

InterSangha 2013
Insight Retreat Center, Scotts Valley CA

Thursday, Aug 22

1:00-3:00 Registration
3:15-4:15 Opening Circle and Orientation to IRC
4:15-4:30 Group meditation
4:30-5:15 Intentions and Aspirations for the Conference
5:15 Supper
6:00 Work meditation for some

7:00 Plenary session: Heartwood in the West
Kim Allen, Buddhist Insight Network

7:45 Investigating Western Approaches to Insight Practice
Facilitator: Dawn Neal, Insight Meditation Center

The culture of the Insight Meditation Movement in the West contrasts with Asian Buddhist culture in several ways. It primarily includes lay teachers; it draws inspiration from multiple sources of wisdom; and its practitioners co-create a container for practice amidst particularly busy lives. How do we see ourselves maturing into a meaningful spiritual movement that is relevant to people's lives and also continues a profound lineage of teachings with integrity?

[a star(*) before the time means this segment is in Noble Silence]

*8:45 Sitting

*9:00 Rest or further practice

Friday, Aug 23

*5:45 Wake up

*6:15 Sitting

*7:00 Breakfast

(*7:30 Work meditation / offsite people arrive during this interval

Please do work meditations in silence; talking is OK in public areas

Theme 1: Creating Sangha

8:30am Gather. Brief announcements.

8:45 am Creating a Truly Supportive Sangha

Facilitator: Lori Wong, Insight Meditation Central Valley

We will unpack the word "supportive," aiming to distill some key qualities that make a group supportive. In addition, we will aim to compile a handful of practical suggestions for developing/enhancing each quality.

9:45 Inclusivity and Diversity

Facilitator: Nils Heymann, East Bay Meditation Center

Institutional social justice and diversity initiatives: Using the Buddha's teaching as a foundation for discussion, this session will offer an overview of the challenges and joys of social justice work and a look at how organizations arrive at inclusivity.

10:45 Break

11:10 Two Parallel Sessions: Special Topics related to Sangha

1. Relation of the Insight Movement to Other Buddhist Traditions

Facilitator: Leslie Tremaine, Insight Santa Cruz

Insight centers or individual teachers may offer teachings from other traditions, such as Zen or Tibetan. How does this create rich opportunities for dialogue and learning? How might it be confusing? Are teachings being "diluted" through this mixing? We will examine helpful frameworks, general principles, and our own experience with various Buddhist traditions.

2. Delving Deeper into Diversity

Facilitators: Nils Heymann, EBMC, and Andrea Castillo, Insight Meditation Center

What is happening in the Insight movement among the Hispanic population? What changes are being made to better serve this population? Is it just a language change? The fruits of two years of Spanish Dharma offerings.

12:15 Lunch

Optional sign-up for table topics

12:45 Work meditation for some

1:45 Dharma Discussion with Teachers

Gil Fronsdal, Anna Douglas, Adrienne Ross, Susie Harrington, Matthew Brensilver, and Jason Murphy

An opportunity to hear from each teacher about how they are approaching the Dharma through programs they have created, experiences with their own sanghas, or inspiration that fuels their practice. Short offerings from each teacher will be followed by an opportunity to discuss with them in a smaller group.

3:15 Break

*3:30 Sitting / Work meditation for some

*4:00 Walking

*4:30 Sitting

5:00 Social time

5:15 Supper

5:45 Work meditation for some

Theme 2: Teacher Development and Integration

*6:45pm Sitting

7:15 Developing Teachers: Questions and Issues

Facilitator: Wynn Fricke, Common Ground Meditation Center

What are some of the ways we define *teacher* in our minds and communities? How do practitioners emerge and become recognized as teachers, and in what contexts do they teach? What issues arise around identification with the role of "teacher"? This session includes a panel of people who occupy the teacher seat in a variety of ways.

*8:45 Sitting

*9:00 Sleep or further practice

Saturday, Aug 24

*5:45 Wake up

*6:15 Sitting

*7:00 Breakfast

(*7:30 Work meditation / offsite people arrive during this interval

Please do work meditations in silence; talking is OK in public areas

Theme 3: Leadership and Service

8:30am Gather. Brief announcements.

8:45 am The Lay Insight Movement and the Theravadan Monastic Sangha

Facilitator: Susan Pembroke, Insight Meditation Ventura and Founder and former President of Alliance for Bhikkhunis

The Insight Movement is characterized by lay teachers. We will consider the relation to monastics, including the unique contributions of lay and monastic teachings, benefits to practitioners of being exposed to both, and ways that lay and monastic teachers might support each other. We will also touch on tensions between lay teachers/practitioners and monastics.

9:45 Two Parallel Sessions

1. Breakout groups: Governance and Financial

Based on the material from the first session

Building on the momentum from the first session, two peer-led breakout groups will form to discuss particular areas in lay Insight sanghas:

- Leadership and governance structures: How formal or traditional is the sangha in terms of culture, governance, and policies? How do administrators interact with the teacher(s)?
- Financial structure: Is there desire to support a lay teacher with dana? Are fees or membership preferred? How is money discussed within the sangha and among leadership?

2. Movement session: Qigong

Marcy Reynolds, Insight Santa Cruz

An opportunity to integrate mind and body.

10:30 Break

10:50 Two Parallel Sessions

1. Gradients of Agreement: A Workshop on Collaborative Decision-Making

Facilitator: June Fukushima, Victoria Insight Meditation Society

Group decisions can be hindered by attachment to our views and opinions. In this workshop we will explore ways to cultivate effective collaboration using tools that support right view, right intention, and right speech.

2. Outreach and Engaged Buddhism – Taking Our Practice into the World

Peer Panel: Kristin Barker (One Earth Sangha), Jeff Hardin (Insight World Aid), and Candace McGahan (Buddhist Pathways Prison Project)

Group facilitator: Mary Stancavage, Against the Stream

Buddhists who are inspired toward compassionate action are finding more and more ways to express this, but still, “engaged Buddhism” has much development to do. Short summaries from those engaged in this work will be followed by group discussion.

12:15 Lunch

Optional sign-up for table topics

12:45 Work meditation for some

1:45 Gather. Brief announcements.

1:55 Specialized and Open Sessions

These sessions are created on the spot and led by conference participants. There will be a sign-up board to write suggestions and indicate interest on Sat morning. Sessions will be finalized during the lunch period.

2:45 Room packing and cleaning for some / IRC Cleaning session

3:30 Integration Session

Facilitator: Kim Allen, Buddhist Insight Network

Guided summarizing of the weekend, including small group processing

4:15 Closing Circle

5:00 Conference Ends

5:30 Supper

6:15 Supper clean-up

7:00 Nighttime Outing to Santa Cruz Beach and Boardwalk

Sunday, Aug 25

*6:00 Wake up

*6:30 Sitting

7:15 Breakfast

8:00 Work meditation for some / room packing and cleaning

8:45 Kitchen and general center cleaning (room cleaning for others), ending with floor mopping

10:00 Depart