

# Mid America Dharma News



Winter 2007/Spring 2008

[www.midamericadharmadharma.org](http://www.midamericadharmadharma.org)

November, 2007

## Beyond the Familiar

An edited talk by Shaila Catherine

The fragility of personal identity is reinforced through association with what's familiar. Sometimes we cling to habits, even when we know that they may be unhealthy or inappropriate. Sometimes people judge what's unfamiliar as being wrong or disturbing. When we experience something that is familiar or known, we commonly feel confirmed; we feel validated. There is a feeling that "I'm getting it. I'm okay as a person. This is an okay situation -- because it's familiar."

When we encounter something unknown, we might feel uncertain, insecure, perhaps even confused. We may be forced to reorganize our experience of who we are or reexamine our views, opinions, or interpretations of the situation. We may even question the primacy of our personal perspective. New demands will require a fresh response, and sometimes this process feels disorienting or unnerving. We may not have a plan.

So how do you deal with the known and the unknown? Is there fear? Is there excitement? Is there curiosity? Fear of the unfamiliar will have huge ramifications in our lives.

### Notice something new

Each day we experience millions of sensory contacts -- you might try to notice how much is new each day. Does your consciousness even register that which is new? You might experiment -- notice one new sensation, one new sight, one new experience in your daily routine. The familiar places that you visit can be where you suddenly observe something that might contradict your cherished beliefs. It may be a belief about yourself -- "I'm an angry person". But are you angry all the time? Or "I'm a kind person". But are you kind all the time? Or "I'm a capable person". But are you capable when you get sick or tired? Question your beliefs about the world, about your families, about how you think things should be. Question the narratives that float through your mind about how your life should be. Question your views about culture and values, and question the significance of your own perspective.

### Is your mind obsessed?

There's a wonderful teaching that the Buddha gave to the monks living near the village of Kosambi (MN 48) who were deeply divided about some minor rules for monastic conduct. When their argument continued to escalate, the Buddha went personally to instruct these monks. Even though the disagreement was about rules that the Buddha had established, he did not enter into the debate as an arbitrator declaring which position was correct. Instead, he instructed the monks to individually reflect on the state of their own minds, to recognize if there might be some view or conditioned pattern that so obsessed their mind that it prohibited them from seeing clearly.

I'd like to read a paragraph of the teaching that the Buddha gave them. It is part of the instruction on six memorable qualities that lead to love and respect:

"Here a bhikkhu gone to the forest or the root of a tree or to an empty hut considers thus: Is there any obsession unabandoned in myself that might so obsess my mind that I cannot know or see things as they actually are?"

It's a lovely reflection that we can employ. We can extract ourselves from an argument and reflect: Is there anything preoccupying my mind and preventing me from seeing clearly? And then the Buddha continues:

"If a bhikkhu is obsessed by sensual lust, then his mind is obsessed. If he is obsessed by ill will, then his mind is obsessed. If he is obsessed by sloth and torpor, then his mind is obsessed. If he is obsessed by restlessness and remorse, then his mind is obsessed. If he is obsessed by doubt, then his mind is obsessed. If he is absorbed in speculation about this world, then his mind is obsessed. If a bhikkhu is absorbed in speculation about the other world, then his mind is obsessed. If a bhikkhu takes to quarreling and brawling and is deep in dispute, stabbing others with verbal daggers, then his mind is obsessed."

This instruction asks us to consider the attachment, reactivity and conditioning of our own minds when we are caught in an argument. Have we taken a position that we feel obliged to defend? The Buddha asks us to reflect and expose the places where habit, attachment, and

clinging fester. How attached are we to views, to feelings, to desires, to doubts? Is our mind obsessed?

### **Exploring habits & attachments**

Sometimes attachment may be so gross that we feel pain -- we know that we have lost perspective; we know we are caught. Sometimes the attachment is so familiar that we believe it is necessary. It may seem to define the kind of people that we are. Meditative investigation invites us to explore attachment, in subtle and gross manifestations, and to discern which structures provide valuable discipline for awakening, and which constructs are merely repetitive causes of suffering.

I remember watching the movie "Rain Man". The autistic brother had peculiar and humorous habits that structured his life. He read at night -- there is that funny scene where he reads the telephone book. He had to eat particular meals on particular days -- Friday it's tuna fish or Wednesday it's hamburger, or whatever. And the light had to go out at a certain time each night. These little events punctuated his day, creating a structure in which he could function.

