

Common Ground

MEDITATION CENTER

PRACTICING TOGETHER IN THE FOOTSTEPS OF THE BUDDHA

SEPTEMBER – DECEMBER 2019



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.

Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation leads to insight into the nature of our hearts and minds, revealing an inherent clarity, openness, and ease. 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 10 – October 15, 7:30-9:00pm
Intro Workshop with Gail Iverson, Saturday, November 16, 9:30am-1pm

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, 6:30-9:00am

Sunday, 8:00-10:00am

Tuesday, 11:00am-12:00pm, 7:30-9:00pm

Friday, 11:00am-12:00pm

Weekly Practice Groups

The weekly practice groups are designed to be a cornerstone for one's practice by providing ongoing instruction and teachings that will 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. Sunday groups are usually led by Mark Nunberg and Wednesday groups are usually led by Mark or Shelly Graf.

Sunday, 10:30-11:45am

Sunday, 7:00-8:30pm

Wednesday, 7:30-9:00pm

Youth Programs

Common Ground hosts three programs for youth during the school calendar year. The children's practice group is for ages 3 through 3rd grade. The preteen group is for youth in 4th-7th grades. The teen group is for 8th-12th grades. The children and preteen groups will start on September 15th and the teen group will start on September 22nd. These programs are drop-in, no registration required. Contact info@commongroundmeditation.org for more info or visit our website: commongroundmeditation.org

Sundays, 10:30-11:45am

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. Usually the first Friday of the month. September 6th, October 4th, November 1st, with Mark Nunberg, December 6th with TBD

7:00-8:30pm

Guiding Teacher Letter from Mark Nunberg

Dear Friends,

Although we can probably agree that compassion is a good idea, there might be confusion about what the actual experience of compassion is. Buddhist practice emphasizes a clear connection with each moment as it arises. This intimate connection challenges and transforms our view of the world. It tenderizes the heart.

Compassion is this experience of the heart becoming tender. When we can open to life, just as it is, the defensive crust of the heart begins to break apart, revealing a more pure sensitivity. We usually defend against this exposure because it seems dangerous to feel so deeply. We may take those feelings personally and react in a way that creates stress and resistance.

The art of living a wise and compassionate life is to allow the beauty and challenges of life to break open the heart over and over again. We practice not being confused by the intensity of this exposure and allow the energy of this sensitivity to transform itself into skillful action. The heart is sensitized, but also enlivened by this undefended relationship with life.

We might think that we first need to be compassionate in order to open to the world. Instead, we find that it is the wise effort to open fully that reveals the heart's capacity for profound sensitivity and responsiveness. Compassion is learning to trust this powerful, fearless movement of the heart.

Wishing everyone a peaceful fall,
Mark

Originally printed in the Fall 2011 newsletter

"Rahula, develop the meditation in tune with earth. For when you are developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind. Just as when people throw what is clean or unclean on the earth — feces, urine, saliva, pus, or blood — the earth is not horrified, humiliated, or disgusted by it; in the same way, when you are developing the meditation in tune with earth, agreeable & disagreeable sensory impressions that have arisen will not stay in charge of your mind."

From the Majjhima Nikaya (Middle-Length Discourses of the Buddha), #62



Mindful 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. Usually the third Friday of the month. September 20th, October 25th (instead of the 18th), November 15th, December 20th.

7:00-8:30pm.

COURSES

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

Buddhist Studies Program

The Buddhist Studies courses are designed for people who have attended three or more mindfulness meditation retreats and have a commitment to daily meditation practice. This ongoing program is designed to deepen our understanding through the study and application of the teachings of the Buddha. Each class will include a short talk, small-group discussions, and guided sitting time. Participants will be expected to use the teachings as a focus of their daily practice.

The Buddha's Liberating Teachings on Dukkha—The Unsatisfactory Nature of Sense Experience

In this eight-week course on Dukkha, we will use a stable and continuous present-moment awareness to better investigate the unsatisfactory, uncertain, and ungovernable nature of experience. With practice, it is possible to meet unsatisfactoriness with equanimity, thus opening the door to insight and freedom.

