

DALLAS MEDITATION CENTER

AUGUST 2016 – “LOVE, COMPASSION, JOY & EQUANIMITY”

One Dharma / Awakening Heart @ CSLDallas (A Center for Spiritual Living)

SUNDAYS 5:00-7:00 PM

Awakening Heart (Community of Mindful Living)
Interfaith Buddhist Spirituality (Thich Nhat Hanh)
Zen, Mindfulness, Holistic Meditation (Brother ChiSing)



Aug 7: “The First Brahmavihara: Maitri (Love)”
Speaker: Jessica Hitch

Aug 14: “The Second Brahmavihara: Karuna (Compassion)”
Speaker: Bobbie Perkins

Aug 21: ***** SPECIAL GUEST SPEAKER *****
Gaelyn Godwin (Abbot, Houston Zen Center)
THE JOY OF LIVING MINDFULLY
“The Third Brahmavihara: Mudita (Joy)”
7-8pm * Community vegetarian potluck dinner follows

Aug 28: “The Fourth Brahmavihara: Upeksha (Equanimity)”
Speaker: Terry Cortes-Vega

Mondays

12:00p **ZEN-To-Go** (silent meditation) – *trained members facilitating*
6:00p TAI CHI – *Janna Whitton*
7:30p **MINDFUL Mondays** – *Cornell Kinderknecht*

Tuesdays

12:00p **ZEN-To-Go** (silent meditation) – *trained members facilitating*
7:00p **YES (Young Enlightened Souls)**
Meditation/Social Community – *Young Adults (20’s & 30’s)*

Wednesdays

9:00a TAI CHI – *Janna Whitton*
10:30a QIGONG – *Janna Whitton*
7:30p **INTERBEING Sangha** – *Bobbie Perkins*
(Five Mindfulness Trainings on First Wednesdays – Aug 3)

Saturday (once-a-month)

* 2:00p **Monthly BEGINNERS MEDITATION Workshop**
Next scheduled: August 20 *check website for other dates*

08/05/16 – 7:00pm – First Friday Drum Circle with Dorayne Breedlove at Dallas Meditation Center @ CSLDallas

*08/21/16 – 2:00-3:30pm – Workshop with Dr. Paula Joyce at CSLDallas

*08/31/16-09/20/2016 – 7:30-9:00pm – Learn Native American Flute *level 2* – 4-week series with Cornell in Plano.

* = Register Online

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" LIBERATION "

Article from Thich Minh Thien

The Buddhist Path is often described in terms of freedom and liberation. It was the Gautama Shakyamuni's original intention, as he set out on his spiritual path, to free living beings from suffering. Upon his awakening as the Buddha, his first teachings on the Four Noble Truths and the Noble Eightfold Path gave every sentient being the opportunity to follow a path that relieves our suffering and thus opens our hearts and lives to freedom and liberation. The Buddha saw that people's ignorance of the nature of change was the cause of suffering. Because we desire to hold on to what we value, we suffer when life's inevitable process of change separates us from those things. Liberation from suffering comes, the Buddha taught, when we are able to sever our attachments to the transient things of this world. One might argue that it is impossible to live in the world without attachments, or indeed to eradicate them. Our affections for others, the desire to succeed in our endeavors, our interests and passions, our love of life itself - all of these are attachments and potential sources of disappointment or suffering. They are however, the substance of our humanity and the elements of engaged and fulfilled lives. The challenge is not to rid oneself of attachments, but to become enlightened concerning them. It is in the transformation rather than the total elimination of desire that reduces our suffering and brings about liberation.

Early Buddhist teachings focused on the impermanence of all things. In this perspective, the practice was oriented away from the world: life is suffering, the world is a place of uncertainty; liberation lies in freeing oneself from the attachment to worldly things and concerns, attaining a transcendent enlightenment. This focus had regarded enlightenment, or the final liberation of Buddhahood as a goal to be obtained at some future point in time. A revision of this focus however, found in the Lotus Sutra, teaches that each person is inherently and originally a Buddha. Through our Buddhist practice, we develop our enlightened qualities and exercise them in the world here and now for the sake of others and for the purpose of positively transforming society. That allows the true

nature of our lives, our inherent Buddha nature, to realize the expansive freedom and liberation in each moment.

