Greetings to all!

As we continue our journey through the Wings to Awakening, specifically looking at the Noble Eightfold Path, this month’s focus is on Wise Action. This path factor is where we find the elaboration on ethical training, adding additional actions to Wise Speech. Together these denote the precepts as they relate to lay practitioners, and we will look at how they serve as a spiritual guide for conducting ourselves in all of our affairs. Gil Fronsdal says “the practice of living by the precepts, as one aspect of sila, is also about our interpersonal relationships. It is the practice of training to develop caring, compassionate relationships with others rather than harmful ones, generous ones rather than greedy ones, honest ones rather than dishonest ones.” When sincerely taken to heart, the precepts become an important and illuminating, if not challenging, form of investigation. This is true especially in our everyday lives, where the “all” (the sense bases) are “aflame with the fire of greed, the fire of hatred, and the fire of delusion.” (The Fire Sermon,
One might say that we practice to extinguish these fires to realize *nibbana*, one definition of which is "extinction."

Through our study of the Buddhist teachings, we continually see their repetitious form indicative of the oral tradition that existed during the time of the Buddha. Serving as a pedagogical aid, this method holds true for the precepts as well, as evidenced by the manner in which they are presented:

- I undertake the training to refrain from killing living beings.
- I undertake the training to refrain from taking what is not given.
- I undertake the training to refrain from sexual misconduct.
- I undertake the training to refrain from unwise speech.
- I undertake the training to refrain from taking intoxicants that cloud the mind.

(for a more contemporary and comprehensive rendering from Thich Nhat Hahn, you may find it here: *The Five Mindfulness Trainings*)

The specific actions relevant to each precept can be explored in more depth by referring to Bhikkhu Bodhi’s more classical exposition in Chapter IV of *The Noble Eightfold Path: the Way to the End of Suffering*. For our purpose here we would like to draw your attention to the manner in which the precepts are to be approached. In contrast to a "thou shalt not" commandment connoting a "divine rule," the precepts are simply another instruction in the form of training in refraining from activities which impede our progress in meditation, and by extension, our insight and wisdom. It seems the Buddha understood that we are going to have challenges in changing our behavior and that it will take conviction, persistence, mindfulness, concentration, and discernment (The Five Spiritual Faculties/Strengths), not to mention time, in order to do so. Refraining opens to what is wise and skillful.

In applying Rodney Smith’s approach to the spiritual journey, the "*Continua of Practice*," the precepts provide a useful framework as we move from struggle, to which unwise actions contribute, toward the end of struggle, where freedom is realized. One important aspect of this approach, and in keeping with the precepts as a training, has to do with the orientation we bring to the inevitable challenges we face in moving from unwise to wise action (or any other continuum we choose). In the case of wise action, Rodney would say that if your intention is to move in that
direction, then whenever you come upon an unwise action, this is precisely what you need to see! Unwise action then becomes an opportunity for curiosity and interest, not criticism and indictment, opening the heart to investigate and discern the roots of the action. Once fully comprehended in this way, unskillful actions are naturally released through clear comprehension of their role in our suffering, and freedom from suffering is realized in each and every moment when this shift occurs, not in some far and distant future. As Rodney would say, "Look to see where you have a struggle -- that's what you need to see. This is a seeing game."

May we all be curious and interested in seeing our struggles so as to open to the freedom of release -- the end of struggle.

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

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**Triangle Insight Meditation Groups**

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:**

**Wednesday Evenings**

6:30 - 8:00 PM  
*(Insight Dialogue from 6:30 - 8:30 PM)*

- **December 2:** Dave Hughey  
- **December 9:** Jeanne van Gemert  
- **December 16:** Ron Vereen (Holiday Party)  
- **December 23:** No Meeting (Holiday Break)  
- **December 30:** No Meeting (Holiday Break)

- **January 6:** Ron Vereen  
- **January 13:** Scott Bryce (Guest Teacher)  
- **January 20:** Jeanne van Gemert  
- **January 27:** Phyllis Hicks (Insight Dialogue)
Daylong Practices
**January 1 & 2: Insight Dialogue Retreat** (click here for more info)

