

# Common Ground Meditation Center

Practicing together in the footsteps of the Buddha

September – December 2017



Visit [commongroundmeditation.org](http://commongroundmeditation.org) for complete program information and registration. All programs are offered without charge. Freely given donations cover expenses of the center and support for the teachers' livelihoods. See back page for more information.

## Ongoing Programs

### Open Meditation Sessions

Drop in to as many silent meditation periods as you like. Please arrive and depart with the bell, which is rung every half hour.

**Monday – Saturday, 6:30 – 9:00 a.m.**

**Sunday, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m., Tuesday, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m., 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.,**

**Friday, 11:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

### Weekly Practice Groups

These weekly groups are designed to be a cornerstone for one's practice by providing ongoing instruction and teachings that help illuminate the simple but challenging practice of mindfulness. Each session includes a guided meditation, dharma talk, and discussion. Both experienced and beginning meditators are welcome. No registration necessary. Led by Mark Nunberg and other teachers.

**Sunday, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.,**

**Sunday, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.,**

**Wednesday, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.**

### Children's Practice Group

The Children's Practice Group is for ages 3 through 3rd grade. Instruction revolves around mindful words, thoughts, and actions. Mindful movement, relaxation, songs, stories, and crafts are part of the experience. Class size is limited; please register online.

**Sundays, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. starting September 10**

### Preteen Practice Group

The preteen group is for youth in 4th – 7th grades who want to explore meditation and mindfulness in daily life. We emphasize a safe, respectful, and fun community where we can all learn from each other. Class size is limited; please register online.

**Sundays, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m. starting September 10**

### Teen Practice

You are not alone! Join others your age who are interested in learning how to be more mindful in daily life, relate to difficult emotions, and show up in a good way for your friends, family and others you care about. This is a drop-in practice group, no registration required. For more info, contact [gabe@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:gabe@commongroundmeditation.org).

**Sundays, 10:30-11:45 a.m. starting September 10**

### Lovingkindness Practice Group

This practice group is for people interested in developing the heart by training in the four beautiful emotions of lovingkindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. Led by Mark Nunberg and other teachers.

**First Fridays: September 1, October 6, November 3, December 1; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

### Self-Compassion Practice Group

This practice group is for anyone interested in developing practices that strengthen and support mindful self-compassion. Led by Jean Haley and Jane Rauenhorst.

**Third Fridays: September 15, October 20, November 17, December 15; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

### Practice Meetings

Practice meetings with Guiding Teacher Mark Nunberg and other teachers are available to people with specific questions about their meditation practice or for people who are interested in deepening their practice through regular meetings with a spiritual friend. You can sign up online.

## Courses

### Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation

This course includes exploration of the intention behind practice, an introduction to insight (vipassana) meditation techniques, instructions for working with common obstacles, an overview of the practice of lovingkindness, and a discussion on how mindfulness can be part of one's daily life.

**Intro Class with Mark Nunberg, Six Tuesdays, September 12 – October 17; 7:30-9:00 p.m.; Intro Workshop with Gail Iverson, Sunday, December 3, 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.**

Mark Nunberg, Guiding Teacher, on the Soft Power of Mindfulness

Dear Friends,

The Buddha discovered two things in his practice. He discovered the unshakable release of the heart and he uncovered the path that leads to this release. Both the means and the end of practice are characterized by an openness of mind and heart. Albert Einstein once said, "We can't solve problems by using the same kind of thinking we used when we created them." Understanding this, the Buddha discovered that the healing power of mindful awareness doesn't depend on force but rather on its ability to revolutionize the mind's understanding of the way things are. It is precisely because of the non-judging nature of mindfulness that the mind sees clearly the changing and impersonal nature of the present moment.

The soft power of mindfulness arises when the mind is willing to connect to things as they are, not as "I" wish them to be. It is possible to sustain a stable and clear present-moment awareness that is no longer confused by any interpretation the mind might construct regarding what is coming and going in one's experience. Just this is the aspiration of our practice, to be able to be undefended and responsive to the ten thousand joys and sorrows that keep touching the sensitive heart.

### Buddhist Studies Program

The Buddhist Studies Program is for experienced practitioners who have attended three or more Buddhist meditation retreats and have a commitment to daily meditation practice. Led by Mark Nunberg.

#### Buddhist Studies: The Three Refuges

Please join in for this eight week course examining the traditional three refuges as the central practice of clarifying and strengthening one's spiritual aspiration and path. Without this ongoing deepening of understanding regarding the means and ends of spiritual practice we tend to pick and choose what we like from the many choices that exist today. The Buddhist practice of taking refuge as a conscious intentional act goes against the stream of our habit energies and our culture. We are developing an allegiance toward an intimate and clear connection with the present moment and the kind and skillful engagement that flows from that.