We may not act in such an extreme manner, but we might feel discomfort when things aren't the way we want them to be. Do we argue and dispute like the monks at Kosambi? Or investigate the mind as the Buddha instructed? The moment of dissonance can be a place for curiosity. However, if we don't allow the space for the unknown in our lives, we might inhibit our natural curiosity. Meditation practice sparks curiosity in how the mind works, how perception operates. It can be amazing how much we can learn by sitting in silence. Meditators often recognize aspects of the mind that they had not encountered before.

### **Look beyond the familiar**

On my wall I have posted pictures of our sun, and images of a nebula and distant solar systems. I like pictures of things that are beyond anything that makes sense to my mind. The universe of possibilities is vast. Pictures of planets and galaxies remind me that life is awesomely unknown. There are so many things we can never really know, but can we be honest and just say: "I don't know?" Or does admitting that we don't know make us feel uncomfortable? Do we try to contrive answers or form spurious opinions? Instead, we can express a depth of integrity simply by the statement "I don't know."

It's interesting in Buddhism that there's right view and there's wrong view. Wrong view in Buddhism is defined as not merely the holding of views that are wrong, that is, not factual or incorrect; but wrong view includes the

holding of a view against something when the truth is that we just don't know. Right view includes the expression of profound not knowing -- to simply and honestly recognize that there's a limit to what our minds can conceptualize.

During the Buddha's forty years of teaching, he deliberately left certain questions unanswered. He was asked philosophical questions that were being debated in his era, such as "What's the origin of the world?" "How will the world end?" "What happens after death?" "Can the body exist without the soul, or can the soul exist without the body?" People still have similar questions. They've never been fully resolved. But when the Buddha was asked these questions, he said that these questions should be left unanswered; they are not beneficial. It's more profitable to teach the four noble truths -- to recognize suffering and the end of suffering -- than to waste one's time engaging in endless philosophical speculation.

To some, this can be an unsatisfactory answer. This desire to be knowledgeable, to have the answers, to belong to a group that shares our views, is a deeply conditioned pattern in the human mind. The Buddhadharma is directing us to another order of knowing: a knowing beyond fixed answers, a quality of knowledge that goes beyond all concepts, all information, all description, and all perceptions.

The Buddha invites us to cease using beliefs for consolation; to learn to not reach for ideas to ease the discomfort of not knowing but to stay present in the very experience of not having an answer. We need to be willing to let the unknown remain unknown while we're investigating it; to stay engaged with curiosity, but not grasp for the answer; to listen and remain present in the midst of any feelings of confusion or disorientation, and sense of being ungrounded or uncomfortable, so that we can open to the possibility of a vastly different perspective.

### **Look again at the obvious**

To see the unfamiliar we may not need to look in a different direction; we may not actually need to go to another culture or a different situation but just look again at what's obvious in our daily life. We can expose, reveal and see those hidden structures and influences that constrain and pattern our lives. A fresh and present attention with the obvious, with the interest and willingness to go beyond the familiar, can bring amazing revelations.

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The full version of this talk can be found at [www.imsb.org](http://www.imsb.org)

**Shaila Catherine will be leading a Mid America Dharma residential retreat, April 25-27 in Leavenworth, KS. See [Retreats](#), page 7, for details.**

# Sangha News

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Note: we do our best to provide accurate listings, but please use the contact information to verify all specific listings, events and dates of interest. Things change!

## Arkansas - Little Rock

**The Ecumenical Buddhist Society** - 1015 Second St., Little Rock, AR 72201 - meets Sundays at 7:00 PM for a thirty minute silent sitting followed by a book discussion.

Contact: Phebe Duff, [phebed@comcast.net](mailto:phebed@comcast.net), 501-975-4060

Website: [www.ebslr.org](http://www.ebslr.org)

## Illinois - Carbondale

**The Shawnee Dharma Group** - The Interfaith Center, 913 S. Illinois Ave., Carbondale, IL 62901 – meets Tuesdays 7:00 PM for a meditation sitting. We are an informal peer-led group meeting regularly since 1999.

Contact: Yolán Presley, [yo@shawnee-dharma.org](mailto:yo@shawnee-dharma.org)

Website: [www.shawnee-dharma.org](http://www.shawnee-dharma.org)

## Illinois - Chicago Area

**Insight Chicago** - Contact Ellen McCammon, [ellen\\_mccammon@ameritech.net](mailto:ellen_mccammon@ameritech.net)

- Chicago Sittings - Mondays 7:30 PM in East Rogers Park (near the Morse stop on the CTA red line) at 7:30. See [www.InsightChicago.org](http://www.InsightChicago.org) for updated schedule.
- North Side Sangha – Evanston - holds weekly Sunday sits and instruction. Contact Ralph Marol, [rmarol1@comcast.net](mailto:rmarol1@comcast.net), 847-675-0282; [www.northsidesangha.org](http://www.northsidesangha.org)
- Western suburbs group: Weekly sitting in Elgin - Wednesday evenings; includes readings and other teachings. Contact [debwright@earthlink.net](mailto:debwright@earthlink.net).

