



Philadelphia Buddhist Association NEWSLETTER

www.PhilaBuddhist.org

December, 2009

SCHEDULE OF PROGRAMS AND EVENTS

DECEMBER					JANUARY								
	1	R	3	4	5		1	2					
P	7	8	R	10	11	C	P	M	5	R	7	8	C
L	14	15	R	17	18	19	L	11	12	R	14	15	16
P	21	22	D	24	25	26	P	18	19	R	21	22	23
P	28	29	R	31			P	25	26	D	28	29	30
							S						

FEBRUARY					MARCH								
	1	2	R	4	5	6		1	2	R	4	5	6
P	8	9	R	11	12	C	P	8	9	R	11	12	C
L	15	16	R	18	19	20	L	15	16	R	18	19	20
P	M	23	D	25	26	27	P	22	23	D	25	26	27
P							P	29	30	R			

- C** Meditation class at Radnor Friends 11:00 am to 12:30 pm
- D** Meditation Discussion group at Radnor Friends 7:30 to 9:00 pm
- L** Buddhism Lecture and Discussion Series at Plymouth Meeting Friends 7:30 to 9:00 pm
- M** PBA Board meeting at Radnor Friends 7:00 to 9:00 pm. All are welcome to attend.
- P** Sitting meditation at Plymouth Meeting Friends 7:30 to 9:00 pm
- R** Sitting meditation at Radnor Friends 7:30 to 9:00 pm
- S** Special workshop, Meditation in Motion, at Plymouth Meeting Friends 7:30 to 9:00 pm

Thank You Enkyo Roshi

The Philadelphia Buddhist Association has benefitted greatly from the Zen retreats led by Roshi Enkyo O'Hara over the years. Now that she sees many flourishing opportunities for Zen practice in the Philadelphia area, she wishes us well and will turn her energies from her annual PBA visit to seeding other grounds and her increasing responsibilities at the Village Zendo. We want to express our deepest gratitude for the gift she has been to us. We will miss her inspiring presence and dharma talks. We offer nine bows of thanks and respect.

Special Workshop Meditation in Motion January 31

The Philadelphia Buddhist Association will present a special workshop on *Meditation in Motion* on January 31 at 7:30 pm at Plymouth Meeting Friends in place of the regular Sunday night sitting that evening.

The workshop will include an introduction by PBA Board member Dom Roberti, who will also lead some movements derived from the Kundalini yoga tradition, and a more extensive presentation of movements designed to support mindfulness and conscious breathing by Lisa Newman, a popular and experienced teacher of yoga. There will be time for discussion at the end.

The workshop will be suitable for beginners as well as those who practice yoga regularly and for all levels of fitness. Some mats will be supplied, but those who have their own mats should bring them.

Since yoga was widely practiced as a preparation and complement to sitting practice in the Buddha's time, it is likely that the Buddha and his followers practiced yoga regularly. A disciplined practice of yoga movements with an emphasis on breathing can foster mindfulness and itself be a form of meditation.

Buddhism Lecture and Discussion Series

Sunday nights, Plymouth Meeting, 7:30

- December 13 **Buddha Nature and Ebenezer Scrooge**
Bill Cunningham Bah! Humbug! An unlikely comparison.
- January 10 **Starting and Maintaining a Meditation Practice**
Gail Zivin Helpful hints for beginners and support for all of us.
- February 14 **The Eightfold Path**
Richard McKinney The fourth Noble Truth, the Buddha's prescription for an end to suffering.
- March 14 **Mindfulness**
Robin Carr The disciplined practice to achieve awakening.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND ANY OF OUR PROGRAMS OR EVENTS AT NO CHARGE

Local Buddhist Centers and Groups

The following are some of the places in the Philadelphia region where regular Buddhist meditation practice is followed.

