

Becoming Congruent with Life: Insight Meditation Retreat

March 19 – 23, 2021

The Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy

www.meditationandpsychotherapy.org

and

Insight Meditation Society

1230 Pleasant Street

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Program Description

Through the practice of meditation and the development of the Noble Eightfold Path we begin to experience the world as it actually is, not how we think it is or want it to be. Based on this correct understanding, we resist life less and become more harmonious or congruent with it. Because we are not in a state of resistance, we experience less agitation and stress, and more contentment and ease.

To support this unfolding, during the retreat we will practice observing the truth of conditionality: That all things, including our own bodies, thoughts and emotions, arise and pass away dependent on conditions. We will employ silent sitting, standing and walking meditation as vehicles to support the embodiment of this understanding. The daily schedule includes guided meditations, instructions and meetings with teachers.

The format will include **12.5** hours of guided meditations, talks, instruction, small group meetings, and Q and A sessions led by the teachers. There will also be periods of meditation and silent practice of the principles being taught (including during meals). This retreat is non-sectarian and does not require any adherence to Buddhism or any other adaptation of personal faith. The only requirement is participants' willingness to learn and practice the skills taught during the course. This retreat is suitable for both beginners and experienced meditators.

For a detailed schedule, see below.

Learning Objectives

At the end of this course, participants will be able to:

- 1) describe, demonstrate and practice mindfulness meditation;
- 2) utilize insight and concentration practices to sharpen assessment skills through increased awareness of their client's presentation: through language, facial expression, posture and affect;
- 3) methodically identify the causality of thought, emotion and behavior from a Buddhist psychological perspective;
- 4) apply mindful observation to their own subjective experience as a therapist and how it might be impacting the therapeutic process;
- 5) utilize mindful compassion practices to identify and support the clinician in dealing with their clients' mental, emotional and physical distress.
- 6) assess and advise clients as to the appropriateness of mindfulness practice for symptom reduction, and, if appropriate, coach them in its application;
- 7) Identify the cognitive, affective, and physiologic states that precede anger, fear, and aggression in thought, speech and behavior.
- 8) Employ applications of mindful insight and compassion to interrupt negative thought patterns that unconsciously lead to addictive habits, obsessive thinking and dysfunctional relating to self and others.
- 9) Employ concentration practices that are based in kindness, compassion and generosity, that help to diminish negative addictive habits, obsessional thinking and dysfunctional relating to self and others.
- 10) Employ concentration practices based in kindness, compassion, and generosity in order to foster a greater sense of ease, wellbeing and overall acceptance of the inevitable difficult life conditions that are not controllable.
- 11) Utilize and relay these practices of kindness, compassion and acceptance for their clients in relationship to issues of aging, illness and death.

12) Identify the roots of secular mindfulness-based applications within a Buddhist psychological understanding.

Continuing Education



Psychologists: This program is co-sponsored by the Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy and the Insight Meditation Society. The Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy is approved by the American Psychological Association to sponsor continuing education for psychologists. The Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy maintains responsibility for this program and its content. This course offers **12.5** hours of credit.



Social Workers: This program has been approved for **12.5** Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. NASW-MA Chapter CE Approving Program, Authorization Number D 81628-3.

Nurses: Nurses are welcome to pursue continuing education credit with IMS. As an approved provider through the APA and the NASW, many certifying and licensing nursing boards will accept the CEUs that IMS offers. We strongly recommend that you contact the board through which you are licensed or certified, to learn of your particular requirements. Specific questions can be directed to your state board. Please refer to the ncsbn.org website for more information.

Daily Schedule

Opening Session

(All times ET)

***7:00-8:45 pm Welcome and Instruction (1.75 CE credits)**

Definition of Mindfulness: "A family of self-regulation practices that focus on training attention and awareness in order to bring mental processes under greater voluntary control and thereby foster general mental well-being and development and/or specific capacities such as calm, clarity, and concentration."

Benefits of Meditation, i.e. "Emotion regulation and evidence that mindfulness helps develop effective emotion regulation in the brain."

Method: Didactic presentation

Objectives: 1, 10, 12

Daily Schedule (4 days)

9:45-10:45 am – Sitting Meditation with Instructions (Total for retreat = 4 CE credits)

Developing Concentration and explanation of techniques that will be used in personal practice sessions, i.e. mindfulness of the body during walking meditation as a practice to diminish dissociation.