October 25-28, 2007, residential retreat at the Cenacle Retreat Center in Chicago – Contact: Ann Leeds, [aleeds@prairiesangha.org](mailto:aleeds@prairiesangha.org), 847-644-8593

Contacts: General info and directions: Ellen McCammon, [ellen\\_mccammon@ameritech.net](mailto:ellen_mccammon@ameritech.net) (312) 493-9015

For sangha news & retreats: Ann Leeds, [aleeds@prairiesangha.org](mailto:aleeds@prairiesangha.org), phone (847) 644-8593

## Illinois – Prairie Sangha Network

[www.prairiesangha.org](http://www.prairiesangha.org) is a multi-group website offering further information about several of the sanghas listed here, plus several that are unlisted.

## Illinois - Quincy

**Great River Sangha** - an eclectic group benefiting from our members' range of experience. Beginners welcome. Activities include: meetings Sundays, 9:00 AM for meditation and puja at New Horizons on State Street; book discussion every other Wednesday; day-long retreats once every two months  
Contact: Patrick Hotle, [photle@culver.edu](mailto:photle@culver.edu), 573-288-6394

## Illinois - Rockford

**SatSang Sangha** - meets Saturdays at 7:30 AM in members' homes to practice sitting meditation and to share reading materials, tapes and breakfast. We are an eclectic group drawing direction from the Insight Meditation Society and Goenka, both coming from the Theravada (insight meditation) tradition of Buddhism; and Thich Nhat Hanh's version of Zen Buddhism. We often attend retreats together.  
Contact: Wendy Larson Bennett, 815-961-0164

## Illinois - Springfield

**Satipatthana Vipassana Association** - a newly established meditation center focusing on Vipassana Insight Meditation (Mahasi tradition).

Contact: [ugunasiri@chanmyayusa.org](mailto:ugunasiri@chanmyayusa.org)

## Indiana - Evansville

**The Mindful Heart Buddha Sangha** - 20 Walnut Street, Suite 120, Evansville, Indiana, 47708  
**The Sanmon Sangha** - Branchville Correctional Facility - meets weekly with the support of the Mindful Heart Buddha Sangha. The sangha has written and printed an introductory booklet to give to newcomers and is currently studying *Wings of Awakening* by Thanissaro Bhikkhu.  
Contact: (both sanghas): 812-434-6643  
Website: [www.mindfulsangha.com](http://www.mindfulsangha.com)

## Indiana – Ft. Wayne

**Ft. Wayne Vipassana Sangha** - Plymouth Congregational Church, 501 West Berry Street.  
We meet on Tuesday evenings at 5:30 pm.  
The sangha is sponsoring the following Vipassana retreat: Matthew Flickstein – “Balancing the Mind and Heart” Aug. 22-24, 2008; Oakwood Retreat Center (near Selma, IN)  
Contact: Tammy Dyer, [tsdyer@comcast.net](mailto:tsdyer@comcast.net), 260-672-8023

## Indiana - Indianapolis

**Friends of Awakening**  
4370 Cooper Rd, Indianapolis, Indiana, 46228  
Contact: Ingrid Sato, [IngridSato@gmail.com](mailto:IngridSato@gmail.com), 317-291-1776  
Website: [www.friendsofawakening.net](http://www.friendsofawakening.net)

## Indiana, Laporte

Vipassana meditation and dharma discussion 7:00pm Tuesday evenings.  
Contact: Michael at [mlzieve@yahoo.com](mailto:mlzieve@yahoo.com) 219-871-2094

## Indiana - Michigan City

**Peacemakers Sangha** - meets at two locations:

- Tuesdays at 7:15 PM at Dancing Feet Yoga Studio in the Old School Community Center of Long Beach in Michigan City
- Sundays at 9:00 AM (except winter months) at the Friendship Gardens of Michigan City off Rt. 12.

We practice sitting and walking meditation with discussion afterwards. Members practice in the Zen tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh and some in the vipassana school. Beginners welcome.