Led by Mark Nunberg

Eight Mondays: September 9 – October 28, 7:30-9:00pm; Optional Sit: 7:00-7:30pm

The Five Aggregates

Join in an exploration of the physical and mental processes that comprise the totality of our conditioned experience and how directly and clearly seeing them can lead to freedom.

Led by Shelly Graf

Three Mondays: November 11-25, 7:30-9:00pm; Optional Sit: 7:00-7:30pm

Befriending Death Course with Kyoko Katayama

In this six-week class, we will explore how we relate to death and dying – our own and that of others. 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. Both morning and evening options are offered.

Six Thursdays, September 26 – October 31, either 10:30am-12:30pm or 6:30-8:30pm

The Paramis as Civic Values, Part 1 with Patrice Koelsch

Through study, discussion, and creative exercises we will imagine what it would look like if generosity, integrity, renunciation, wisdom, and energy were integral civic values in a pluralistic society.

Five Tuesdays, October 15 – November 12, 5:30-7:00pm

WORKSHOPS

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

Laughter Yoga with Spruce Krause

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, September 8, 2:00-3:00pm

No Time to Lose: A Dharma Response to Climate Change

A Livestream from Spirit Rock Meditation Center Please register at www.commongroundmeditation.org, space is limited to 20

Sunday, September 15, 9:30am-4:30pm at the Ivy Arts Building

Cultivating a Compassionate Heart with your Beloved: Workshop for Couples with Cheri Desmond-May and Jane Rauenhorst

Sunday, October 27, 1:00-5:00pm

Noble Eightfold Path Workshop Series with Ramesh Sairam

These workshops will be suitable for those who have engaged in Vipassana meditation practice for at least 6 – 12 months and have done some reading of the core teachings, such as the 4 Noble Truths and Noble Eightfold path (detailed study in not a requisite).

Wise Mindfulness: Saturday, November 2, 9:00am-12:30pm

Wise Concentration: Saturday, December 14, 9:00am-1:00pm

The Skillful and Unskillful Use of Identity(ies): How the Buddha's Teachings on Conceit and Views Support Skillful Engagement and Freedom in our Lives Today

In this daylong workshop we will reflect together how necessary and unavoidable it is to use identity to illuminate the social dynamics of our lives, and at the same time how easy it is to become attached and confused by identity, taking it to be more than what it is.

Led by Mark Nunberg, Shelly Graf, Wynn Fricke, and Gabe Keller Flores

Saturday, November 23, 9:30-4:00pm

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.

Educators Mindfulness Group

Living Simply EcoSangha

Mental Health Professionals Group

Millenials Sangha

Mindfulness and Depression

Organizers and Activists

People of Color Community Group

Race and Racism Book Club

Refirement Group for Retirees

Sprout House

Unraveling Whiteness

Women's Group

Insight Writing Workshop with Roseanne Pereira

This workshop will focus on in-class generative writing. By using guided meditations, short readings, and writing prompts, we will together create a contemplative atmosphere where discovery-oriented writing can emerge. Words by Alice Walker, Alexander Chee, and Banana Yoshimoto, among others, will assist us along the way.

Sunday, November 24, 1:00-4:00pm

VISITING TEACHERS

Anushka Fernandopulle

Anushka Fernandopulle has trained for over 30 years in the Theravada Buddhist tradition in the U.S., India and Sri Lanka and teaches retreats and workshops around the globe.

Talk: Finding True Refuge

Friday, September 27, 7:00-9:00pm

Daylong Retreat: Dharma, Body and Nature

Saturday, September 28, 9:00am-6:00pm

Talk: Farming Your Heart and Mind

Sunday, September 29, 10:30-11:45am

Bhikkhu Cintita

Bhikkhu Cintita is an American-born Burmese-ordained Theravada monk who winters in monastery in Austin, TX, and summers in Chisago City, MN. He dropped out of professional life to become a Soto Zen priest for some years, before entering fully into Theravada monastic life in 2009.

Talk: How did mindfulness become “bare, non-judgmental, present-moment awareness”?

