



Triangle Insight Meditation Community

triangleinsight.org

Greetings to All!

Last month we began our investigation of the **Five Spiritual Faculties/Strengths**, beginning with the first faculty of conviction or faith. This month we explore the second faculty, persistence, and its role in this causal chain, and which leads naturally from faith. If you would like to review our previous discussions, just click **here**, and the link will take you to the archives on our website in which these topics were presented (May through August 2014).

Persistence, which is also synonymously referred to as effort or energy, can be considered the root of our practice, for without it, or if it is too lax, not much will be accomplished. We also must be careful that the quality of this accomplishment from

our effort is not overly ambitious, for this can lead to egoic striving and the creation of external goals toward which we may grasp. Rather than being imposed from the outside, this effort must persistently arise from within as a natural outgrowth of conviction or faith. This inner wellspring of energy is thus available to nurture and sustain our practice. Just as the Buddha instructed Venerable Sona with his analogy to the strings of the lute, which must be of the right pitch, neither too tight nor too loose, so too should there be the right pitch of our persistence (**Sona Sutta: AN 6.55**).

Thanissaro Bhikkhu states in the **Wings to Awakening** that persistence or effort, as listed in the Five Faculties, is equivalent to right or wise effort, one of the factors of the Noble Eightfold Path. This effort is directed toward avoiding and abandoning unskillful and unwholesome mental states, and cultivating and maintaining the skillful and the wholesome. In their classic book, **Seeking the Heart of Wisdom** (Shambhala, 1987), Joseph Goldstein and Jack Kornfield state that effort can be divided into three aspects -- launching or preliminary effort, liberating or transcending effort, and developed or progressive effort. Accordingly, preliminary effort is "the courage and willingness to begin on a genuine path of discovery;" liberating or transcending effort is "the diligence not to falter or be dissuaded in times of difficulty;" and developed or progressive effort is "that quality of energy that does not decrease or stagnate, but which continually grows in power, leading us on to liberation." Effort at this point then assumes its position as one of the **Seven Factors for Awakening**.

It is noteworthy that in the ways the **Noble Eightfold Path** and the Five Spiritual Faculties are presented, effort precedes the factor of mindfulness in both. Hence this skillful, well-pitched effort develops mindfulness, which Thanissaro considers the most essential skillful quality in the mind as it is the basis for and leads to concentration and discernment. Interestingly, in the progression of the Seven Factors for Awakening, effort follows the two factors of mindfulness and investigation of phenomena. It thus appears that effort is both generative and transformative. Just as in Goldstein and Kornfield's progression above, it is this spiraling loop that brings about the transcendence that leads all the way to awakening and is a manifestation of our faith and persistence.

So, over this next month, as you continue to develop your faith and skillfully-

pitched effort, contemplate what it means to be mindful. As we all know, this term has received quite a bit of attention in Western culture as of late, but what did the Buddha mean by "mindfulness?" Stay tuned and we'll hope to shed some light on the matter.

May we all discover the true essence of mindfulness.

Phyllis Hicks, Cynthia Hughey, Jeanne van Gemert, and Ron Vereen



Wednesday Meditation Group

All levels of meditation experience are welcome, and the teachings are offered free of charge, with donations accepted to cover costs of using the facility and to support the study of the teachers. Please review our [sangha guidelines](#) before arriving. We also wish to maintain a hypoallergenic space, so please avoid wearing scents, colognes or perfumes. If you would like to submit items for inclusion in this newsletter, please review the [newsletter guidelines](#).

Schedule:

September 3: Ron Vereen
September 10: Cynthia Hughey
September 17: Phyllis Hicks (small & large group contemplation of what it means to be a sangha)
September 24: Jeanne van Gemert

October 1: Ron Vereen
October 8: Cynthia Hughey
October 15: Jeanne van Gemert
October 22: Mary Burns (Insight Dialogue)
October 29: Dave Hughey

Wednesday Evenings

6:30 - 8:00 PM
(Insight Dialogue from 6:30 - 8:30 PM)
Episcopal Center (EC) at Duke
505 Alexander Avenue
Durham, NC 27705

Sitting Opportunities

[Wednesday Meditation Group](#)

[Insight Dialogue at Triangle Insight](#)

[Buddhist Families of Durham](#)

[Neighborhood Sitting Group](#)

[Duke Cancer Center](#)

[Recovery Group](#)

[Other Resources](#)

Upcoming

A Collective Inquiry: "What Does it Mean to be a Sangha?"