Monday and Thursday Morning Meditation
**7:00 - 7:45 AM** (click here for more info)
**Note: No meeting on 12/10, 12/24, 12/28 & 12/31**

**Episcopal Center at Duke**
505 Alexander Ave.
Durham, NC 27705

**Holiday Party! at Triangle Insight**

It's that time of year when the holiday season brings us another opportunity to come together and celebrate the warmth in gathering as a sangha for food and fellowship. We plan to begin our festivities following our regular meeting of Triangle Insight on Wednesday, December 16th. Also note that this will be our last time to be together until the New Year's Retreat January 1st & 2nd, or with the next regular meeting of the sangha on Wednesday, January 6th.

This gathering is open to all who would like to participate, even if you don't regularly attend the Wednesday night meetings. If you plan to come, please bring a sweet or savory dish to share, and Triangle Insight will provide the beverages (refrigeration and a microwave are available if needed).

**Wednesday, December 16th**
Episcopal Center at Duke
8:00 PM until!

**New Year's Insight Dialogue Non-Residential Retreat:**
**Step by Step, Aware and Awake with Phyllis Hicks**

Please join Phyllis and the community for this nonresidential one half-day and one full-day retreat, **Friday and Saturday, January 1st and 2nd, 2016.** Insight Dialogue brings the dynamic stillness of silent practice into relationship through dialogue. We will continue to explore the six Insight Dialogue guidelines as a practice of awakening moment by moment, step by step. Through the
Project
A Volunteer Initiative of Triangle Insight

Ongoing Classes and Events
Mindfulness Awareness Training with Tamara Share PhD
Mindfulness Programs at Duke Integrative Medicine
Mindfulness Programs at UNC Integrative Medicine

exploration of the guidelines and the wisdom teachings of the Buddha we walk the walk, finding the opportunity to awaken in the joys and challenges of everyday life. Together we find courage and a great heart for awakening. This retreat is both an introduction to Insight Dialogue and an opportunity to deepen practice.

This activity is 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 teacher. Please bring your own lunch on Saturday. Refrigeration and a microwave are available as needed. Coffee, tea, and snacks will be provided by Triangle Insight.

To make our preparations we are asking you to pre-register if you plan to attend. Upon registering, you will then receive guidelines on how to approach the retreat, along with a proposed schedule. For more information or to register, please contact Tamara at tamara@triangleinsight.org (when registering, please include your full name and telephone contact information in the email).

Episcopal Center at Duke
505 Alexander Ave., Durham, NC 27705
Friday, January 1st, 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM
Saturday, January 2nd, 9:00 AM-5:00 PM

An Evening with Scott Bryce
Reflections on Self-Kindness, Self-Compassion, and Self-Esteem

Please join Scott for this evening of reflections on self-kindness, self-compassion, and self-esteem. For over fifty years, self-esteem has been the dominant measure of psychological wellbeing in the American context. Today an alternative, Buddhist-inspired paradigm is emerging that emphasizes self-kindness and self-compassion rather than self-esteem, with transformative implications for Western psychology and psychotherapy. Guest teacher Scott Bryce, a meditator and therapist for twenty years, considers some of the ways these two practices -- Buddhist practice and the practice of psychotherapy - are intersecting in this time and place.

Wednesday, January 13th, 2016
Episcopal Center at Duke
6:30 - 8:00 PM
The Shramadana Project
A Volunteer Initiative of Triangle Insight

The Shramadana Project (SP) 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.

Mary Mudd, the current coordinator of the SP, recently called a meeting of this group to explore ways to meet the needs of our growing sangha and to assess the group's interest in outreach to the community-at-large. We encourage you to review the minutes here so as to learn more about these ongoing opportunities to serve in the evolution of these worthwhile and exciting initiatives of the sangha, one of which is the formation of a listserv so as to connect among ourselves in a more efficient way.

As you can see, as we move into 2016, many activities are on the horizon that will need the sangha's support for implementation, including the January Insight Dialogue Retreat, the Spring Retreat in May, Days of Practice, and others that pertain to our recent exploration of issues around diversity in the sangha and end-of-life concerns.