Contact: Michael Zieve, [mlzieve@yahoo.com](mailto:mlzieve@yahoo.com), 219-362-1462

## Iowa - Des Moines

**The Des Moines Meditation Group** - Friends Meeting House, 4211 Grand Avenue - meets Tuesdays at 7:30 PM. Other activities include non-residential retreats throughout the year. Contact: Charlie Day, [charlesday1@mchsi.com](mailto:charlesday1@mchsi.com), 515-255-8398

## Kansas - Lawrence

**The Free State Sangha** - Oread Friends Meeting House, 1146 Oregon - meets Wednesdays, 7:30 PM for metta practice, insight meditation and discussion. Activities include occasional pot luck and movie gatherings, day-long and weekend retreats. Contact: Steve Abbott, [swaad@hotmail.com](mailto:swaad@hotmail.com), 785-842-2533

## Kansas - Shawnee

**The Monday Mindfuls** - 5302 Lucille Lane, Shawnee, KS - 66203; Mondays from 5:30 to 7:00 PM  
Contact: Jane Vogel, [wired4gs@yahoo.com](mailto:wired4gs@yahoo.com), 913-248-4412

## Michigan - Ann Arbor

**Arbor Insight** - sitting group meets bi-monthly on Sunday evenings. They also offer beginning meditation classes and non-residential retreats

Contact: Sandra Berman at 734-769-9948

Website: [www.arborinsight.org](http://www.arborinsight.org)

**Deep Spring Center** - 3003 Washtenaw Ave., Ste. 2, Ann Arbor  
Offers classes for beginning, intermediate, and experienced students; plus short courses on specific topics such as non-duality and metta, weekly drop-in sittings, residential and non-residential weekend retreats 3-5 times/year, week-long summer retreat in June. The guiding teacher is Barbara Brodsky. See the website for a complete schedule, including retreats led by Barbara Brodsky at other locations.

Contact: email [info@deepspring.org](mailto:info@deepspring.org) or phone (734) 477-5848

Website: [www.deepspring.org](http://www.deepspring.org)

## Minnesota - Minneapolis

**Common Ground Meditation Center** - 3400 East 26th Street - offers weekly sitting groups and classes, daily open sitting times, and both residential and non-residential retreats. We practice vipassana (insight) and metta (loving kindness) meditation as well as other practices that flow out of the Theravada Buddhist Tradition.

Contact: Mark Nunberg, [info@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:info@commongroundmeditation.org), 612-722-8260

Website: [www.commongroundmeditation.org](http://www.commongroundmeditation.org)

## Minnesota - Minneapolis (cont')

**Rivers' Way Meditation Center** - 2637 27th Ave. S. #201  
Vipassana/Mindfulness meditation, loving kindness practice and qigong/mindful movement.

Mindfulness Mondays 7:30-9:15pm, weekly sitting group. Individual practice meetings. Monthly Qigong practice group. Beginners and all levels of experience welcome. (donation/dana) Inquire.

Contact: Merrra Young, [rivwaymed@aol.com](mailto:rivwaymed@aol.com), 612-253-5133

Website: [www.riverswaymeditation.com](http://www.riverswaymeditation.com)

**Twin Cities Vipassana Collective (TCVC)** - provides opportunities to hear and practice the teachings of vipassana and metta meditation, with an emphasis on residential retreats led by senior teachers in the Theravada Buddhist tradition.

Upcoming 2008 residential retreats:

- Feb. 1-3 or 1-9, 2008, Ajahn Punnadhamo in Willard, WI - Contact Elizabeth Archerd, [earcherd@comcast.net](mailto:earcherd@comcast.net), 612-729-6168
- April 6-11, 2008 Kamala Masters, Myoshin Kelly & Patricia Genoud in Marathon, WI - Contact Naomi Baer, [baern@msn.com](mailto:baern@msn.com), 651-698-1458
- June 13-15 or 13-22 Kamala Masters & Steve Armstrong in Frontenac, MN - Contact Elena Walker, [ms\\_eleneous@msn.com](mailto:ms_eleneous@msn.com), 651-699-6640

Contact: Joanne Skarjune, 612-724-9357

Website: [www.tcv.info](http://www.tcv.info)

## Mississippi - Jackson

**The Conscious Living Project** - offers a one hour sit on Sundays at 10:00 AM at Computer Co-op, 2807 Old Canton Road, Jackson.