A Special Sangha Meeting on September 17 facilitated by Phyllis Hicks, joined by

Classes and Events

[What Does it Mean to be a Sangha?](#)

[Koru Mindfulness and Meditation Classes](#)

[Book Study Group on *Awakening: A Paradigm Shift of the Heart*](#)

[The Foundations of Well-Being](#)

[Documentary Film: *A Joyful Mind*](#)

[Buddhist Meditation & The Modern World](#)
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Upcoming Retreats

[New Year's Insight Dialogue at Stone House](#)

Goings On in the Sangha

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The Shramadana Project

[A Volunteer Initiative of Triangle Insight](#)

Cynthia Hughey and Ron Vereen

The Buddha said to his good friend Ananda: "This is the entire holy life, Ananda, that is good friendship, good companionship, good comradeship. When a bhikkhu has a good friend, a good companion, a good comrade, it is to be expected that he will develop and cultivate the Noble Eightfold Path."

At Triangle Insight's July birthday party seeds were planted for the continued exploration of sangha and what it means to be on a path of awakening together. Already we have tasted the fruits of shared study, meditation, inquiry, and community service. On Wednesday, September 17th we will listen deeply together for how to live more consciously in the Triangle Insight community. Please join us for this evening of small and large group contemplation of these important questions.

We will reflect on the role of spiritual friendship in awakening and also on the deep wisdom of the Buddhist tradition around transmission of the Dhamma. The Buddha instructed each of us to see for ourselves, through practice, the truth of the teachings. In this way the teachings have remained alive for over 2500 years.

How can our shared life at Triangle Insight support us being awake together? Our world sorely needs minds free from the taints of greed, hatred, and delusion. We offer this article from Bhikku Bodhi for preparation and inspiration: [**Message for a Globalized World.**](#)

In addition to the gifts that all of us may contribute to this endeavor, we also have available to us a well of wisdom from our many teachers, plus that of the Community Dharma Leader Program and the Buddhist Insight Network (BIN). Ron attended the InterSangha meeting of BIN August 11-14, and will share some of what he learned about practices in other sanghas as a way of inspiring our shared inquiry.

We look forward to discovering a collectively held vision of what it means to be a sangha here and now!

With our deepest gratitude for joining us in this journey,

Phyllis Hicks, Cynthia Hughey, Jeanne van Gemert, and Ron Vereen

**The Foundations of Well-Being:
A Year-long Web-Based Program
with Rick Hanson, Ph.D.**

Ongoing Classes and Events

[Mindfulness
Programs at Duke
Integrative Medicine](#)

[Mindfulness
Programs at UNC
Integrative Medicine](#)



Starting in October 2014, this year-long web-based learning program will use the power of positive neuroplasticity to hardwire more happiness, resilience, self-worth, love, and peace into your brain and your life. The focus will be on the development of what Rick calls the The Twelve Pillars of Well-Being: self-caring, mindfulness, learning, vitality, gratitude, confidence, calm, motivation, intimacy, courage, aspiration, and service. He'll be joined by Tara Brach, Jack Kornfield, Dan Siegel, and many others. For more information or to register, click [here](#).

Rick Hanson, Ph.D. is a neuropsychologist, Senior Fellow of the Greater Good Science Center at the University of California, Berkeley, and New York Times bestselling author of *Hardwiring Happiness*, *Buddha's Brain*, *Just One Thing*, and *Mother Nature*.

Beginning October 2014

Cost: \$25 per month, with a \$50 savings if registered by August 31.

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New Year's Retreat 2015: Awakening Together Insight Dialogue with Phyllis Hicks and Janet Surrey

While meditating with others, the heart and mind relax and open in recognition of this shared human experience. In this time of new beginnings we will gather to learn and deepen our Insight Dialogue practice. We will inquire together into the nature of suffering in relationship, and touch the possibility of awakening together. We will investigate obstacles to mindfulness and cultivate the factors of awakening: mindfulness, investigation, energy, joy, tranquility, concentration and equanimity. We will experience the power of meditating together to accelerate insight, wisdom and compassion.