**Eight Mondays, September 11 – October 30; 7:30 – 9:00 p.m. Optional Sitting Period, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.**

#### Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction

This eight-week program is an introduction to mindfulness meditation practice following the stress reduction program pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn over 30 years ago. Led by Shelly Graf.

**Eight Thursdays, October 26 – December 21 (No class on November 23).**

#### Befriending Death

In this six-week class, we will explore how we relate to death and dying – our own and that of others, some of the rituals and care involved in one's end of life, grief, embracing life, and befriending death. We will practice relating to death as a great teacher who can break our heart yet awakens us to the Truth that will liberate us. You must have some meditation experience or familiarity with Buddhist meditative traditions. The class is not appropriate for people who have recently experienced the loss of a loved one and whose grief is raw. Led by Kyoko Katayama.

**Six Thursdays, September 14 – October 19, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. or 6:30 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.**

#### Mindful Self-Compassion

This eight-week class is designed to help participants cultivate self-compassion skills for daily life. Based on the program developed by Christopher Germer and Kristen Neff, Mindful Self-Compassion (MSC) builds on a foundation of mindfulness, kindness, and a sense of our shared humanity to help us meet the difficulties in our lives with compassion.

Led by Jean Haley and Jane Rauenhorst.  
**Eight Mondays, September 18 – November 6, 1:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m. & Half-day Retreat, Saturday October 21, 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**

### Workshops

**With Ajahn Punnadhammo: The Nature of Mind**

Saturday, September 9, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

**With Ramesh Sairam: Mindfulness and Physical Pain**

Mindfulness meditation can help practitioners understand the complex nature of pain and provide tools to reduce the suffering associated with it.

**Saturday, September 16, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

**Workshop for Couples with Cheri Desmond-May and Jane Rauenhorst: Cultivating Compassion with Your Beloved**  
**Saturday, September 23, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m.**

**With Spruce Krause: Laughter Yoga – A Direct Practice of Joy**

Laughter yoga involves deep breathing and a deep commitment to being fully in the now. When we are laughing there is no past, no future, and no mind chatter. Laughter increases one's sense of well-being and promotes a wholesome community.  
**Sunday, October 8, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.**

**Living the Practice Workshop Series**

The Living the Practice Workshop Series is designed for people who have an ongoing mindfulness practice and want to integrate the practice more thoroughly into all aspects of life.

**With Wynn Fricke and Mark Nunberg: The Discipline and Freedom of Wise Speech**  
The Buddha has much to say about wise speech as a cause for living with integrity and building wholesome community, and as a direct opening to what the Buddha calls the bliss of blamelessness. In this workshop

## Meditation Retreats

Leaving behind our homes, family and friends, and our duties and responsibilities can be a powerful support for deepening insight. In a quiet setting, with a simple schedule of sitting and walking meditation, practicing noble silence, the mind naturally begins to quiet down. A quiet, serene mind is capable of seeing clearly in a way that is often not available during our busy lives. Clear seeing or insight uproots the confusion behind the cycles of stress and suffering. Those who are new to meditation should attend the intro class or several weekly practice groups before their first retreat.

#### Half-Day Retreats

- Saturday, October 7, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m. with Mark Nunberg
- Saturday, November 4, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
- Saturday, December 2, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

#### Daylong Retreats (Please bring a bag lunch)

- Saturday, September 30, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. with Mark Nunberg
- Saturday, October 28, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. with Mark Nunberg
- Saturday, November 25, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. with Mark Nunberg

#### Retreat at Prairie Farm

Due to construction, please check the website or contact the office for the most up-to-date information about possible work retreats or other retreats.

#### Community Practice Intensive

This intensive emphasizes the integration of daily life duties and responsibilities with elements of retreat practice. Participants commit

to a continuity of mindfulness in all daily activities as well as an intensification of one's formal practice schedule.

Monday, December 4 – Thursday, December 21; Monday night community sharings on December 4, 11, and 18, 7:00 – 9:00pm; Daylong retreat, Saturday December 23, 6:30 a.m. – 8:00 p.m.

#### Residential Retreat

At Holy Spirit Retreat Center with Mark Nunberg. Thursday, November 2 at 5:00 p.m. to Sunday, November 5 at noon; registration begins September 2.

**Year-End Non-Residential Retreat with Mark Nunberg**

Tuesday, December 26 at 10:00 a.m. – Sunday, December 31 at noon

**Retreat for People of Color with Stacy McClendon, Femi Akinnagbe, and Gabe Keller-Flores**

Sunday, December 10, 12:30 – 6:00 p.m.

we will look at the Buddha's teachings on wise speech in terms of all the relationships we navigate in our lives. We will explore the radical question, what does speech look like when it is not being motivated by greed, anger or delusion?

