

Common Ground

MEDITATION CENTER

PRACTICING TOGETHER IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2018



Visit 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 half-hour 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. The Buddha taught that mindfulness is the way to go beyond habits of distraction and grasping. To walk this path of wisdom and compassion, we need the support of a community that shares this intention. Each session includes a guided meditation, dharma talk, and discussion. Both experienced and beginning meditators are welcome. No registration necessary. Led by Mark Nunberg, Shelly Graf, and others.

Sunday, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Sunday, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Wednesday, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Youth Programs

Common Ground hosts 3 programs for youth during the school calendar year. The Children's Practice Group is for ages 3 – 3rd grade. The pre-teen group is for youth in 4th – 7th grades. The teen group is for 8th – 12th grades. The two younger groups resume on Sunday September 16th, the teens on Sunday September 23rd. No registration required.

Sundays, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

Lovingkindness Practice Group

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

**Fridays, September 7, October 5,
November 2, December 7; 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.

**Fridays, September 21, October 19,
November 16, December 21; 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

Practice Meetings

Practice meetings with Mark Nunberg and Shelly Graf 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.

Dear Friends,

Although we may not have fully realized the freedom that the Buddha points to, the unshakeable release of the heart from the torments of greed, hate and delusion, we can become wise about what regularly obstructs our experience of freedom. The Buddha points to conceit as one of the most subtle and tenacious fixations of the heart. In Buddhist psychology, conceit is considered a fetter or torment of the heart in that this mental pattern obstructs the simple freedom and release that is available when wise understanding is present. Conceit is clinging to a view of being better than, worse than, or even the same as others. It doesn't matter how the mind constructs and fixates on a conceited identity, it will always be a cause for stress. Even the seemingly skillful thought, "We are all the same" can mask a fixed self-view and fuel the proliferating comparing mind. This we can see clearly in our own practice. The heart is released when wisdom understands this pattern as simply an impersonal but persistent mental habit. If wisdom is strong, the mind will not be confused by these projections; "just thinking being known."

The fruit of cultivating mindful awareness more and more in our lives is a deepening capacity to navigate all our relationships, responsibilities, and worldly engagements without clinging (as much) to the inevitable and useful mental constructions around identity, difference, and evaluation. As social beings, these mental activities are necessary. However, they are often used to fuel attachment and reactivity. Haven't we all noticed the endless spinning of our self-dramas and felt the tension in the body and heart that results? Is there a way to use identity skillfully to better illuminate and connect with the world of relationship without it being the cause for suffering?

Peace,
Mark Nunberg
Guiding Teacher

"Just as when an ocean-going ship, rigged with masts & stays, after six months on the water, is left on shore for the winter: its stays, weathered by the heat & wind, moistened by the clouds of the rainy season, easily wither & rot away. In the same way, when a practitioner dwells devoting oneself to development (wise mindful awareness), one's unskillful mental tendencies easily wither & rot away."



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COURSES

Find complete program information and register online at www.commongroundmeditation.org.

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 18 – October 23, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.; Intro Workshop with Gail Iverson, Saturday, November 11, 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.

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.

Karma and Dependent Origination

This class will begin with the study of the Buddha's teachings on Karma – that intention matters. With a grounding in understanding the conditional nature of experience we will examine the Buddha's insights into the causes of suffering and its release. The course includes Dharma talks, small and large group discussions, and guided sitting time. Participants will be expected to use the teachings as a focus of their meditation and daily life practice. Led by Mark Nunberg.

Eight Mondays, September 17 – November 5, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m., Optional Sit, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

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.

Thursdays, November 1 – December 13, no class November 22; Kyoko will offer two sections of this class: either 10:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. or 6:30 – 8:30 p.m.

Beyond Being a "Good White Person": Disrupting Unconscious Racist Identities

In this two-session class we will use Buddhist teachings to explore attachment to the habit of

thinking of oneself as a "good white person." Supported by the truth of our basic goodness, we'll examine our unconscious self-protective strategies and the subtler cultural legacies of entitlement and superiority. At the first class you'll receive an article to read and an assignment to help you investigate aspects of your racial identity. In the second class, we'll support each other by sharing our learning and consider how to translate our good intentions into effective action in the world to address racism. Led by Terri Karis.