If you would like to experience the fruits of service to the sangha, and are not already on the member list of the SP, please contact Mary at mary@triangleinsight.org. The next meeting is scheduled for January 13th following the regular meeting of Triangle Insight.

Organizing Against Racism NC
Workshops Being Offered

In response to our efforts to engage the Buddhist teachings around the issues of Racial Justice and Diversity, we would like to recommend the training opportunities available through OARNC as a first step in this investigation. Several members of Triangle Insight have already participated in these workshops and they come highly recommended. A few more from the sangha and other Buddhist communities in the Triangle are planning to attend the Phase I events scheduled for early 2016, and you are encouraged to participate if interested. If three or more attend an event from our sangha, you will each get a discount on the fee for being a part of the Triangle Insight Meditation Community.

TI is contributing $500 to start a scholarship fund for this purpose, and the community is invited to join the initiative by contributing specifically to the scholarship fund. The fund will be available to support TI community members in
attending OARNC or other similar trainings. The goal of the initiative is to help individuals and the community to deepen their understanding of the way the mind and human systems are limited by unexamined views of race. The scholarships will be available on a case by case basis to help supplement the cost of registration. To contribute now through PayPal, please go here.

The plan at present is to keep a log of those from our sangha who participate in these trainings, and then to convene a meeting of this core group of individuals to discuss ideas about the best way forward. The Phase II trainings are designed to assist us in bringing this knowledge back to our community so as to guide us more skillfully in addressing these issues in our own community. For a description of the Phase I & II trainings you may click here.

Please contact us at info@triangleinsight.org if you: 1) have any questions about this initiative; 2) would like to be considered for a scholarship; 3) want to contribute toward a scholarship; and 4) wish to be a part of the core group to discuss our plans after completing the trainings.

OARNC
A variety of times and dates in Durham & Chapel Hill
Each workshop is two days, 8:30 AM - 5:30 PM
Cost: $275 ($225 with 3+ discount; student $175)
and includes breakfast and lunch

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Spiritual Friends Groups

Having admirable people as friends, companions, and colleagues is actually the whole of the holy life.
~ The Buddha

Though we know there is great suffering in the world, at times we experience a heightened awareness of this dukkha. It can arise from global, national, or deeply personal conditions, and as sensitively explored in the November 18th dharma talk and discussion, it may elicit a wide range of thoughts and feelings, including grief, anger, vulnerability, fear, and confusion.

At such times, the intimacy and trust that develop in a spiritual friends group can create a safe space to be present with whatever is arising in us. As we are held within the supportive container of the group, we can use the dharma and mindful sharing to deepen our connection with self and others and thus move towards greater understanding and healing.

A wondrous aspect of this process is that as the heart of the
dharma is enriched in our own lives, we are also contributing to the spiritual journey of others. As Gil Fronsdal states in *Friendship on the Path*, "Friendships also teach us that the fruits of practice are not something we keep for ourselves. They are something that we share." Kalyana Mitta and Racial Affinity Groups reflect this beautiful intention and provide a special opportunity for its expression.

**Kalyana Mitta Groups**
The Insight Dialogue Group begins December 6. Registration is still open.

There are still openings in our Insight Dialogue KM group, which will have its first meeting **9-11 a.m., Sunday, December 6**. Meetings will be in Durham on the first Sunday morning of each month. If you didn't attend the August 23rd training but have attended prior Insight Dialogue retreats and would like to join the Insight Dialogue KM group, please send our newly combined KM-RA Questionnaire to Sarah Tillis, KM Coordinator, or contact Beverly Johnson: beverlyjohnson992@gmail.com.

For more information about any of our KM Groups, visit the KM web page or contact Sarah Tillis, KM Coordinator, at sarah@triangleinsight.org.

**Racial Affinity Groups**
As many of you know, our Racial Affinity Groups are part of our commitment to engaged Buddhism. As stated in our newly developed Racial Affinity Group Guidelines, "The specific intention of Racial Affinity (RA) Groups is to deepen self-awareness around issues of race in small, racially homogeneous groups that integrate the dharma into members' personal and collective exploration. Development of this deepened self-awareness underlies wise action, and we're encouraged not to rush too quickly to 'fix' anything, but rather, to take the time needed to do our own work."

