



Triangle Insight Meditation Community

triangleinsight.org

Greetings to All!

This month we continue our exploration of the seven sets of the **Wings to Awakening**, arriving at concentration, the fourth factor of the Five Spiritual Faculties/Strengths, progressing from mindfulness on the way to wisdom. (Prior discussions on The Wings to Awakening can be found in the May - November 2014 issues of our newsletter which are archived on our **website**.)

Concentration, or *samadhi*, can be defined as that faculty of mind which focuses one-pointedly on an object without interruption. Wise concentration also has a wholesomeness about it in that it is a state free from greed, hatred, and delusion. And Thannissaro Bhikkhu states that when brought to the point of absorption, or *jhana*, "not only is the awareness focused on a single object, but also the object is reduced to a single quality that fills the entirety of one's awareness, at the same

time that one's awareness broadens to suffuse the entire object. This mutual pervasion of awareness and object in a state of expansion is what is meant by *absorption*."

We saw last month how mindfulness is a necessary condition for the arising of concentration, the key being a persevering continuity of mindfulness. Now we will explore how concentration plays an important role in the function of mindfulness, and working together they heighten one's discernment such that insights are revealed and wisdom springs forth.

As Bhante Gunaratana says in an article titled **Mindfulness and Concentration**, concentration should be regarded as a tool which can assist one toward liberation. He cautions, however, that like any tool, it can be used skillfully or unskillfully, depending on one's intention. A concentrated mind wields great power, and can be used in the service of freeing the limited mind or to build up the ego as a framework of achievement and competition. He goes on to say that concentration alone will not give you a perspective on the basic problems of selfishness and suffering. Moreover, the states of absorption may bring about such bliss and contentment that one may falsely believe one is enlightened.

However, when occurring in tandem with mindfulness, concentration can provide the power through a one-pointedness of mind which can focus on an object, at which point mindfulness can come in and notice things, e.g., the ever-changing nature of phenomena, with an unlimited number of objects of attention, both internally and externally. Mindfulness, therefore, is a much broader and larger function than concentration, all-encompassing, whereas concentration alone can be exclusive. And yet the ability of concentration to exclude the hindrances -- sensual desire, aversion, laziness, restlessness, and doubt -- allows mindfulness to flourish, seeing more clearly the sources of suffering and then discerning how they can be released. With even greater concentration, mindfulness reveals ever more subtle levels of awareness into the insights toward which the Buddha has pointed -- impermanence, suffering, and non-self. These very insights are the proximate cause of the liberating wisdom that the Buddha promised, which we will explore next month as the fifth and final factor of the Five Spiritual Faculties/Strengths.

In the meantime, see for yourselves how the partnership of mindfulness and

concentration bring about a balanced mind, and discern how the other factors we have discussed, faith/conviction and energy, help to promote this delicate balancing act. And perhaps you've already noticed more wisdom emerging!

May we all experience a balanced mind which can then lead us to greater wisdom.

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:

- December 3: Ron Vereen
(Holiday Celebration after the meeting)
- December 6: Day of Mindfulness
- December 10: Cynthia Hughey
(Shramadana Project after the meeting)
- December 17: Jeanne van Gemert
(KM discussion during the talk)
- December 24: No meeting
- December 31: No meeting

- January 7: Ron Vereen
- January 14: Cynthia Hughey
- January 21: Jeanne van Gemert
- January 28: Phyllis Hicks (Insight Dialogue)

Sitting Opportunities

Wednesday Meditation Group

Insight Dialogue at Triangle Insight

Buddhist Families of Durham

Neighborhood Sitting Group

Duke Cancer Center

Recovery Group

Other Resources

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

Upcoming Classes and

Holiday Celebration at Triangle Insight

Events

Basics of Buddhist Practice Class

**Kalyana Mitta
StartUp Meeting**

Awakening Joy, 2015

**An online course
with James Baraz**

**Documentary Film:
A Joyful Mind**

**Buddhist Meditation
& the Modern World:
A Coursera MOOC**

**Stop Smoking Online!
Craving to Quit**

It's that time of year when we invite the sangha to join us for our annual holiday gathering and social following our regularly scheduled meeting. On **Wednesday, December 3rd**, take advantage of this opportunity to meet new faces and catch up with others in the sangha. We will follow our regular meeting format from 6:30 - 8 PM, and then enjoy good food and fellowship from 8 - 8:30 PM. *If you plan to attend, please bring a savory or sweet to share with others, and Triangle Insight will provide the beverages.*