In their proper perspective, when we can see them clearly and master them rather than being mastered by them, desires and attachments enable us to live interesting and significant lives. Consider that it is our "small ego" or "lesser self" that makes us slaves to our desires and causes us to suffer. Our Buddhist practice enables us to break out of the shell of our lesser self and awaken to the "greater self" of our Buddha nature. This expanded sense of self is based on a clear awareness of the interconnected fabric of life which we are part of and which sustains us. When awakened to the reality of our relatedness to all life, we can overcome the fear of change and experience the deeper continuities beyond and beneath the ceaseless flow of change.

The basic character of our greater self is compassion. Ultimate freedom is experienced when we develop the ability to channel the full energy of our attachments into compassionate concern and action on behalf of others.

And so consider the following from the Prajnaparamita:

"How amazing. All living beings have the Buddha nature of awakening and freedom, yet they do not realize this. Unknowingly they wander on the ocean of suffering for lifetimes. It is time to realize your own Buddha nature."



Thich Minh Thien, or "Thay Z," is a monk in the Rinzai and Soto Zen traditions. He is a teacher with the Mount Adams Zen Buddhist Temple in Trout Lake, Washington. When he is at his home in Dallas, we are happy that, for the past four years or so, he meditates with Awakening Heart (Community of Mindful Living) at Dallas Meditation Center as his local Sangha.

MESSAGE FROM CORNELL

In last month's newsletter we began talking about freedom and liberation. At our meditation gatherings, we looked into the teachings of the Three Dharma Seals, one of the many teachings in Buddhism that help us liberate ourselves from habits, ideas and afflictions that inhibit us from being free.



Let's look now at the way of the bodhisattva. Bodhisattvas do not aspire to achieve enlightenment purely to free themselves of suffering. Instead, a bodhisattva seeks enlightenment out of compassion in order to liberate all sentient beings.

How does someone take on such a task? Really, it is not so difficult. Thich Nhat Hanh says, "A bodhisattva doesn't have to be perfect. Anyone who is aware of what is happening and who tries to wake up other people is a bodhisattva. We are all bodhisattvas, doing our best." So just by practicing mindfulness with a heart of compassion, we are all already bodhisattvas.

I feel that one of the most important aspects of practicing on behalf of others is communication. We live in an era of instant communication—phone, email, Internet, social networking... In a split second, what we type on our computer can be seen around the world. But, how well do we truly communicate with someone living in our own house, with someone we pass on the street, with someone we work with? Do we really take the time to look into someone's eyes and recognize that they are made of the same beautiful elements as ourselves? Do we truly listen to the answer when we say, "How are you today?"

Each week at our Sunday sangha and other Awakening Heart groups that meet during the week, we recite the Four Vows of the Bodhisattva. I find the following way that Thich Nhat Hanh has worded them to be quite beautiful and meaningful:

- However innumerable beings are, I vow to meet them with kindness and interest.
- However inexhaustible the states of suffering are, I vow to touch them with patience and love.
- However immeasurable the Dharmas are, I vow to explore them deeply.
- However incomparable the mystery of interbeing, I vow to surrender to it freely.

CELEBRATING WITH SANGHA

Julie Ryan, part of our Awakening Heart community, recalls a special evening after our Sunday gathering...



When you share a picnic blanket with sangha friends, you get to know them better. Even with sparkly explosions all around you! It was July 3, and the U.S.' 5th largest Independence Day celebration, Addison's "KABOOM TOWN!" was just a few skyscraper-studded blocks from our picnic on the green lawn of Whole Foods.

This monthly dinner outing of Awakening Heart Sunday sangha, 'Sangha Yum!' was renamed for the night: "Sangha BOOM!" Six hardy souls staked out blanket space, ate and chatted until fireworks time.

We learned Neal is writing his second book, on a mindfulness topic, after winning free design and publishing! Bobbie's college degree is in piano – and she loves olives. Becca and Kayla who live in Allen... favorite dessert? Chantilly white cake, butter frosting (conveniently, a WF specialty). Eric, Neal's friend and new to sangha, speaks four languages – that he learned as part of rehabilitation from a brain injury. People were surprised to learn that Julie authored two successful books about gardening and native plants in Texas.

The sky spectacular fired up, prompting blanket hopping. The group shunted gear along the grassy perimeter for a better view, with the other partiers. Bigger, brighter, louder! The starbursts, chrysanthemums and falling waters spangled the sky, on and on.

At the finale, "Let's get out of here before the mob!" urged Neal. We three trundled back to a shared car. There, on a skinny strip of ground by the tollway, the view of the fireworks was immense and clear. "Ha ha, the best sight was where we began!" someone laughed. It seemed like a bit of stars-and-stripes dharma.