Contact: Luke Lundemo, [luke@computercoop.com](mailto:luke@computercoop.com),

601-981-6925

## Missouri - Columbia

**Show Me Dharma** - 717 Hilltop Dr, Columbia, MO 65201 - offers weekly meditation groups on Tuesday and Wednesday evenings, as well as Committed Practice Classes on Monday, Thursday and Friday. Mindful Family Programming is offered, as well as a Book Study Group. Recent additions include monthly groups practicing Insight Dialogue and Dharma Contemplation.

We offer non-residential, daylong, and half-day retreats. Recent retreats have included a residential Insight Dialogue Retreat with Gregory Kramer in June, a nonresidential Insight Meditation Retreat with Matthew Flickstein in September, and a daylong Metta Bhavana Retreat with Ginny Morgan in October.

Contact: Ginny Morgan, [virginia028@centurytel.net](mailto:virginia028@centurytel.net) or call 573-817-9942

Website: [www.dharma.missouri.org](http://www.dharma.missouri.org)

**Silent Mind-Open Heart** - Elm Street Yoga, 904 Elm St., Suite. 210 - Offering insight meditation for beginning and advanced practitioners.

Meets Sundays, 8:45 a.m.-10:00 a.m. for a 45 minute sitting plus a brief talk and Q&A. Instructions are available.



### Missouri – Columbia (Cont')

Contact Phil Jones, [phil@silentmindopenheart.org](mailto:phil@silentmindopenheart.org)  
573-874-0881  
Website: [www.silentmindopenheart.org](http://www.silentmindopenheart.org)

### Missouri - Jefferson City

**Jefferson City Meditation Group** - 203 East Dunklin - meets Thursdays 7:00–9:00 PM, for insight and metta meditation, dharma talk, and discussion  
Contact: Joe McCormack, [metta41856@yahoo.com](mailto:metta41856@yahoo.com), 573-491-3431 (Home), 573-864-5617 (Cell)

### Missouri - Kansas City Metro Area

**Heart of America Sangha** - Unity on the Plaza – meets Thursdays 7:30 PM to explore how to deepen insight practice in daily life. We are searching for quiet, accessible space in midtown KC.  
Contact: John or Marnie, 816-523-5061

**Kansas City Bhavana Group** - Pilgrim Chapel, 3801 Gillham Rd. (mid-town area) - meets Sunday evenings at 6:30 PM for Metta practice, 45 minutes of sitting meditation, and a discussion of dhamma/meditation topics. We are a friendly and caring group, and the space has a great "energy."  
Contact: Mike McFarland, [karma\\_704@yahoo.com](mailto:karma_704@yahoo.com), 816-914-9732

**The Unity Village/Lee's Summit Sangha** - Unity Village Administration Building Room #229 - meets Mondays 7:00 PM for a 40-minute sit followed by 45 minutes of sharing/discussion. We conduct a three-day, nonresidential retreat twice a year (April and October).  
Contact: Robert Brumet, [brumetri@unityworldhq.org](mailto:brumetri@unityworldhq.org), 816-941-4603

**The Monday Mindfuls (Shawnee Sangha Group)**  
5302 Lucille Lane, Shawnee, KS 66203 – Mondays, 5:30-7:00 PM  
Contact: Jane Vogel, [wired4gs@yahoo.com](mailto:wired4gs@yahoo.com), 913-248-4412

### Missouri - Kirksville

**Kirksville Dharma** - 501 South Halliburton, Kirksville, MO 63501 - meets Sundays 8:00 PM for sitting and Dharma talks at the home of Mark Rice  
Contact: Marc Rice, 660-216-5303

### Missouri - Rolla

**Inspiration Center Sangha** - 13345 Christopher Drive - meets Saturday's, 10:00–11:30 AM. Other activities include 2 full-day retreats.  
Contact: Maureen Hall, [mhall@inspirationcenter.net](mailto:mhall@inspirationcenter.net), 573-364-0517

### Missouri - Saint Louis Metro Area

**St. Louis Insight Meditation Group** - Big Bend Center, 88 N. Gore, Webster Groves - meets Sundays, 7:00-8:30 PM. Meditators at all levels are welcome. Leadership rotates between three leaders, each with a unique style of sharing the dharma. Meetings usually include a 40 minute sitting meditation, a dharma talk and discussion. The

### Missouri - Saint Louis Metro Area (cont')

last Sunday includes tea and time for socializing. Other activities include: Introduction to Insight Meditation Classes; Committed Practice Groups; and half day, day-long and 2-day nonresidential retreats. Those new to insight meditation may arrange for a brief orientation to the practice by contacting Bridget Rolens.  
Contact: Bridget Rolens, [bridget@pathwaystomindfulness.com](mailto:bridget@pathwaystomindfulness.com), 314-773-0866  
Website: [www.insightstlouis.org](http://www.insightstlouis.org)