Pennsylvania

- Buddhist Sangha of Bucks County
Yardley 215-431-0882
- Clear Light Meditation Group
Devon 610-293-9133
- Dungkar Ling (Tibetan)
Honeybrook 610-942-2512
- Media Meditation Group
(Shambhala)
Media 610-566-2525
- Peaceful City Sangha (Community
of Mindful Living)
Center City 215-852-4375
- Pebble Hill Mindfulness Sangha
Doylestown 215-230-9899
- Perkiomenville Karma Kagyu
Study Group (Tibetan)
Spring Mount 610-287-2043
- Philadelphia Meditation Center
(Non-Sectarian)
Havertown 610-853-8200
- Philadelphia Soka Gakkai
International-USA
Center City Philadelphia
215-569-2144
- Rainbow LGBTQ Buddhist
Meditation Group
Center City Philadelphia
215-732-2220
- Shambhala Center (Shambhala)
Center City Philadelphia
215-568-6070
- Soji Zen Center
Lansdowne 917- 856-5657
- The Oubaku Tree Sangha
(Zen Buddhist)
West Philadelphia 267-972-5442
- Tibetan Buddhist Center
of Philadelphia
West Philadelphia 215-701-7018
- Willow Branch Sangha
West Chester 610-388-1257
- Won Buddhism Temple
of Philadelphia
Glenside 215-884-8443
- Zen Center of Philadelphia
West Philadelphia 215-472-2613
- Zen Meditation Group of Greater
Philadelphia (Center City)
215-381-0398

New Jersey

- Buddhist Sangha
of Southern New Jersey
Cherry Hill 609-953-9215
- Pine Wind Zen Center
Shamong, NJ 609-268-9151
- Seabrook Buddhist Temple
(Jodo Shin Shu Buddhism)
Seabrook 856-451-3422

Delaware

- Delaware Valley Zen Center
Newark 302-981-6209

How to Contact PBA

- Send an email to
info@PhilaBuddhist.org
- Call and leave a message at
610-660-9269.
- Send USPS mail to
**P.O. Box 532
Narberth, PA 19072**

Guide to Retreat Centers

The following is a listing of some Buddhist centers in the Eastern United States that offer a program of retreats throughout the year. These centers offer a place where scheduled Buddhist teaching from various traditions is given. In addition, many local centers offer day and week-end retreats.

- Bhavana Society Near Washington, DC & PA border
Rt.1, Box 218-3 High View, WV (304)-856-3241
<http://www.bhavanasociety.org>
- Insight Meditation Society
1230 Pleasant Street, Barre, MA, 01005 (978)-355-4378
<http://www.Dharma.org>
- Mt. Equity Zendo
280 Mt. Equity Road, Pennsdale, PA, 17756
(717)-546-2784, <http://www.mtequity.org>
- Zen Mountain Monastery
P.O. Box 197, Mt. Tremper, NY, 12457 (845)-688-2415
http://www.mro.org/zmm_cat/retreats.html

The Philadelphia Buddhist Association (PBA) is a non-profit corporation registered in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania. It has provided programs since 1986 to the public for making known the principles and practices of

the Buddhist way. PBA represents no one Buddhist tradition and promotes dialogue with all faiths. All programs are without charge and are financed only by freely given donations. Donations are tax-deductible.

Cultivating the Dharma with PBA

The Philadelphia Buddhist Association is dedicated to spreading the Dharma (the teachings and practice of Buddhism) among interested seekers. PBA is not oriented toward any particular school of Buddhism and our meditation sittings do not require participants to be practicing any particular form of meditation. Newcomers, in particular, may benefit from the broad exposure to the varieties of Buddhism and may use PBA as a doorway into one which attracts them.

Buddhism Lecture and Discussion Series: A series of talks intended for all levels, presented by PBA members and invited speakers. Each lecture is complete in itself and does not require attendance at previous lectures.

Introductory meditation class: Basic instruction in meditation upon the breath, including ways to incorporate it into

your life, intended primarily for beginners, but suitable as a review even for experienced meditators.

Silent meditation: Offered in a group setting two evenings a week, interspersing sitting with walking. Meditators are welcome to participate in the mini-retreat even if they are not able to remain for the entire time.

Meditation discussion group: An opportunity to share your experience, strength, and hope with others; to share your spiritual journey in an open meditative environment. No commitment to regular attendance is needed; the discussion sessions are open to all who wish to succeed in wise and compassionate practice.

Retreats: Several retreats with a visiting teacher throughout the year.

Dana Dharma

Buddhist tradition provides a way of cultivating the quality of generosity: the tradition of dana, which encourages contributions of material goods to the support of monks and teachers. In its modern version, it takes the form of financial contributions to support Buddhist organizations like the Philadelphia Buddhist Association.

PBA does not charge for any of its activities (other than residence fees at residential retreats). We do incur expenses for rent, newsletters, telephone, and various other items. If you have found participation in our activities valuable, please consider sending PBA a tax-deductible contribution. Make checks payable to PBA and send to P.O. Box 532, Narberth, PA 19072

WANT TO HELP OUT?