Then mindfulness practice ensued for an hour--as we discovered all the routes to our carpool site were now barricaded, and semi-politely haggled over which way? It's estimated that over 500,000 people came to the area to see the fireworks that evening. Now we know what that many people gathered to celebrate the nation's founding looks like!

How many of our humankind around the world simultaneously celebrate enlightenment, on any given day? *That's* independence for you.

A special evening at our Awakening Heart (Community of Mindful Living) gathering...

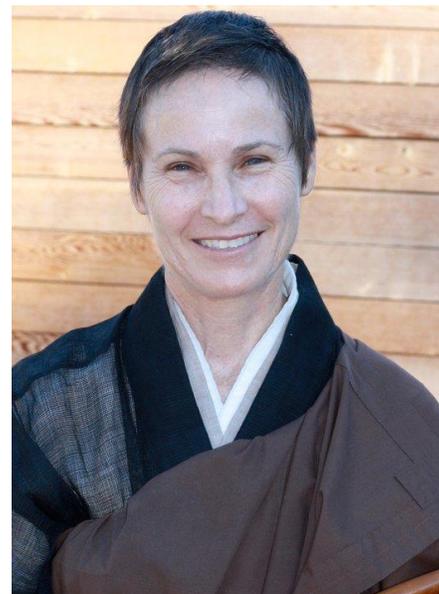
Sunday, August 21, 2016 - 5:00-7:00pm
Awakening Heart (Community of Mindful Living)
@ Dallas Meditation Center

Guest Speaker: Gaelyn Godwin
"The Joy of Living Mindfully "

Join us at our weekly Sunday gathering as we are joined by guest speaker, Setsuan Gaelyn Godwin, abbot and abiding teacher of Houston Zen Center. *All are welcome! Community vegetarian potluck dinner follows.*

Gaelyn is a Zen priest, and a Dharma successor in the lineage of Suzuki Roshi. Gaelyn began training at San Francisco Zen Center (SFZC) in 1985 and was ordained by Tenshin Reb Anderson Roshi in January 1991. She received the Dharma name, Setsuan, which is translated as Snow Hut. Her second Dharma name is Konjin, Establish Love. She became Tenshin Roshi's Dharma successor in 2003 in the U.S., and was acknowledged in 2005 at the head Soto Zen temple in Japan, qualifying to receive the title of Kaikyoshi.

She values interfaith communication as well as intra-Buddhist communication to further understanding of the various Buddhist schools. She maintains close ties, both official and social, with the Soto Zen head temple in Japan. She is a member of the Soto Zen Buddhist Association and served as the President of the Board. She is also a member of the American Zen Teachers Association and the Association of Soto Zen Buddhists. She hopes to see the teachings of Buddhism flourish and show their Western colors and Western styles for the benefit of everyone. Gaelyn has two stepdaughters and four grandchildren.



AN INVITATION

Dear Friends,

We would love to hear from you! *What's your favorite part of practicing with the Dallas Meditation Center?*

Please accept this invitation to be published in an upcoming Dallas Meditation Center newsletter. You may submit a brief essay, a reflection on something you've experienced, a funny story, a poem, an insight or whatever – surprise us!

It's really quite simple. Just keep your submissions to 250 words or less. Send to info@dallasmeditationcenter.com with a couple of sentences identifying yourself. Also, send your piece as a document so that we can fit it to the newsletter format.

I know we have some very talented, creative people in our sangha! I witness your wisdom, your humor and your creativity every time we have sharing opportunities after a gathering.

Would you consider becoming a sustaining donor?

One Dharma, Awakening Heart, Dallas Meditation Center is an educational 501(c)(3) non-profit organization that is funded solely by donation, and offers mindfulness, life-enrichment and wellness practices throughout North Texas. It is an interfaith organization open to people of all faith and non-faith based traditions.

Would you consider becoming a sustaining donor with a monthly gift of \$25, \$100, \$250 or other? You may set up a monthly gift online at www.DallasMeditationCenter/donate or by automatic draft through your bank, sending the gifts to: Dallas Meditation Center, PO Box 832412, Richardson, TX 75083.

Time once again to start planning for @NorthTexasGivingDay on Sept. 22! We can't wait to be a part of such a BIG day!

Most of our gatherings are held at Dallas Meditation Center @ CSLDallas, International Place, 4801 Spring Valley Rd, #115, Dallas, Texas 75244. Mailing address: Dallas Meditation Center, PO Box 832412, Richardson, TX 75083. Phone: 972.432.7871. Email: info@DallasMeditationCenter.com

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