Methods: Didactic presentation, experiential exercise, Q&A as a group: teacher analyzes participant's reported experience as described in their question, and guides their further practice in light of that experience.

Objectives: 1, 4, 8, 9

11:00-12:00 am – Group meeting with Q&A

Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5

Noon – Mindful food preparation & eating

1:00 pm – Mindful walk/exercise

2:00-2:45 pm Sit with instructions (Total = 2.25 CE credits)

Mindfulness of Projective Thinking, building throughout the week on the finding that mindfulness training decreased rumination, and those findings are consistent with research with participants having chronic mood disorders.

Method: Didactic presentation, experiential exercise, Q&A

Objectives: 3, 4, 9

2:45 Walking meditation

3:45 Sitting: Cultivating Compassion for Self and Other (Experiential support for objectives 5, 11)

4:00-4:45 pm – Dharma talk (Total for retreat – 2.25 CE credits)

How does mindful awareness help in addressing difficult emotions? Dealing with The Human Realities of Loss: Aging, Illness and Death. Four hours total of exploring decreased reactivity and increased response flexibility. "Research has demonstrated that mindfulness meditation enables people to become less reactive and have greater cognitive flexibility. Evidence indicates that mindfulness meditators develop the skill of self-observation that neurologically disengages automatic pathways created from prior learning and enables present moment input to be integrated in a new way." We discuss how various mindfulness techniques

Method: Didactic presentation, Q&A

Objectives: 2, 4, 5, 6, 11 (over the course of the retreat)

7:00-7:45 pm – Chanting & sitting meditation

Closing Day

9:45-10:45 am – Sitting Meditation with Instructions (1 CE credit)

Method: Didactic presentation, experiential exercise, Q&A

Objectives: 3, 4, 9

10:30-12:00 am – Closing Q/A and Instructions (1.5 CE credit)

Integrating mindfulness into one's personal and professional life, in the service of the health and well-being of oneself and the people that are under our care.

Method: Didactic presentation, Q&A

Objectives: 6, 7, 8, 10, 11

Total CEs requested: 12.5

Faculty

Chas DiCapua, MEd, has been practicing Buddhist meditation for almost 30 years. He has trained with Burmese meditation masters, western monastics of the Thai Forest tradition and senior western vipassana teachers. He has spent over two years in silent, intensive retreat. He has served as IMS's Resident Teacher at IMS since 2003 and is a graduate of the four-year joint Insight Meditation Society / Spirit Rock Teacher Training Program. He teaches retreats at IMS and at various centers and sanghas throughout the country.

As a way to address the wide spread suffering that is endemic in many partnered relationships, Chas explores how the dharma can be practiced in relationship, including how the masculine and feminine energies manifest in relationship, in spiritual practice, and in the world.

Jean Esther, MSW LICSW, has trained in meditation since 1975 and has been a practicing psychotherapist for over 39 years. She has trained with Burmese and western monastics as well as senior lay teachers in the Theravada and Thai Forest tradition. Jean is a Guiding Teacher of True North Insight in Canada. She teaches at IMS in Barre, MA, at Insight Meditation of Pioneer Valley, MA, and across the US and Canada. Jean's teachings, rooted in the primary teachings of the Buddha, integrate psychological understanding, somatic awareness and a social justice perspective.

Registration

You may register online at www.dharma.org. If you have any questions, contact us at imsonline@dharma.org.

A Note on Dana (Generosity): Most IMS teachers—like insight teachers around the world—rely on the generosity of students for their livelihood, and receive no compensation from course fees. All IMS online teachers receive a modest dana advance from IMS to guarantee a minimum level of financial support. (Click here to learn more about the dana practice.) There will be an opportunity to offer a contribution to your teachers at the end of this course.

Fees: For this course, sliding scale fees are \$160, \$210, \$260, or \$400, your choice. Registration fees support the Insight Meditation Society's work online and at our physical retreat centers in Barre, MA. Scholarships (\$80) are available. We welcome you to reach out, nobody will be turned away for lack of funds. For more information, please email imsonline@dharma.org.

Location: The entire course will be online.