To register go to:

<http://metta.org/program/new-years-retreat-awakening-together/>

[The Stone House](#)

6602 Nicks Rd.
Mebane, NC 27302

January 1-4, 2015

<http://www.stonecircles.org/the-stone-house/>

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Book Study Group on *Awakening: A Paradigm Shift of the Heart*

Beginning in September 2014, Ron Vereen will be offering an integrated study and practice group using Rodney Smith's new book, ***Awakening: A Paradigm Shift of the Heart***. The group will meet monthly, including occasional Skype sessions with Rodney, and is open to those with any level of meditation experience. There is no charge for this activity, with donations accepted to help support Ron's study and practice and to cover the costs of the use of the facility. If you would like to register or need additional information, please contact Ron at rlvereen@aol.com. (Please note that both sessions have filled, but if you would like to be placed on a wait list then email Ron)

One Saturday Monthly

One Heart, Durham

Schedule determined by participants

10:00 AM - 12:00 noon or 1:00 PM - 3:00 PM

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The Practice of Insight Dialogue at Triangle Insight

Insight Dialogue is an interpersonal meditation practice and is offered at Triangle Insight once monthly, usually on the fourth Wednesday of the month. It brings the mindfulness and tranquility of silent meditation directly into our experience with other people. The new website for Insight Dialogue is an excellent resource for learning more about the practice: www.metta.org.

The evening begins with silent meditation practice, followed by gentle mindful movement, and then shifting into dyad practice where interpersonal mindfulness is explored with a partner in response to a contemplation that is offered. The dyad practice is optional so that anyone who chooses to remain in silent practice may do so, rather than shifting into dyad practice. One can investigate the guidance of the contemplation internally, noticing the moment by moment unfolding of internal experience. Also note that the ID practice goes from 6:30 to 8:30 PM to allow for more spaciousness and time for questions. We hope you will be able to join us.

Fourth Wednesdays
(unless otherwise indicated)
Triangle Insight, Episcopal Center at Duke
6:30 - 8:30 PM

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The Shramadana Project at Triangle Insight

The Shramadana Project is a volunteer initiative of the Triangle Insight Meditation Community that has recently formed to address some of the needs within the sangha, and to provide outreach to the community-at-large as well. Two co-coordinators of the overall project emerged out of the first core group meeting on August 21st - Sharon Jamison and Tamara Share. Please consider being involved in some fashion, large or small, and to participate or for more information, contact us at:

info@triangleinsight.org.

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Goings-on in the Sangha

This section in the newsletter is where sangha members may list a variety activities or announcements for everyone to view, e.g., study groups, social gatherings, and any classes or other events that you consider relevant to the mission of our sangha. If you would like something included, please submit your request by the 20th of each month to info@triangleinsight.org.

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BFD is Seeking a Volunteer

The Buddhist Families of Durham community is seeking a volunteer to teach their middle school meditation group. This individual would volunteer to work with their middle school students one Sunday morning a month during the academic year. They have 4 middle school students eager to learn mindfulness in meditation, with two more students joining next year. This small class could possibly work through the *Stress Reduction Workbook for Teens* together. Please contact Sumi at:

Sumi@BuddhistfamiliesofDurham.org. Thank you!



Elder Sangha Intentional Community

Mature, committed practitioners interested in establishing an affordable, nurturing, and supportive aging-in-place community that is based in simplicity and sustainability are invited to participate in an opening conversation with Tom Howlett, a builder with background in cohousing and spiritual community (thowlett11@gmail.com).



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Koru Mindfulness and Meditation Classes in Carrboro

Koru is a brief, structured approach to teaching mindfulness and meditation to emerging adults, ages 18-29. Developed by Holly Rogers, M.D. and Margaret Maytan, M.D. of Duke's student counseling center, it is ideally suited for college students; other young adults have also benefited from it. Koru students will learn to meditate and develop a mindful approach to life using practical skills to calm and focus the mind, manage worries and anxiety, and improve sleep and energy. Participation in ALL 4 sessions is required, as well as 10 minutes of meditation and brief mindfulness exercises every day, plus weekly readings.

Classes at the Center

Mondays 12:15 to 1:30

Sept 22, 29; Oct 6, 13

or

Tuesday evenings 5:30-6:45

Sept 16, 23, 30; Oct 7

\$65 for all 4 classes

Register by Sept 8

For more information and to register:

www.thewellnessalliance.com/BreeKalb.html

or email bree@mindspring.com

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Mindfulness-Based Stress
Reduction Classes & Events
at Duke Integrative Medicine

Please click on any of the following links for a variety of programs related to the practice of mindfulness:

[Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction](#)

[Classes, Workshops & Events](#)

or call **919-660-6826** for more information.

