

Mindfulness and Liberation – Foundations of Mindfulness-Based Approaches:

Insight Meditation Retreat

January 16-23, 2024

The Institute for Meditation and Psychotherapy
www.meditationandpsychotherapy.org and

Insight Meditation Society

1230 Pleasant Street

Barre, MA 01005

978-355-4378 www.dharma.org

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Program Description

This retreat is specifically designed for professionals involved in mindfulness-based approaches, whether as teachers, trainers, psychotherapists, clinicians or researchers. A minimum requirement for attendance is prior completion of a recognized eight-week mindfulness course, or prior retreat experience together with a professional involvement with mindfulness. The teachers of this retreat are all involved in training mindfulness-based professionals or in teaching mindfulness.

The course is not a professional training, but rather an invitation to extend and deepen personal experience of insight meditation, which is rooted in the cultivation of mindfulness. Retreatants will explore the Four Establishments of Mindfulness as taught in the Satipaṭṭhāna, the foundational teachings

of all contemporary mindfulness-based applications. These teachings offer a path to freedom and compassion, and encourage the integration of contemplative wisdom into the fabric of our daily lives.

Each day will offer a sustained schedule of guided and unguided meditation practice, meetings with the teachers, talks and reflections, all within an environment of silence. An optional daily period of mindful movement will be offered by the teachers.

This course is suitable for mental health professionals of all practice levels, beginning, intermediate, and experienced. When registering, please indicate your personal and professional involvement with mindfulness.

Learning Objectives

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

1. Understand and define mindfulness meditation and its specific practices;
2. Utilize their improved mindfulness skills intra- and interpersonally in therapeutic or clinical settings, as well as apply mindfulness skills in their daily lives;
3. Identify and discern four distinct areas of personal process that preoccupy attentional focus: i) discursive processes ii) affective and conative impulses iii) hedonic reactivity iv) somatic processes;
4. Bring sustained moment-to-moment awareness to these areas and mitigate personal patterning that impairs focus, resilience and availability;
5. Lessen reactivity to inner processes and outward stimuli leading to deeper value-based responsiveness and heightened empathetic availability in personal and clinical settings;
6. Discern and mitigate identification with negative autobiographical narratives contributing to distress and preoccupation, assisting in self-care and the professional work with human suffering;
7. Effectively assess and guide an individual's ability to use their bodily awareness for the purpose of self-care and mindful self-exploration;
8. Identify and mitigate mental, emotional and physical distress by developing non-judging attention, which will assist in working professionally with human suffering;
9. Model forms of mindful self-awareness and non-reactiveness and encourage clients and patients in bringing such qualities to their own inner and outer worlds;
10. Utilize a strong, developed quality of balanced observing awareness, which will in turn help augment the therapy/training given to clients in the professional setting.

The format will include **21.5 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). 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.

Continuing Education

Psychologists: 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 **21.5 hours** of credit.

Social Workers: This program has been approved for **21.5** Social Work Continuing Education hours for relicensure, in accordance with 258 CMR. NASW-MA Chapter CE Approving Program, Authorization Number **D 91724**.

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 Night

7:00-8:30 Welcome and Instruction (1 CE hr)

Didactic verbal instructions, initial experiential exercise. Encourage awareness of expectations and educational goals for participants. Attune group to creating a supportive and coherent retreat ambiance. Initial outline of course content and challenges inherent in contemplative depth work. Guided experiential exercise. (Objectives 1, 3, 4)

Daily Schedule (7 days / 6 nights)

5:30 Wake up

6:00 Sitting Meditation

6:30 Breakfast

7:15 Service Period

8:15 Guided Meditation with Beginning Instructions (.75 CE hrs x 6 days = 4.5 total CE hr)

Daily didactic presentation of the territory of contemplative exercises; introduction of specific intrapersonal calming and mindfulness exercises; application and development of contemplative skills to modulate and stabilize inner process and develop experiential understanding of somatic, hedonic, conative/affective and cognitive processes.

Format: *Instructions and guided exercises are given several times during each day, ranging from 15 to 45 minutes. During the course of the week, a gradual shift of emphasis in these presentations and instructions will take place from an initially more somatic type of mindfulness exercise (objective 1) to the more challenging tasks of establishing and developing mindfulness skills of hedonic, conative/affective and discursive inner experiences. Initially, more dedicated to stabilizing and calming types of mindful metacognitive awareness and the development of attentional continuity, these instructions, presentations and exercises increasingly shift their accent to contemplative inquiry and development of experiential insight into unwholesome mental and emotional patterns with a view to lessening emotional reactivity, autobiographical rumination and the strengthening and cultivation of resourcing qualities of mind. (In the course of the retreat: objectives 2, 3, 4, 9)*

9:15 Walking

Walking meditation instructions build on and extend the contemplative exercises (objectives #1, 2, 3, 4) as outlined above into a different postural setting.