**Sunday Sangha** - Yoga Source, 1500 S. Big Bend - meets Sundays 11:15 AM to 12:30 PM. The group is open to both experienced and beginning meditators and includes instruction in mindfulness meditation. All dana (donations) are given to the Mitrata-Nepal Foundation, a nonprofit child sponsorship program in Nepal.  
Contact: Christine Schutz, [drcms@earthlink.net](mailto:drcms@earthlink.net), 314 762-9412  
Website: [http://people.tribe.net/sun\\_sangha\\_stl](http://people.tribe.net/sun_sangha_stl)

### Missouri - Springfield

**Buddhist Group** - Body of Work Studio, 205 W. Walnut - meets Saturdays 9:30-11:15 AM - We sit for thirty minutes, walk for fifteen, and conclude with a dhamma talk and discussion. Retreat information is available on our website.  
Contact: Dipa, [dipaeightpreceptor@yahoo.com](mailto:dipaeightpreceptor@yahoo.com), 417-864-4559  
Website: [www.geocities.com/sisterdipa](http://www.geocities.com/sisterdipa)

### Nebraska - Omaha

**Omaha Insight Meditation Group** - currently has two sitting groups. Both are very informal and welcoming and are open to anyone with a personal sitting practice. One group meets 6:30 PM on the 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month in a private home in the vicinity of 58th and Leavenworth, sitting for 40 minutes. The other group meets Wednesdays at Noon at the First United Methodist Church (Mead Chapel), 7020 Cass Street, sitting for 40 minutes and sometimes going to lunch as a group after the sitting.  
Contact: Patti Benker, [insightomaha@gmail.com](mailto:insightomaha@gmail.com), 402-496-3249

### North Dakota - Grand Forks

**Lotus Meditation Center** - 2908 University Avenue, Grand Forks, ND 58203 -  
Sitting group meets Mondays 7:00 PM - Intro classes offered twice per year.  
Contact: Lora Sloan at [lorasloan@gra.midco.net](mailto:lorasloan@gra.midco.net), 701-787-8839

### Ohio - Cincinnati

**Tri-State Dharma** - meets Sundays, 9:30-10:50 AM for sitting and walking meditation followed by tea and Dharma discussion. The group invites nationally known teachers to lead retreats of varying lengths.  
Contact: Joan Staubach, 513-793-0652  
Website: [www.tristatedharma.org](http://www.tristatedharma.org)

### Ohio - Columbus

**Mindfulness Meditation of Columbus** – meets weekly  
Contact: Jim Dunn, [mmocohio@earthlink.net](mailto:mmocohio@earthlink.net), 614-291-7630

### Oklahoma - Oklahoma City

**The Open Circle** - Windsong Innerspace in Oklahoma City – meets Tuesdays at 7:15 PM. One Day and Half-Day retreats occur once each quarter. The last Tuesday of the month is devoted to study. Contact: Arpita Brown, 405-478-8407 or Kay Williams, 405-201-5877

### Oklahoma - Stillwater

**Buddhist Association of OSU** - offers two sitting groups, Wednesdays 7:00 AM and Tuesdays 7:00 PM. The location changes each semester, so contact us for current location information, and also for information about special events. Contact: Barbara Carlozzi, [carlozz@okstate.edu](mailto:carlozz@okstate.edu), 405-744-9457

### Oklahoma - Tahlequah

**Tahlequah Sangha** – Universalist Unitarian Congregation of Tahlequah, 104 N. College - Wednesdays 12:15–12:45 PM  
We read from the writings of Thich Nhat Hanh and meditate silently together for 20 minutes. When a new person comes, we discuss the Vipassana method of meditation. Other activities include retreats about twice a year lead by Charlie Day from Des Moines, IA.  
Contact: Thea Nietfeld, 918-456-7900

### Tennessee - Memphis

**Dharma Memphis** - home for the mindfulness community of the mid-south. Our goal is to offer information and support for the various monasteries, sanghas, and all practitioners of the middle way  
Website: [www.dharmamemphis.com/index2](http://www.dharmamemphis.com/index2)

### Texas - Beaumont

**Insight Meditation Community in Beaumont** - currently is physically dispersed due to the effects of hurricane Rita on the entire community. Contact us for an update on the sangha's status.  
Contact: Nancy Thompson, [njuniper@sbcglobal.net](mailto:njuniper@sbcglobal.net)