2 Thursdays, September 27 & October 18; 7:00 – 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 Wednesdays, September 12 – October 31, 1:30 – 4:00 p.m. & Half-day Retreat, Sunday October 14, 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.

WORKSHOPS

Find complete program information and register online at www.commongroundmeditation.org.

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 7, 2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

With Shannon Gibney and Arleta Little: Writing as a Practice of Freedom

How can we hone our writing craft, so that the Creative can arise to its fullest potential, and hopefully be a force for positive transformation in our own lives as well as in others'? The great American poet Nikky Finney has written, "My job as a poet, as an artist, is to not look away." How do we keep on looking at the things that hurt, scare, or confuse us, and translate this to the page? What, if anything, is the writer's role in building a more just world with less suffering? How might we use writing to create more freedom in the world, and in ourselves?

Sunday, October 7, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

With Ajahn Punnadhammo: Working with the Various Levels of Self and Not-Self, Peeling the Onion

Saturday, October 27, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

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.

Race and Racism Book Club

Living Simply EcoSangha

Educators Mindfulness

Immigration Justice Sangha

Mental Health Professionals

Mindfulness and Depression

Organizers & Social Justice Activists

People of Color

Sprout House

Under 40

Unraveling Whiteness

Women's

With Wynn Fricke and Ajahn Jotipalo: Art and Dharma

In this workshop we will reflect on the interconnections of our art-making practices and our spiritual path. How do our distinct disciplines as artists and as Buddhist practitioners naturally converge? What is the role of expression in our aspiration for deepening freedom? We will discuss our experiences in the creative process, with its joys and obstacles, as a means for self-discovery, and insight.

Saturday, December 8, 9:30 a.m. – 12:00 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, Mark Nunberg, Stacy McClendon, and Shelly Graf: Relating to Others with Wisdom and Compassion

It is hard to imagine an authentic deepening and releasing of the heart without the healing joys and entangling difficulties that arise in the relationships that shape our lives. Please join us as we review the Buddha's teachings on wisely relating to others and how a kind and mindful presence provides the fertile ground for the array of skillful emotions and mind states necessary to being a good friend and competent social being.

Saturday, September 29, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

For Couples with Cheri Desmond May and Jane Rauenhorst: Deepening Your Intimacy through Insight Dialogue

Come with your partner to learn about Slowing Down in order to Show Up with more presence with your beloved, and have deep listening as a more accessible way of connecting. All couples are welcome.

Saturday, October 20, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 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, December 15, 9:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

GUEST TEACHER TALKS

Please join us for these special evenings of dharma (spiritual teachings) and connection with the Common Ground community. Visit our online calendar for complete program information, including teacher bios.

With Anam Thubten: The Fragrance of Freedom

Friday, October 19, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

With Ajahn Punnadhammo: An Inquiry into the Central Buddhist Teaching of Not-Self

Friday, October 26, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

YOGA AND QIGONG

No registration required for yoga and qigong classes except where noted.

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, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. (Myra Rucker),
Tuesdays, 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. (Nancy Boler),
or, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. (Nancy Boler, level 2),
Wednesdays, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. (Nancy Boler),
& Fridays, 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. (Nancy Boler),
or, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. (Anita R.)**

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 9 & 23, October 7 & 21,
November 4 & 18, December 2 & 16;
4:00 – 5:30 p.m. Attend one or all.**

Mindful Movement Workshop: Embodiment and Freedom Through Movement

with Steve Compton, Wynn Fricke, Mark Nunberg and Sarah Wilson. Please register.

**Friday, October 12, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m. &
Saturday, October 13, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

Drop-in Qigong

Qigong is a deeply satisfying healing practice that integrates mindful awareness, breath, and movement. This practice develops relaxation, concentration, and vitality. Please join us. Led by Mark Nunberg and others.

Wednesdays, 9:05 – 10:05 a.m., ongoing.

