

# *Living Dharma:*

## Mindfulness, Kindness & Wisdom Retreat

---

May 14 – 17, 2021

The Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy

[www.meditationandpsychotherapy.org](http://www.meditationandpsychotherapy.org)

and

Insight Meditation Society

1230 Pleasant Street

Barre, MA 01005

978-355-4378

[www.dharma.org](http://www.dharma.org)

### **Program Description**

All aspects of our lives hold the potential for deep and direct seeing into the nature of suffering and discovering a path to freedom. This retreat will support this process of awakening by encouraging a continuity of mindfulness in all activities throughout the day, while developing a kind and wise attitude in relating to whatever arises.

As we awaken and connect more fully to the present moment, all of life is then experienced as meditation. And with this understanding, we discover that each moment of our unfolding lives provides an opportunity for nurturing our innate capacity for kindness and wisdom.

This course, held within the context of silence, is suitable for both new and experienced meditators. The format will include meditation instruction, silent sitting and walking meditation periods, as well as talks about the Buddha's teachings and meetings with the teachers. Guided metta (lovingkindness) practice will be offered each day.

*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.

The format will include 13 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). Although much of the culture and atmosphere at IMS reflects the Buddhist meditative tradition, 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.

## Continuing Education



**Psychologists:** This program is co-sponsored by the Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy and 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 **13** hours of credit.



**Social Workers:** This program has been approved for **13** Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. NASW-MA Chapter CE Approving Program, Authorization Number D 81628-6.

**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](http://ncsbn.org) website for more information.

## Daily Schedule

### Opening Session

*(All times ET)*

#### **\*7:00-8:00 pm Welcome and Instruction (1 CE credit)**

*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)

**10:00-11:15 am – Sitting Meditation with Instructions (Total for retreat = 3.75 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, 2, 4, 8, 9

**12:00-1:00pm – Guided meditation with discussion (Total = 3 CE credits)**

Methods: Didactic presentation, experiential exercise, Q&A

Objectives: 2, 3, 4, 5, 7

**3:30-4:15 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)

**5:00-6:00 pm Guided meditation with discussion (Total = 2 CE credits)**

Method: Experiential exercise, Q&A

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

**Closing Day**

**10:00-11:15 am – Sitting Meditation with Instructions (1.25 CE credits)**

**12:00-1:00 pm – Guided meditation with discussion**

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

Objectives: 6, 7, 8, 10, 11

**3:30-4:15 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)

**5:00-6:00 pm – Closing talk with Q&A**

Total CEs requested: 13

## Faculty

**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.

**Michael Grady** began practicing Vipassana with Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Salzberg in 1974 when they first returned from Asia. He has also been a student of the late Chan master Sheng Yen. Michael is a core teacher at IMS in Barre, MA and was a guiding teacher at the Cambridge Insight Meditation Center for more than 20 years.

## Registration

You may register online at [www.dharma.org](http://www.dharma.org). You may also call IMS to register: 978-355-4378.

**Fee:** IMS has a sliding scale fee structure. The minimum fee for this course is \$40, the sustaining fee is \$295, and the benefactor rate is \$500. A modest number of scholarships are available by application and will be awarded on a first-come, first-served basis.

Please note that IMS's sliding scale fee structure covers accommodations and meals only. As is customary here, the teachings are freely offered by the course faculty, who do not receive compensation. Instead, participants are invited to support the teachers via a donation at the end of the retreat.

**Location:** The entire course will be held online.