Friday, October 11, 7:00-9:00pm

Daylong Workshop: Mindfulness: where Dharma hits the road of practice

Saturday, October 12, 9:30am-4:00pm

Ajahn Punadhhamo

Ajahn Punadhhamo is the abbot of Arrow River Forest Hermitage near Thunder Bay. He has been a monk in the Thai Forest Tradition of Theravada Buddhism since 1991.

Understanding and Transforming our Heart & Mind: How the Early Buddhist World View Informs the Buddha’s Path of Awakening today

Talk: Friday, October 18, 7:00-9:00pm
Daylong Workshop: Saturday, October 19, 9:30-4:00pm

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, 5:30-6:45pm (Myra Rucker),
Tuesdays, 9:30-10:45am (Nancy Boler),
Wednesdays, 5:30-6:45pm. (Nancy Boler),
& Fridays, 9:30-10:45am (Nancy Boler), or,
5:30-6:45pm (Anita R.)**

Gentle Yoga & Deep Relaxation with Nancy Boler

**Sundays, 4:00-5:30pm
September 8 & 22, October 6 & 20,
November 10 & 24, December 1 & 15**

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, Autumn Compton, and Steve Compton.

Wednesdays, 9:05-10:05am

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., Mary G., April H., Gail I., Emil J., Marc J., Anita R., Sharon S., and Ollie S.

Fridays, 7:00-8:30pm

Mindfulness and Recovery Retreat with Anita R

Sunday, November 17, 1:00-5:00pm

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Community Cleaning and Maintenance Day

**Thursday, September 19, 9:00am-12:00pm,
with lunch provided afterwards**

Community Potluck

Sunday, September 22, 12:00-2:00pm

Kirtan with Temple of Light

Kirtan is the East Indian practice of singing simple call and response chants, mostly in Sanskrit.

Saturday, October 12, 7:30-9:00pm

Community Conversation on Grief and Loss with Patrice Koelsch and Ellen Hufschmidt

Sunday, October 20, 1:00-4:00pm

Day of Remembrance with Kyoko Katayama and Patrice Koelsch

The Day of Remembrance is an occasion to remember and express our love and thanks to our friends and family members who have died, humans or animal companions.

Sunday, November 3, 1:00-3:00pm

Community Conversation on Healthy Masculinity

This conversation is open to all those who identify as male, or men, or embodying masculinity.

Led by Mark Nunberg, Louis Alemayehu, Robb Reed, Omkar Sawardekar, Malik Watkins, and Gabe Keller Flores

Sunday, November 3, 3:30-6:00pm

Community Practice Intensive with Shelly Graf and Gabe Keller Flores

This intensive emphasizes the integration of daily life duties and responsibilities with elements of retreat practice. The Community Practice Intensive is also a good time to deepen relationships with others in the community.

**Monday, December 2 – Saturday,
December 21**

New Year’s Eve Celebration and Potluck

Tuesday, December 31, 7:30pm-12:15am

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

Usually the first Saturday of the month

**Saturday, September 7, 1:00-5:00pm
with Mark Nunberg**

**Saturday, October 5, 1:00-5:00pm
with Mark Nunberg**

**Saturday, November 2, 1:00-5:00pm
with Mark Nunberg**

**Saturday, December 7, 1:00-5:00pm
with TBD**

Daylong Retreats

Please bring a bag lunch

**Daylong Retreat: Dharma, Body and Nature
Saturday, September 28, 9:00am-6:00pm
with visiting teacher Anushka Fernandopulle**

**Saturday, October 26, 9:00am-6:00pm
with Mark Nunberg**

**Saturday, November 30, 9:00-6:00pm
With Mark Nunberg**

Retreat with Mark Nunberg and Shelly Graf at Metta Meditation Center

**Thursday, November 7 – Sunday,
November 10**

Registration will open September 7th

Year-End Non-Residential Retreat with Mark Nunberg and Shelly Graf

**Thursday, December 26 - Tuesday,
December 31**

Registration will open October 26th

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 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 LEADERSHIP

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.