MINDFULNESS IN THE TWELVE STEPS

Weekly Practice Group: Mindfulness, Recovery, and the Twelve Steps

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 Charlie B., April H., Gail I., Emil J., Marc J., Spruce K., Elene L., Anita R., Sharon S., Ollie S., and Alice V.

Fridays, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Twelve-Step Recovery and Mindfulness Meditation Retreats with Anita R.

**Sundays, September 30 & December 23,
1:00 – 5:00 p.m.**

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Poetry Reading: Things We Grapple With

with Andrea Jenkins, Mimi Jennings, Guthema Roba, and Morgan Rutherford

Sunday, September 16, 2:00 – 3:00 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. Led by Kyoko Katayama and Patrice Koelsch.

Sunday, October 28, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Community Conversation: Making our Way through Grief and Loss

Facilitated by Merrra Young and Ellen Hufschmidt
Sunday, December 9, 1:00 – 3:00 p.m.

MEDITATION RETREATS

Retreating from the distractions of daily life is an essential part of the path of awakening. Please join us for these important opportunities to deepen mindfulness. Those who are new to meditation should attend the intro class or several weekly practice groups before their first retreat. Register for Common Ground retreats at www.commongroundmeditation.org.

Half-Day Retreats

Saturday, September 8, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
with Ramesh Sairam

Saturday, October 6, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
with Mark Nunberg

Saturday, November 3, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
with Jean Haley

Saturday, December 1, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.
with Mark Nunberg

Daylong Retreats

(Please bring a bag lunch.)

For People of Color, **Saturday, September 22, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**
with Nils Heymann. Optional yoga from **9:00 a.m. – 10:00 a.m.** with Femi Akinnagbe

Saturday, November 10, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m. with Mark Nunberg

Community Practice Intensive

This intensive practice period is for those interested in integrating daily life with more formal practice and study.

**3 Mondays, December 3, 10, & 17,
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.**
and ending with a daylong retreat, **Saturday,
December 22, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.**

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.

Year-End Non-Residential Retreat with Wynn Fricke, Shelly Graf, and Mark Nunberg: Tranquility and Insight

**Wednesday, December 26 at 10:00 a.m. –
Monday, December 31 at noon**

Common Ground Residential Retreats

At Metta Meditation Center with Wynn Fricke, Shelly Graf, and Mark Nunberg.

**Thursday, November 1 at 5:00 p.m.
to Sunday, November 4 at noon;
registration begins September 1.**

Other Residential Retreats with Common Ground Teachers

With Mark Nunberg and Kamala Masters, assisted by Shelly Graf at Cloud Mountain Retreat Center, **September 7 – 14**

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 from 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 and Shelly'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 and click on Supporting the Center, under About Us.
- If it is convenient for you to schedule electronic deductions on a regular basis, it helps simplify the center's bookkeeping. 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 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. All contributions to Common Ground are tax deductible.

Contact Us

Phone: (612) 722-8260

Email: info@commongroundmeditation.org

Website: www.commongroundmeditation.org

COMMON GROUND STAFF

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.

Associate Director

Shelly Graf has been practicing at Common Ground since 2003. They are currently being trained by Insight Meditation Society as part of the four-year teacher training program. They are a staff dharma teacher, like Mark Nunberg, the Guiding Teacher. Currently they teach a variety of programs at the center including co-leading residential retreats with Mark Nunberg and Wynn Fricke. Shelly's administrative role includes partnering with the Guiding Teacher to develop and clarify the center's vision, policies, and priorities. Professionally, Shelly has been a clinician and administrator in the Social Work and mental health fields since 2005. They have a special interest in waking up to whiteness as part of this total path of awakening. Whatever Shelly's role may be, they will always be a grateful student of Buddhist practice first.

Office Manager: Gabe Keller-Flores

Bookkeeping Manager: Gail Iverson

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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

ADVISORY BOARD

Steve Armstrong, James Baraz, Joseph Goldstein, Kamala Masters

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

Common Ground is a community meditation center dedicated to the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of being present with the moment and learning to be at ease with the unfolding 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, Massachusetts and Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, California 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.