Wednesday, December 3rd

6:30 - 8:00 PM Regular Meeting

8:00 - 8:30 PM Holiday Celebration

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**A Day of Mindfulness, Dec. 6th
with Cynthia Hughey, Jeanne van Gemert,
and Ron Vereen**

Upcoming Retreats

**A Day of Mindfulness
in December**

**New Year's Insight
Dialogue at Stone
House**

Since the holidays this year fall on two of our meeting nights, we will not gather on 12/24 and 12/31. So, here is a chance to devote a little more time to practice so as to ease into the holiday season.

This Day of Mindfulness on **December 6th** is an opportunity for retreat and coming together for an extended period of contemplative practice. Deepening in this way can bring a more continuous access to presence and a strengthening of the five spiritual faculties of conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, and discernment. Many find that it is a way to "recharge" their practice.

During the day there will be periods of sitting meditation, walking meditation, mindful movement, and investigation of the Dharma. We welcome people at all levels of meditation experience. There will be an opportunity for those new to the practice of insight meditation to receive guided instruction.

These teachings are being offered free of charge, with donations accepted to cover the cost of using the facility and to support the study and practice of the teachers.

Goings On in the Sangha

**Request 2-month
Housesitter/Renter**

Kalyana Mitta

**Basics of Buddhist
Practice**

Please bring your own lunch. Refrigeration is available if needed (coffee, tea, and snacks will be provided). In order to make our preparations, we are asking you to pre-register if you plan to attend. You will then receive guidelines on how to approach this day of practice, along with a proposed schedule.

To register, or if you have further questions, please contact

The Shramadana Project

**A Volunteer Initiative
of Triangle Insight**

Ongoing Classes and Events

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

**Mindfulness
Programs at Duke
Integrative Medicine**

**Mindfulness
Programs at UNC
Integrative Medicine**



us at: info@triangleinsight.org.

Episcopal Center at Duke
505 Alexander Ave., Durham 27705
December 6, 2014
9:00AM - 4:00PM

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New Year's Insight Dialogue Retreat 2015: Awakening Together

with Phyllis Hicks and Janet Surrey

While meditating with others in dialogue, the heart and mind relax and open in recognition of this shared human experience. Cultivating awareness in the moment of human contact allows us to discover and embody the wisdom of the Buddha's teaching on suffering and the end of suffering. Insight Dialogue provides a way to live the teachings in real time! We will investigate obstacles to mindfulness, the hindrances, and cultivate the factors of awakening: mindfulness, investigation, energy, joy, tranquility, concentration and equanimity. We can witness the power of relationship to accelerate insight, wisdom and compassion.

There will be alternating periods of internal silent meditation, Insight Dialogue, and mindful movement. Noble silence will be maintained throughout.

Register soon! The early registration discount ends Dec 7th.

To register go to:

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

Location: **[The Stone House](#)**
Mebane, NC 27302

Date: January 1-4, 2015

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

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Basics of Buddhist Practice
Five Evenings with Jeanne van Gemert

The first class is now filled, but please NOTE: Jeanne is

keeping a **Wait List**. Should seats open up, you will be contacted in first come, first served order. **If you are interested in getting on the Wait List for this class, and want first crack at registering when the class is repeated, contact Jeanne by e-mail at jeannevg@mindspring.com.**

"For sure we'll offer it again, and we will let you know when that is scheduled. Many thanks for your interest!"
- Jeanne van Gemert

Episcopal Center at Duke
505 Alexander Ave., Durham 27705
Tuesdays, January 6th through February 3rd, 2015
6:30 - 8:00 PM

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Kalyana Mitta Groups

StartUp Meeting -- Bring Your Ideas

The Kalyana Mitta (KM) planning committee has developed a structure and guidelines that we will be sharing with the sangha on Dec. 17th. We're ready for groups to begin forming in the New Year. The intention is to deepen our sangha by creating space for rich dharma interaction through mindful listening and speaking in small group settings. The groups offer on-going support for study and for bringing the dharma into our lives. **If you are interested in forming a KM group, joining a KM group, or learning more about KM groups, please join us on Wednesday, Dec. 17th, after the regular meditation meeting.** We also plan to post information on our website and send out details in future newsletters.