### Texas - Houston

**Insight Meditation Community Houston and Citta 101** - led by Community Dharma Leader Mary Rees, we host sittings weekly, Mondays 7:00 PM and Wednesdays 11:00 AM.  
Contact: Lisa Hoover, [dharmadelrio-design.com](mailto:dharmadelrio-design.com), 979-798-4448  
or  
Greg Van Meter, [gregvanm@aol.com](mailto:gregvanm@aol.com), 713-823-5610  
Website: [www.citta101.org](http://www.citta101.org)

### Texas - San Antonio

**San Antonio Insight Meditation Sangha** - First Unitarian Universalist Church 7150 W. I-10 - meets 7:30-9:00 PM Mondays (6:50 PM for new student orientation) in the Jefferson Building.  
Contact: Randy Gribbin, [rgribbin@hotmail.com](mailto:rgribbin@hotmail.com), 830-964-3684

### Wisconsin - Winona

**Winona Meditation Group** - meets Sundays 8:30–9:30 AM for silent meditation.  
Contact: Lynne, 507-457-0347

To list your group or update its listing in the next *Mid America Dharma News*, contact Jon Yaffe, [giyaffe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:giyaffe@sbcglobal.net), 314-644-1926.  
The next edition will be published in May, 2008. Deadline for submissions is April 1.

### **Notice of Mid America Dharma Annual Meeting**

The Annual Meeting of the Mid America Dharma Board of Directors will be held on Saturday, January 12, 2008, at 717 Hilltop Drive, Columbia, MO. The meeting will begin at 10 AM, and is open to the public. Interested parties are welcome to attend. Please check the Mid America Dharma website ([www.midamericadharm.org](http://www.midamericadharm.org)) to confirm the time and place of the meeting



# Mid America Dharma – 2007-8 Winter/Spring Retreats

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Dec. 29, 2007 - Jan. 1, 2008

## Residential retreat with Ginny Morgan – St. Louis, MO

Ginny Morgan lives in Columbia, Missouri. She is a guiding teacher for Show Me Dharma Center and the former President of the Board of Mid America Dharma, the emerging retreat center for the Midwest area. After working as a play therapist for acutely and chronically ill children for many years, she has shifted her focus to Dharma teaching, and to working exclusively for Dharma activities. She has studied with Ram Dass, Munindraji, Matthew Flickstein and teachers from Insight Meditation Society and Spirit Rock Meditation Center.

The retreat will be held at the La Salle Retreat and Conference Center, Wildwood, MO (25 miles west of St. Louis). Each retreatant will have a private room.

**Cost:** \$250 (\$275 if paid after Dec. 8)

Registration opens Oct. 1, deadline Dec 8, closes Dec. 15. To register online go to: [www.retreat0712.homestead.com](http://www.retreat0712.homestead.com)

**Send registration to:** Jon Yaffe, 3222 Walter Ave., Maplewood, MO 63143, 314-644-1926, E-Mail: [gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net)



Feb. 29-March 2, 2008

## Non-Residential retreat with Phil Jones – St. Louis, MO

Phil Jones has practiced meditation since 1987 and has been teaching since 1996. After working as a psychotherapist for 25 years, he now works part-time as a medical social worker, devoting the remainder of his time to Dharma service and teaching, and to his family. He helped found Show Me Dharma and currently serves as president of the Board of Directors of Mid America Dharma. Phil completed Spirit Rock Meditation Center's first Community Dharma Leader Program and has been mentored by Matthew Flickstein.

Registration begins Dec. 29, closes February 22.

**Send registration to:** Jon Yaffe, 3222 Walter Ave., Maplewood, MO 63143, 314-644-1926, [gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net)



April 25-27, 2008

## Non-Residential retreat with Shaila Catherine – Leavenworth, KS

**Shaila Catherine** has been practicing meditation since 1980. She has been teaching since 1996 in the USA, India, Israel, England and New Zealand. Shaila studied at the Sharpsham College for Buddhist Studies in England and then with masters in India, Nepal and Thailand including H. W. L. Poonja, Buddhadasa Bhikkhu, Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche, and Tulku Urgyen Rinpoche. Her current focus is developing concentration and the deep states of absorption called jhana. She completed a one-year intensive meditation retreat focused on jhana as the basis for insight at the Forest Refuge of the Insight Meditation Society (2003-2004) and a jhana retreat with PaAuk Sayadaw of Burma (2006). Shaila founded Insight Meditation South Bay in California in 2006 to bring a continuity of Dhamma teachings to the south and west bay region.

