
Send registration to Bridget Rolens, 10165 Cabana Club Drive, Apt 1F, St. Ann, MO 63074; 314-426-4238; email: bridgetr@brick.net Registration begins Oct. 30; deadline, Dec. 9; closes Dec. 16.

Ginny Morgan lives in Columbia, Missouri. She is the current board president of Mid America Dharma, the emerging retreat and dharma center for the Midwest. After working as a play therapist for chronically and acutely ill children for many years, she has shifted her focus to dharma teaching, and to working almost exclusively for dharma activities. She has studied with Ram Dass and teachers from Insight Meditation Society and Spirit Rock. She is currently being mentored by Matthew Flickstein.



April 30-May 4: Residential with Matt Flickstein, Conception, MO
Send registration to Bridget Rolens, 10165 Cabana Club Dr., Apt 1F, St. Ann, MO, 63074; 314-426-4238; email: bridgetr@brick.net Registration begins February 29; deadline, April 9; closes April 16.

Matthew Flickstein has been practicing and teaching Theravadan Buddhism for over twenty-five years. At one time he was ordained as a monk in the Theravadan Buddhist tradition. His primary teacher has been Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, a Buddhist monk for over fifty-eight years and author of the highly regarded book, *Mindfulness in Plain English*. Matthew co-founded the Bhavana Society Meditation Center in West Virginia with Bhante Gunaratana in 1982. Matt has published two books, *Journey to the Center: A Meditation Workbook* and *Swallowing the River Ganges: A Comprehensive Practice Guide to the Path of Purification*, (Wisdom Publications).



July 23-25: Non-residential Metta Retreat with Sharda Rogell, St. Louis, MO

Send registration to Jon Yaffe, 3222 Walter Ave., Maplewood, MO 63143-3916; 314-644-1926. email: gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net Registration begins May 23; deadline, July 16.

Sharda Rogell began practicing vipassana meditation in 1979 and teaching worldwide in 1985. She brings a strong emphasis on awakening heartfulness to her teaching. Sharda has also been influenced by the non-dual teachings of Advaita, as well as Dzogchen in the Tibetan tradition. She was a teacher with Seattle Insight Meditation Society and is now moving back to the Bay area.

Information on Mid America Dharma Retreats

INSIGHT MEDITATION offers an easily accessible way of freeing the mind from the distortions of self-centeredness, negativity and confusion. Through concentrated awareness, we can learn to see our experience as a constantly changing process, in which pleasure and pain, fear and joy, and all aspects of life are accepted with increasing balance and equanimity. This insight leads to an understanding of our true nature and 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 by the retreat description, no previous meditation experience is required.

RETREAT FORMAT: Periods of sitting meditation will be alternated with walking meditation. *Retreats will be held in silence with talking only during teaching periods. Beginners must 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. **Non-Residential Retreats** will provide basic instruction in vipassana (insight) meditation. They are open to both beginning and experienced practitioners. Non-residential retreats are an opportunity for beginners to experience more intensive practice. Due to the length and size of the retreats, there will not be scheduled individual interviews. **Residential Retreats** begin with check-in at 4 p.m. on the first day and run through lunch on the last day. Participants will be guided through group or private interviews and daily general lectures. **Meals** are plain vegetarian. A complimentary tea table will be available.

REGISTRATION: Information about retreat site, starting times and other details will be sent after you register.

RETREAT REGISTRARS: See information on page 6.

Non-Residential Retreats: Please note that full payment is due at time of registration .

Residential Retreats: A minimum deposit of \$70 must accompany your registration. Full payment is due before the start of the retreat.

Registration Begins: Registrations will not be accepted prior to the beginning date for each specific retreat.

Registration Deadline: Registration deadlines are posted for each retreat on the previous page. *Any registrations postmarked or received after the deadlines will be subject to a \$25 late charge.*

Retreat Costs: See registration information below.

Refunds: No deposits will be refunded after the deadline.

Scholarships: Inability to pay should not prevent you from attending, as there are scholarship funds set aside for this purpose. Deferred payment plans are also available. Contact the Registrar for a copy of the scholarship and deferred payment criteria. Written applications for scholarship must be received by the Registrar no later than three weeks prior to the retreat.

Dana (or generosity): These retreats are led by teachers who freely give the teachings without any payment. All retreat fees go for retreat expenses. It is central to this tradition that the students support the teacher with a donation. There is no expected amount, but you are encouraged to give to the extent you are able. Dana is totally voluntary.

REGISTRATION FORM

To register please send a check payable to Mid America Dharma with this form to the specific Registrar for the retreat you plan to attend (see p. 6). If you are registering for more than one retreat, please photocopy this form and send with payment to the listed registrar for each retreat. A \$70 deposit is required for all residential retreats. Late registration creates problems for us, please register early.

Dec 30 '03 - Jan 2 '04: Residential with Ginny Morgan, Conception, MO. Cost \$180.00, (after Dec. 9 - \$205.00)

April 30 - May 4: Residential with Matt Flickstein, Conception, MO. Cost \$ \$237 (after April 9 - \$262).

July 23-25: Non-residential Metta Retreat with Sharda Rogell, St. Louis, MO. Cost \$50.

Total Amount Enclosed: _____

If you have special needs, please contact the listed registrar.

Please Print:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____

E-Mail Address: _____

For Residential Retreatants only:

Gender: F M

Will you arrive after 8 p.m. on the first day? Y N

Is this your first insight meditation retreat? Y N

Do you snore? Y N

2004 Retreat Schedule

Dec. 30, '03 - Jan 2, '04:	Residential with Ginny Morgan, Conception, MO
April 30 - May 4	Residential with Matt Flickstein, Conception, MO
July 23-25	Non-residential Metta Retreat with Sharda Rogell, St. Louis, MO
October 8-10	Non-residential with Rodney Smith in Kansas City, MO
November 3 - 7	Residential with Shinzen Young, Conception, MO
Dec. 30, '04-Jan. 2, '05	Residential with Ginny Morgan, Conception, MO

* Please visit our website <<http://www.midamericadharm.org>> for the latest information on retreats during these months.

address service requested

**P.O. Box 120246
Kansas City, MO 64112**

Mid America Dharma

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage
PAID
Columbia, MO
Permit #286