Committee members include Jeanne van Gemert as liason with the Teachers Group, Tom Howlett, Tamara Share and Sarah Tillis.

Please send your questions or comments to
Jeanne van Gemert: Jeanne@triangleinsight.org

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Awakening JOY, 2015

A 5-month online course

This online course is led by James Baraz, a founding teacher of Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, California. He has offered the Awakening Joy course since 2003. It consists

of different themes and materials every two weeks for five months. The intention is to create a supportive structure for awakening joy and our natural capacity for well-being. Visit the website [overview here](#). There are in-person meetings in Berkeley, CA, and those who participate online will have access to recordings of the live classes with a remarkable [line-up of guest speakers](#), practice letters and live video conference calls, and additional resources.

James Baraz says, "In these times with so much suffering in the world and people often so busy they forget how to nourish themselves, I believe awakening our joy is more important than ever. Remembering to connect with all the goodness inside and around you and then sharing it with others takes practice and support. This course is designed to offer you a structure to do just that. The world needs your aliveness and good heart."

Registration is now open for this course, offered online to all participants with in person meetings also available in Berkeley, Ca. **Register by December 20th and there is an Early Bird Bonus** to join James for a live conference call on Dec. 20th: "Enjoying the Holiday Season".

For more information and to register for the course, click on this logo!



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

In September 2014, Ron Vereen began offering an integrated study and practice group using Rodney Smith's new book, [Awakening: A Paradigm Shift of the Heart](#). The group meets 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. The groups are currently filled, but if you would like to be placed

on a wait list, please contact Ron at ron@triangleinsight.org.

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 been

organized to address some of the needs within the sangha, as well as to provide outreach to the community-at-large. Tamara Share has agreed to be the current coordinator.

Ron Vereen recently completed a pilot Mindful Awareness Training at the Durham Crisis Response Center, and this will likely be offered on an ongoing basis for their clients who are survivors of domestic violence, sexual assault and childhood trauma.

If you have some experience in teaching mindfulness to others and would like to be involved, please contact Ron at ron@triangleinsight.org

Please consider being involved in the Shramadana Project in some fashion, large or small. To participate or for more information, contact us at: info@triangleinsight.org.

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Goings-on in the Sangha

This space is where sangha members may announce timely activities for everyone to view, such as study groups, social gatherings, and any classes or other events that you consider relevant to the mission of our sangha.

If you would like to include something, please submit your request *by the 20th of each month* to info@triangleinsight.org.

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SANGHA MEMBER GOING ON RETREAT Requests Housesitter/Renter for January-February

Tom Howlett is looking for a housesitter/renter, sliding scale, for January and February while he's on retreat in Myanmar (Burma). Tom's home is in a quiet, meditative, rural setting about 8 min. just west of Carrboro. This is ideal for an individual, couple, or family transitioning.

Caring for and sharing metta with the kitty is part of the deal. For anyone interested, please call Tom at 919-730-2756.

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Kaliyana Mitta News Startup Meeting

Please [see the report](#) in this newsletter on the StartUp orientation meeting of the KM Committee: Jeanne van Gemert, Tom Howlett, Tamara Share and Sarah Tillis.

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Basics of Buddhist Practice Five Tuesday Evenings with Jeanne van Gemert

Jeanne van Gemert is teaching this 5-session course at the Episcopal Student Center (505 Alexander Ave., Durham, NC), starting in January. It is currently filled, but for more information, and to get on the Wait List, [see the description above.](#)

**Tuesdays 6:30pm - 8 pm
Jan. 6 - Feb. 3, 2015**

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

Please click on the following link 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 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 [**info@triangleinsight.org**](mailto:info@triangleinsight.org)

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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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How to stop smoking online . . .

Craving to Quit:

A Mindfulness-Based Wellness Program
for Smoking Cessation on the Web

If you or anyone you know has been attempting to quit smoking but has yet to succeed, this program may be for you. Modeled after **Mindfulness-Based Relapse Prevention** at the University of Washington, **Craving to Quit** is a 21-day web-based program from Yale University that offers a mindfully-oriented way to deal with cravings and other addictive patterns. Compared to **Freedom from Smoking** -- an on-line cessation program sponsored by the American Lung Association -- the Yale study had demonstrated twice the quit rates, and the cost is only \$1/day!

Anytime & Anywhere via Web App
Go to **Craving to Quit** to sign up

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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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