**Saturday, October 14, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

#### with Spring Washam: For Women

**Saturday, November 18, 9:30 – 4:00 p.m.**

#### Blooming in The Storm: A Workshop with Louis Alemayehu

**Saturday, December 2, 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m.**

### Guest Teacher Talks

#### With Ajahn Punnadhammo: The Nature of Mind

**Friday, September 8, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

#### With Judith Ragir:

**Friday, October 13, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

#### For People of Color with Spring Washam:

**Thursday, November 16, 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.**

#### With Spring Washam:

**Friday, November 17, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**

### Yoga & Qigong

No registration required for yoga or qigong programs except for New Year's Yoga.

#### Mindful Yoga Weekly Practice

In these sessions we practice yoga poses in a way that promotes ease in the mind. Open to adults of all ages and all levels of experience.

**Mondays (Myra Rucker), 5:30 – 6:45 p.m.,**

**Tuesdays (Nancy Boler), 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.**

**or (level 2) 5:30 – 6:45 p.m., Wednesdays**

**(Nancy Boler), 5:30 – 6:45 p.m., & Fridays**

**(Nancy Boler), 9:30 – 10:45 a.m.**

#### Gentle Yoga and Deep Relaxation

In this class we study and practice relaxation techniques that allow us to "let go" into a deep state of stillness. The result is unification and peacefulness in all aspects of our being. Led by Nancy Boler.

**Sundays, September 10 & 24, October 8 & 22, November 5 & 19, December 17; 4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Attend one or all.**

#### New Year's Day Yoga

This class will offer dynamic asana, pranayama, and relaxation. These practices naturally purify and realign the body and mind. A perfect start to the new year! Led by Nancy Boler. Please register online.

**Monday, January 1, 10:30 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

#### Mindful Chair Yoga

Gain strength and flexibility with chair yoga: a gentle practice done while sitting in a chair or standing, using a chair for balance. This class is designed to guide awareness into the body through attunement to breath and sensation. Led by Sharon Sebring.

**Tuesdays, 2:30 – 3:45 p.m.**

#### Drop-in Qigong

Qigong is a deeply satisfying healing practice that integrates mindful awareness, breath, and movement. **Led by Mark Nunberg and Steve Compton.**

**Wednesdays, 9:05 – 10:05 a.m.**

### Mindfulness, Recovery, and the Twelve Steps

#### Weekly Practice Group

This ongoing program is for those seeking spiritual development by practicing the principles of the Twelve Steps and the Buddha's teachings in everyday life. This practice group is open to all who have an interest in mindfulness and the Twelve Steps. Led by Emil J., April H., Spruce K., Elene L., Gail I., Anita R., Ollie S., Alice V.

**Fridays, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

#### Yoga for Recovery

Regain connection with the body and learn to be comfortable in your own skin. Mindful yoga can help continue the detoxification process on a much deeper lever. Led by Anita R.

**Fridays, 5:30 – 6:30 p.m.**

#### Twelve-Step Recovery and Mindfulness Meditation Retreat

These four hours without distractions provide a unique opportunity for self-discovery and seeing, through mindfulness meditation, how we contribute to our own suffering. Led by Anita R.

**Sundays, September 17 & November 12, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.**

### Community Events

#### Quarterly Community Gathering and Potluck

**Sundays, September 24, December 17, 11:45 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

#### Community Conversation with People with Serious and Life-Limiting Illnesses

facilitated by Kyoko Katayama and Patrice Koelsch.

**Sunday, October 15, 2:00 – 4:00 p.m.**

#### Day of Remembrance

This is an occasion to remember and express our love and thanks to our friends and family members who have died.

**Sunday, November 5, 1:00 – 3:30 p.m.**

#### Community Work Day

Deep cleaning and maintenance with friends! Lunch provided.

**Saturday, November 11, 9:05 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.**

#### Annual New Year's Eve Celebration and Potluck

An evening of practice, reflection, sharing, and celebration, with performances by Ellis and Gabe Keller-Flores.

**Sunday, December 31, 7:30 p.m. – 12:15 a.m.**

#### Pilgrimage to India

Join Wynn Fricke and Nils Heymann on a journey to the land of the Buddha. We will meditate, sightsee, journal/sketch, and explore some of the spiritual, historical, and artistic sites of Delhi, Agra, Bodhgaya, and Varanasi. Contact the center for more details. A deposit covering expenses will be required. **10 days in July 2018.**

### Community Groups

These small, peer-led groups meet at the center, in homes, and in other community venues to explore this path of awakening in terms of issues that are real in our lives. Find complete descriptions including meeting times on our website.