Personal interviews and group interviews will take place during the course at this time for small groups and individuals (Total of 2 CE hrs)

Interpersonal mindfulness practices and exercises for empathetic attunement are introduced. Demonstrations and structured participant interaction: Utilize mindful speaking and listening practices to enhance empathic attunement. Participants identify challenges and progress in developing mindfulness meditation, reflect on afflictive and nourishing experiences and integrate these in a safe and facilitated setting. Practice of mindful communication and enhanced attunement in dyadic or small group setting. (objectives #5, 6, 7)

10:00 Sitting

10:45 Walking

11:30 Sitting

Personal mindfulness practice. Deepen experiential understanding of effects of contemplative practices introduced.

12:00 Lunch

2:15 Sitting with instruction (.75 CE hrs X 7 = 5 CE hrs total)

Verbal didactic instruction and guided intrapersonal mindfulness exercises with an emphasis on empathetic attunement and the cultivation of skilful attitudinal responses. (In the course of the retreat: objectives 4, 5, 6, 8, 9)

2:45 Mindful Yoga or Walking Meditation

3:45 Sitting (metta)

4:15 Q&A [Day two only (1 CE hr)]

Interactive session and open inquiry. Educators responding to verbal and written input and queries to specific concerns in the application of mindfulness from participants. (Objectives 1, 2, 4, 5)

5:15 Light Dinner

6:30 Sitting

7:00 Dharma Talk (1 CE hr X 6 = 6 CE hrs total)

Didactic presentation with examples on topics pertinent to aspects of establishing, applying and sustaining mindfulness and metacognitive awareness in personal and professional life. (In the course of the retreat: objectives 8, 9, 10)

8:00 Walking

9:15 Further Practice or Rest

Closing Day

9:30 – 12:30 Summary, Closing Instructions, Dyadic Exercises (Total 2 CE hrs)

Didactic input and review of exercises applied and skills trained during the course. Reflection and integration of effects of retreat experience. Plan to engage in specific forms of mindfulness skills in personal and professional / therapeutic context. Dyadic integration exercise. (Objectives 1, 2, 6, 8).

Total CEs requested: **21.5**

Faculty

Bob Stahl, Ph.D., founded and directs mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) programs in three medical centers in the San Francisco Bay Area. He completed MBSR teacher certification at the University

of Massachusetts Medical Center. Bob is a professor of the practice in the Department of Behavioral and Social Sciences in the School of Public Health at Brown University and is a senior teacher at the Brown Mindfulness Center. He formerly served as a senior teacher at the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Health Care, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School.

A long-time insight meditator, Bob lived in a Burmese Buddhist monastery in the Forest tradition of Ven. Taungpulu Sayadaw for over eight years. He is the co-guiding teacher at Insight Santa Cruz.

Christiane Wolf, MD, PhD, received her medical degree and completed her postgraduate training in obstetrics and gynecology from Humboldt University in Berlin, Germany. She also holds a PhD in Psychosomatic Medicine from Humboldt University.

Christiane has practiced mindfulness meditation for 30 years, is a senior certified Mindfulness- Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) trainer, and is on faculty for the Center for Mindfulness, University of Massachusetts Medical School. She is a graduate of the 4-year IMS/Spirit Rock teacher training, and is authorized to teach in the Thai Forest Monastery tradition. She is the Director of MBSR programs at InsightLA, and is program director and lead instructor for VA CALM, the national mindfulness facilitator training program for clinicians at the US Department of Veterans Affairs.

Roxanne Dault teaches meditation in Canada, USA and in France. A Guiding Teacher at True North Insight, she teaches in different settings where she lives in Tiohti:áke (Montréal). Roxanne is trained in Somatic Experiencing®, a body-mind approach aimed at relieving the symptoms of trauma and stress.

Dedicated to the insight meditation (*vipassana*) path for almost two decades, Roxanne has sat long retreats both in Asia and in the West. Her practice and teachings take root mainly from the lineage of Mahasi Sayadaw and are influenced by her love of nature and Indigenous wisdom.

Registration

You may register online at <https://www.dharma.org/retreats/692>.

Fee: IMS has a sliding-scale fee structure. Benefactor: \$2,210; Sustaining: \$1,275; Mid: \$960; Base: \$610; Scholarship: \$235, \$270, \$310. 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 at the Insight Meditation Society, 1230 Pleasant Street, Barre, MA 01005.