The Philadelphia Buddhist Association offers various opportunities to become more involved in planning and carrying out PBA programs and events.

Right now there is a need for some volunteers to act as monitors at our sitting meditation sessions at Plymouth Meeting and at Radnor. Monitors set up the cushions and altar, keep time, and lead opening and closing prayers. Volunteers will be trained and observe an experienced monitor before being scheduled for a session on their own. If you are interested in becoming a monitor, send us an email to info@PhilaBuddhist.org

Where We Meet

Plymouth Meeting Friends

Every Sunday at 7:30 PM
2150 Butler Pike, Plymouth Meeting PA 19462
(SW Corner of Germantown and Butler Pikes,
just outside Philadelphia)
Wheelchair and handicap access

Radnor Friends

Every Wednesday at 7:30 PM
second Saturday: meditation class at 11:00 AM
second Saturday: meditation retreat 1:00 to 4:00 PM
610 Conestoga Road, Villanova, PA 19087
(Sproul Rd (route 320) and Conestoga Road)
Limited handicap access

Saint Raphaela Retreat Center

Special retreats only
616 Coopertown Road, Haverford, PA 19041
Wheelchair and handicap access

Philadelphia Meditation Center

Special retreats only
8 East Eagle Road, Havertown, PA 19083
Wheelchair and handicap access

All are welcome to attend.
All events are free; donations gratefully accepted.
Detailed directions at www.PhilaBuddhist.org
See schedule for meeting dates, times and location.



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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

Saturday Extended Sittings Suspended

The three-hour meditations on the second Saturdays at Radnor Friends are suspended until further notice. The meditation classes on the second Saturdays will continue as scheduled.

Meditation: Why and How

Why should I meditate?

All of the Buddhist traditions share the common goal of attaining enlightenment or "waking up," following the example of the historical Buddha 2500 years ago. The techniques for achieving this goal are varied, but most paths prescribe a foundation of regular meditation practice.

Meditation can be thought of as calming the mind and exploring the basic Buddhist themes of impermanence, non-self, non-grasping, and awakening. Meditation has been found useful to many as a way to quiet the mind so as to decrease anxiety, fear, and other destructive emotions

How do I begin to meditate?

Learning to meditate is like tennis. One can go on court and bat the ball, but some instruction by a qualified teacher may make for a better and longer-lasting experience. PBA's monthly meditation class gives detailed instruction on how to begin a meditation practice. A number of readily available books can also be useful. While the various Buddhist traditions have developed different emphases in their meditation practices, they all begin with similar approaches. The following are the most important points for getting started.

Location

Choose a place as free from distractions as possible. Sit in a chair or on a pillow on the floor.

Posture

Good sitting posture is vital to the cultivation of meditative attention. Most important, keep your back straight and relaxed; the spinal column should assume a natural arch in the mid-lower back.

Direct your eyes downward, two or three feet in front of you, slightly open, without looking at anything in particular.

Position your arms and legs in a balanced, symmetrical posture: hands folded on lap, legs comfortably crossed (if on the floor) is usually best. If sitting in a chair, have feet flat on the ground and sit forward in the chair (do not lean back). A kneeling bench may also be used.

Position your head so that it is balanced in a slightly forward position, not hanging forward or back, with the chin slightly tucked in. The tip of your tongue should touch the roof of your mouth at the base of the upper front teeth.

Do not at any time risk injury from excess physical strain. With practice, good sitting posture should become quite natural and comfortable, but prudence is advised. If in doubt, consult a recognized meditation teacher or health professional.

Attention

Focus your awareness on your breathing, but do not attempt to control it. Counting breaths repeatedly from one to ten can help focus awareness. Inevitably, your attention will wander. As soon as you become aware that you have become distracted, gently return, without judgment or reproach, to a simple awareness of your breath. The instant of awareness of wandering mind is itself the re-establishment of meditative awareness, so no "recovery" from wandering is required.

How long to meditate

Try to meditate for 10 or 20 minutes, at least once a day, but do not become discouraged if this feels too difficult; people vary widely in their initial capacity for practice. Simply do what is comfortable on a given day, and occasionally extend a little further. Avoid the tendency to evaluate a given sitting as good or bad, successful or unsuccessful. These categories are unhelpful distractions.