**Concentration Skills and Study  
DharmaCore Queer Meditation Community  
Dharma Flicks**

**Educators Mindfulness Group**

**Gay Men's Group**

**Befriending Immigrants and Refugees**

**Mental Health Professionals Group**

**Mindful Couples**

**Mindfulness and Depression**

**Mindfulness for Caregivers**

**Organizers and Social Justice Activists**

**People of Color**

**Sprout House**

**Unraveling White Privilege**

**Women's Group**

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We will be changing how we distribute the newsletter soon. Please let us know if you depend on this paper version being mailed to you and we will make sure you continue to receive it.  
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Common Ground Meditation Center  
2700 East 26th Street  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55406

## Return Request

### Supporting Common Ground



**Continuing a tradition** from the Buddhist monasteries in Southeast Asia, all programs are offered free of charge in the spirit of generosity. This offering is possible because of the

generosity of people like you who wish to support the continuation of the center.

**Mindful giving and receiving** frees the heart of clinging. Please join us in the practice of generosity, which leads to both joy and wisdom. Because each person's circumstances are different, we do not provide suggested donations or constant reminders to give. The center, however, is completely dependent on your gifts.

Your contributions pay for all of the center's expenses, provide Mark's livelihood, support our teachers, maintain the center's building, and pay the wages of our administrative staff.

- You may leave financial donations in the dana bowl at the center or mail your gift to 2700 E. 26th St. Mpls, 55406.
- To make a gift online, visit: [www.commongroundmeditation.org](http://www.commongroundmeditation.org) and click on Supporting the Center.
- If it is convenient for you to schedule electronic deductions on a regular basis, it helps simplify the center's bookkeeping. You can schedule regular deductions from a credit card (go to [www.commongroundmeditation.org](http://www.commongroundmeditation.org) and click on the Supporting the Center button on the home page to set up a single or ongoing donation). Or you can contact your bank for instructions on setting up electronic payments from your account.

Volunteers do many of the center's day-to-day tasks. Please email [gabe@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:gabe@commongroundmeditation.org) if you have time and skills that you would like to contribute.

The generosity of your practice and financial support make this center a great resource for us all. Contributions to Common Ground are tax deductible.

#### Contact Us

Phone: (612) 722-8260

Email: [info@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:info@commongroundmeditation.org)

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

### Common Ground Leaders

**Guiding Teacher Mark Nunberg** began his practice in 1982 and has been teaching meditation since 1990. He co-founded Common Ground Meditation Center in Minneapolis with Wynn Fricke in 1993 and continues to serve as the center's Guiding Teacher. Mark has studied with both Asian and Western teachers and finds deep inspiration in the teachings of the Buddha. Mark practiced as a monk for five months in Burma and completed four three-month retreats at Insight Meditation Society Retreat Center, as well as many months of intensive retreat practice at The Forest Refuge. Mark continues to be a grateful student of Buddhist practice.

**Board of Directors:** Board Chair: Stacy McClendon; Vice Chair: Jana Larson; Treasurer: Dave Halsey; Secretary: Gabe Keller-Flores; Director: Ramesh Sairam; Director: scottie hall; Guiding Teacher: Mark Nunberg

**Advisory Board:** Steve Armstrong, James-Baraz, Joseph Goldstein, Kamala Masters

**Program Teachers:** Femi Akinngabe, Louis Alemayehu, David Alley, Nancy Boler, Cheri Desmond-May, Jean Fagerstrom, Wynn Fricke, Shelly Graf, April H., Jean Haley, Nils Heymann, Gail Iverson, Emil J., Kyoko Katayama, Patrice Koelsch, Spruce Krause, Gabe Keller-Flores, Elene L., Meski Mebatsion, Anita R., Jane Rauenhorst, Myra Rucker, Ollie S., Ramesh Sairam, Sharon Sebring, Merrra Young, and Alice V.

**Office Staff:** Shelly Graf, Gabe Keller-Flores

**Bookkeeping Manager:** Gail Iverson

### Statement of Purpose

Common Ground is a community meditation center dedicated to the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice

of conditions of life. With practice, mindfulness reveals deep wisdom, compassion, and freedom. Common Ground is an independent center founded on the teachings of the Buddha. This center follows in the spirit of Insight Meditation Society in Barre, MA and Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, CA and is part of the greater insight meditation, or vipassana, community in the West. Common Ground welcomes skillful means from all Buddhist traditions as well as other spiritual traditions dedicated to wisdom and compassion.



*"...for the sake of those people stuck in the middle of the river of being, overwhelmed by death and decay, (insecurity and loss), I will tell you where to find solid ground.*

*There is an island, an island which you cannot go beyond. It is a place of nothingness (no thingness), a place of non-possession and of non-attachment. It is the total end of death and decay, (insecurity and loss), and this is why I call it Nibbana (the extinguished, the cool, unbinding).*

*There are people who, in mindfulness, have realized this and are completely cooled here and now. They do not become slaves working for Mara, for Death; they cannot fall into his power.'*

– the Buddha

*(from Kappa's Question, Sutta Nipata 10, translated by Saddhatissa)*