The guidelines also provide information about forming and joining a group and details about group structure and process. For additional information there are many resources, including our Racial Affinity Groups web page and Ruth King's Group Guidelines.

Developing these groups is a work in progress, and we welcome your ideas. If you have questions or suggestions, please talk to Sarah Tillis, the KM Coordinator, or email her at sarah@triangleinsight.org.

At this season of gratitude, the KM Coordinating Team of Sarah Tillis, Tom Howlett, Tamara Share, and Jeanne van Gemert wishes to express our heartfelt appreciation for the dedication of our spiritual community. May our Kalyana Mitta
Retreat Scholarships Available for People of Color from Spirit Rock Mediation Center

Spirit Rock has scholarship support available for individuals coming from communities of color in their one-month and two-month retreats! This is a beautiful opportunity for deep practice, healing, and the arising of insight.

**Retreat Dates:**
February: January 30 - February 27, 2016 (28 nights)
March: February 27 - March 26, 2016 (28 nights)
Two-Month: January 30 - March 26, 2016 (56 nights)

If interested, call Lynn Stanton at 415-488-0164 x 247, or email her at retreats@spiritrock.org.

**Prerequisite:** You must have completed two previous silent 7-day Vipassana retreats led by Spirit Rock or IMS teachers, or the equivalent. You will need to provide the teachers' names, dates, location, length and style of the retreats when applying, along with a completed questionnaire.

Triangle Insight Morning Meditation Group

**Note:** No Meeting 12/10, 12/24, 12/28, 12/31

This early morning sitting group led by Ron Vereen meets Mondays and Thursdays from 7:00 - 7:45 AM. The group begins with silent, unguided practice, with Ron giving a guided heart practice during the last 10-15 minutes. There is no charge for participation, and donations are accepted. For more info contact Ron at ron@triangleinsight.org.

**Important note:** Only four parking spaces in the parking lot at the Episcopal Center are designated for our use at this hour and are clearly marked. Overflow parking can be found on the west side of Alexander Ave.

**Monday and Thursday Mornings**
Episcopal Center at Duke
505 Alexander Ave.
Durham, NC 27705
7:00 - 7:45 AM
Guest Lecture on Buddhism and Meditation with Jon Kabat-Zinn
Organized through Duke University's Buddhist Meditation Signature Course

**Wednesday, December 2nd, at Goodson Chapel in the new part of Duke Divinity School (across from Duke Chapel, west campus).**

* This event free and open to the public

**At the Confluence of Medicine, Science, and Universal Dharma: the Ethos, Ethics, and Praxis of Embodied Mindfulness and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**

- Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn: Founding Executive Director of the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, Healthcare, and Society at the University of Massachusetts Medical School, author of *Full Catastrophe Living*
- **Wed, December 2, 3:05-4:30 pm**
- Goodson Chapel, Duke Divinity School

**CONTACT**
Richard M. Jaffe
Associate Professor of Religious Studies
Member-Bass Society of Fellows (Duke)
Department of Religious Studies, Duke University
richard.jaffe@duke.edu
(O) 919-660-3502

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**Koru Mindfulness Teacher Certification Training**
Holly Rogers, MD, Libby Webb, LCSW, Jennie Dickson, LCSW

The Center for Koru Mindfulness offers a unique, evidence-based curriculum and teacher certification program that was specifically developed for teaching mindfulness, meditation and stress-management to college students and other young adults.

This training intensive is the first phase of the Koru Mindfulness teacher certification program. The training will lay the foundation for teaching the Koru Mindfulness curriculum, the first and only evidence-based mindfulness curriculum designed specifically for young adults. CE credits will be available for attendees. You must be accepted into the Koru Mindfulness teacher certification program to register for a training.
To apply for teacher certification please visit the Center for Koru Mindfulness website at www.korumindfulness.org

Tuition for Three Phase Teacher Certification Training is $1595.