Registration opens February 1, closes April 11.

**Send registration to:** Jon Yaffe, 3222 Walter Ave., Maplewood, MO 63143, 314-644-1926, [gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net)



June 20-26, 2007

## Residential Self-Retreat with Matthew Flickstein – St. Louis, MO

Matthew Flickstein has been practicing and teaching Vipassana meditation for over thirty years. At one time ordained as a monk in the Theravadan Buddhist tradition, his primary teacher has been Bhante Henepola Gunaratana, a Buddhist monk for over sixty-three 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. He 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*, through Wisdom Publications.

Registration opens April 20, deadline May 30, closes June 6.

**Send registration to:** Jon Yaffe, 3222 Walter Ave., Maplewood, MO 63143, 314-644-1926, [gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net](mailto:gjyaffe@sbcglobal.net)

# Information on Mid America Dharma Retreats

**INSIGHT MEDITATION** offers an easily accessible way to free the mind from the distortions of self-centeredness, negativity and confusion. Through concentrated awareness, we 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 in the description, 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.

**Non-residential retreats** provide basic instruction in vipassana (insight) meditation. They are open to both beginning and experienced practitioners, and offer a valuable opportunity for beginners to develop more intensive practice. The shorter duration of non-residential retreats does not allow teachers to schedule individual interviews with retreatants.

**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.

**RETREAT REGISTRARS:** See information on page 7.

**FEES: Residential:** a minimum deposit of \$75 must accompany registration; full payment is due at 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 preceding page. Registrations are not accepted prior to the beginning date for each retreat. Registrations received after the deadline are subject to a \$25 late fee.

**Retreat Costs:** ... are listed on the Registration Form, below.

**Refunds:** We will refund fees if requested before the deadline.

**Scholarships:** We do not want inability to pay to prevent you from attending, and have established a scholarship fund to provide assistance where needed. Deferred payment is 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):** Our retreats are led by teachers who freely give the teachings without any 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 totally voluntary.

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## Registration Form

To register please send this form with a check payable to **Mid America Dharma** to the Registrar of the retreat you plan to attend (see p. 4). If registering for multiple retreats, please send a separate copy of this form with payment to the registrar listed for each retreat. A \$75 deposit is required for all residential retreats. **We now also offer online registration**, at: [www.midamericadharm.org/retreats](http://www.midamericadharm.org/retreats). Please register as early as you can, as this greatly helps our planning. Thank you.

\_\_\_\_\_ Dec. 29, '07 – Jan. 1, '08  
Residential with Ginny Morgan, St. Louis, MO  
Cost: \$250 (\$275 if paid after Dec. 8)

\_\_\_\_\_ Feb 29-Mar 2, '08  
Non-Residential with Phil Jones, St. Louis, MO  
Cost: \$60

\_\_\_\_\_ April 25-27, '08  
Non-Residential with Shaila Catherine, Leavenworth, KS  
Cost: \$60

\_\_\_\_\_ June 20-26, '08  
Residential Self-Retreat with Matthew Flickstein,  
St. Louis, MO  
Cost: : \$525 (\$550 if paid after May 30)

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

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Home Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

### For Residential Retreatants only:

Gender: F M

Will you arrive after 7 pm on the first day? Y N

Is this your first insight meditation retreat? Y N



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## Mid America Dharma 2007-8 Retreat Schedule

Dec. 29, '07 - Jan. 1, '08 ... Ginny Morgan, Vipassana, Residential; St. Louis, MO

Feb. 29-Mar. 2, '08 - Phil Jones, Vipassana, Non-Residential; St. Louis, MO

Apr. 25-27, '08 - Shaila Catherine, Vipassana, Non-Residential, Leavenworth, KS

June 20-26, '08 ... Matthew Flickstein, Residential Self-Retreat; St. Louis, MO

Nov. 7-11, '08 ... Shinzen Young, Residential; Conception, MO

Dec. 29, '08 - Jan. 1, '09 ... Ginny Morgan, Vipassana, Residential; St. Louis, MO

For the latest information on retreats, please visit our website:

[www.midamericadharm.org](http://www.midamericadharm.org)

### Notice of Mid America Dharma Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the Mid America Dharma Board of Directors will be held on Saturday, January 12, 2008, at 717 Hilltop Drive, Columbia, MO. The meeting will begin at 10 AM, and is open to the public. Interested parties are welcome to attend. Please check the Mid America Dharma website ([www.midamericadharm.org](http://www.midamericadharm.org)) to confirm the time and place of the meeting

*Address Service Requested*

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