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Mindfulness Programs at at UNC Integrative Medicine

Please click on the following link for a variety of programs related to the practice of mindfulness:

[UNC Program on Integrative Medicine](#)

or call **919-966-8586** for more information.

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Buddhist Families of Durham

Currently consisting of ~ 16 families, this group is dedicated to creating a warm, loving community for parents and children to learn and practice together. Adults meet for one hour for meditation and discussion, while the children learn about meditation and Buddhism in Sati School with our marvelous (non-parent-member) teachers.

For more information, visit:

[Buddhist Families of Durham](#)

Sunday Mornings

10:30AM-12:00 noon

please contact Sumi Loundon Kim for details

email: admin@buddhistfamiliesofdurham.com

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Duke Cancer Center

This open meditation period begins with 10 min. of instruction, 15 min. of silent practice, and 5 min. of discussion/reflection. Various meditation practitioners from the community are invited to come and lead these weekly sessions. For more info contact Jon Seskevich at 919-681-

3989 or Annette Olsen at 919-684-2843.

Monday Afternoons

12:30 - 1:00 PM

**The Quiet Room, Main Level
Duke Cancer Center**

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Neighborhood Sitting Group

This early morning sitting group led by Ron Vereen meets Mondays and Thursdays from 7:15-8:00 AM in the Watts-Hillandale Neighborhood. There is no charge for participation, and donations are accepted to support the use of the space. For more info contact Ron at **rlvereen@aol.com**.

Monday and Thursday Mornings

7:15-8:00AM

2205 Wilson St., Durham, NC 27705

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Recovery Group

a Buddhist Perspective on the Twelve Step Program

The meetings begin and end with silent meditation. For more information contact **Zensetter@gmail.com**.

Tuesday Nights

7:00 - 8:15 PM

**[Chapel Hill Zen Center](#)
5322 NC Hwy 86
Chapel Hill, NC 27516**

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Other Resources

In addition to Triangle Insight, there are a variety of other meditation opportunities of which we would like for you to be aware. Rather than list them all here, we wanted to point you to the "links" section of our website at **[Triangle Insight](#)**. There are other sitting groups in the community whose practice is similar to ours, as well as resources for retreat centers and other websites, both locally and nationally. We do not offer an endorsement of these sites, but rather a suggestion for your exploration to see if any may have useful information to support your practice of insight meditation. For any questions please contact us at

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A Joyful Mind

A Documentary on the Life and Teachings of Mingyur Rinpoche

We have recently been contacted by Dharma friends about a film project in progress, with a request to spread the word and invite others to contribute if possible.

A Joyful Mind documents the life and teachings of Mingyur Rinpoche and provides a comprehensive look at the practice of meditation and its benefits. In addition to Rinpoche, the film will feature highly revered Buddhist monastics Mathieu Ricard and Jetsunma Tenzin Palmo, renowned neuroscientists Drs. Richie Davidson and Antoine Lutz, Psychologist and Buddhist teacher Dr. Rick Hanson, meditation master Tsoknyi Rinpoche, and many more. You can view promotional videos and find out more information on their website: www.ajoyfulmind.com.

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Buddhist Meditation and the Modern World

A MOOC (Massive Open On-Line Course) with Kurtis R. Schaeffer and David Francis Germano (University of Virginia)

This online course is offered free-of-charge through Coursera. It runs for 13 weeks beginning Jan. 19, 2015 with extensive contributions from scientists, people involved with meditation practice, and Tibetan Buddhist teachers.

Outline of Topics:

1. The history of Buddhist contemplative traditions in India and Tibet
2. Innovations in scientific research on understanding such contemplative practices
3. Recent adaptations of such practices in multiple professional and personal areas
4. The practices themselves through brief secular contemplative exercises.

Dates: Jan 19th, 2015 -- Apr 20, 2015

To participate, visit [Coursera](#) and click on "join for

free."

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Triangle Insight is a Non-Profit

In December 2011 we announced our classification as a non-profit with the State of North Carolina, and in May 2013 we received our designation as a 501(c)(3) religious organization by the IRS. All contributions received by the Triangle Insight Meditation Community are tax-exempt to the extent of the provisions of this designation. If you would like to donate to our organization please contact us at info@triangleinsight.org.

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