January 21-23, 2016
MDC Center
307 West Main St.
Durham, NC 27701-3215

Mindfulness-Based Recovery Group
Victoria Shields, LCAS, MDiv, MEd
and Susan Orovitz, PhD, CGP

Therapists have training in Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction, chemical dependency treatment and group psychotherapy.

This group is designed to teach you Mindfulness-based Relapse Prevention Skills for those in recovery from Substance Use Disorders. In addition to experiential skills training, there will be time for working with other group members on Life Issues of any kind, such as: problematic relationships, identity, dysfunctional families of origin, assertiveness, abuse, codependency, depression, anxiety, parenting, grief, separation, stress, self-esteem, etc.

FREE ASSESSMENT INTERVIEW: To schedule an individual assessment appointment to determine appropriateness for participation in this group, please contact one of us.

Victoria Shields
ISA Counseling - Suite 117
1709 Legion Road
Chapel Hill, NC 27517
vshields@isacounseling.com
or 919-903-6167

Susan Orovitz
Changes By Choice
911 Broad Street
Durham, NC 27705
sussiego@me.com
or 919-416-4800 x3

Group Meetings at ISA Counseling, 1709 Legion Road, Chapel Hill, NC 7517 (conference room)

FEE: $50.00 per group meeting
TUESDAYS
7:00 - 8:30 PM
8 weeks
Group will begin when there are enough members to start.

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Tibetan Buddhism and the Modern World
an On-line Course through Coursera

This course introduces students to
(i) the history of Buddhist contemplative traditions in India and Tibet (meditation, yoga, mindfulness, visualization, etc.),
(ii) innovations in scientific research on understanding such contemplative practices,
(iii) recent adaptations of such practices in multiple professional and personal areas, and
(iv) the practices themselves through brief secular contemplative exercises.

The course will be co-taught by David Germano and Kurtis Schaeffer, both at the University of Virginia, and will include extensive contributions from scientists, people involved with integrating [meditation] in practice, and Tibetan Buddhist teachers.

NOTE: The course now in progress addresses Tibetan philosophy and practice relating to "the Lesser Vehicle" (Vipassana and Insight Meditation). Subsequent courses will address "the Greater Vehicle," the Adamantine (Diamond, or Tantra) Vehicle, and a "Natural Vehicle". This is a richly supported set of lectures with "Labs"—or practice videos guided by established teachers of various forms of meditation practice.

You can join through Coursera.org at any time; the course is self-paced and free without certification; there is a small fee and specified work load for certification.

August 30th - December 30th, 2015
For further description of course goals, and to register: https://www.coursera.org/course/meditation

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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

Kaliyana Mitta News

* Spiritual Friends Groups. In addition to current KM Affinity Groups, we are now forming Racial Affinity Groups. Please see the report in this newsletter for these developments. Committee: Jeanne van Gemert, Tom Howlett, Tamara Share and Sarah Tillis.

Organizing Against Racism Workshops

* Intensive, long-range preparation and outreach. See the announcement for more information and registration. In
Mindfulness Awareness Training
with Tamara Share, PhD

Tamara Share will be offering an ongoing group for developing skills in mindfulness awareness practices. The group will meet twice monthly, and is open to those 18 years of age and older. A pre-group consultation is required, and you may contact Tamara at 919-442-1118 for further information, and can access a flyer here. The cost is $45/session if pre-paid in 6 session blocks ($270), or $60 if paid per session (sliding scale available).

Tamara L. Share, PhD is a Counseling Psychologist with more than 20 years of training and experience in human development, group facilitation, and personal growth. Tamara's diverse background includes education/training in physics, psychology, wellness, philosophy, and complementary approaches to healthcare.

2nd and 4th Thursdays
HRC, Behavioral Health and Psychiatry
100 Europa Dr., Suite 260, Chapel Hill 27517
4:45 - 6:00 PM

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.

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.

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

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

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
7:30 - 8:45 PM
Chapel Hill Zen Center
5322 NC Hwy 86
Chapel Hill, NC 27516

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

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.

This email was sent to rlvereen@aol.com by info@triangleinsight.org | Update Profile/Email Address | Rapid removal with SafeUnsubscribe™ | About our service provider.