Insight Meditation Center of Pioneer Valley

Guiding Teacher: Rebecca Bradshaw
Administrative Director: Joyce Genet

Insight Meditation Center of Pioneer Valley is a non-residential community meditation center. We are dedicated to offering the Buddha’s teachings of liberation to all who are interested, and to cultivating compassion and wisdom in our daily lives.

InsightPV welcomes all people regardless of cultural or religious background, race, socioeconomic status, sexual orientation, gender identity, age, education, or ability. InsightPV continues its policy of welcoming all, no matter their financial situation.

Pre-registration is requested for all courses and retreats unless otherwise indicated. Registration will be evaluated one week prior to the start date of the course or retreat. If there are too few registrants, the offering may be cancelled at the discretion of the teacher. Cancellations will be posted on the website at least 2 days before the event. We will notify registrants via email and refund donations for offerings that are cancelled.

The suggested contributions for courses, retreats, and events help pay rent, phone, and administrative expenses, however, no one will be excluded for inability to donate. If the suggested contribution is beyond your means, please select the full scholarship option or give what you can by either choosing your own amount online, or giving at the door.

Teacher Donation (Dana): Teachers at the center are not paid by Insight Pioneer Valley for leading courses and retreats; we encourage you to make a contribution to the teacher equal to or greater than your contribution to the Center. In this way, you support the teacher’s livelihood and the Buddhist tradition of offering the teachings freely.

For more information and details on our offerings and teachers, please visit our website at:
www.InsightPV.org
Weekly Open Sittings
Mondays, 5:30 - 6:15pm, discussion until 6:45pm
Fridays, 5:45-6:30pm, unguided, for experienced students
Sit with other sangha members in a relaxed atmosphere. On Mondays, the 45-minute silent meditation period is followed by an optional facilitated discussion time.

Morning Open Sitting
Thursdays, 7:45 - 8:30am

Sittings & Groups
Sittings and groups are appropriate for all levels unless otherwise noted. There is no set fee, but an opportunity to contribute to InsightPV. Please see www.InsightPV.org for additional information.

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POM Practice & Community Group
Second & Fourth Wednesdays, 5:15 - 6:30pm
(no meeting on December 25)
A twice-monthly Insight meditation practice, discussion and community group for POM practitioners. All who identify as POM (Person of Color) are welcome! For more information contact Theresa Vincent, theresa.v.holyoke@gmail.com, 413-539-7964.

Queer & Trans Sitting
First Thursdays, 7:15 - 8:45pm
Jul 4, Aug 1, Sep 5, Oct 3, Nov 7, Dec 5
Come and enjoy an evening of mindfulness and sharing with other queer and trans people. We usually meditate for about 30 minutes, and then have a kind and confidential sharing circle. Friends/partners/allies welcome.

Young Adult Sitting
Third Thursdays, 7:15 - 8:45 pm
Jul 18, Aug 15, Sep 19, Oct 17, Nov 21, Dec 19
Come join us for a night of sharing and meditation for young adults. After a brief check in, we meditate for about 30 minutes, and then have discussion. We strive to be real, honest, open, vulnerable, inclusive, and kind in a safe space. Any sharing is optional. See the Facebook Page “Pioneer Valley Young Adult Sangha” for more information.

Family Gatherings
Second Sundays, 1:00 - 3:00pm
Please check the website for the next offering
There will be a time for parents and children to cultivate mindfulness with meditations, songs, stories, activities, and crafts. Some gatherings will be parent-led, others will be teacher-led. There’s no age restriction.

Refuge Recovery Group
Fridays, 7:00 - 8:00pm
Refuge Recovery is a community using the practices of Mindfulness, Compassion, Forgiveness and Generosity to heal the pain and suffering that addiction has caused in their lives and/or the lives of loved ones. No meditation experience required.

Wednesday Evening Dharma Talks
7:00 Sitting / 7:35 Talk
In the interest of encouraging generous support for our teachers and meeting InsightPV’s expenses, there is a suggested donation of $7-25 for the evening, which will be split 60% for the teacher and 40% for InsightPV.

As always, this donation is voluntary and is a personal decision. Please know that accessibility is very important to us; everyone is welcome at all of our events regardless of ability to donate.

In the interest of encouraging generous support for our teachers and meeting InsightPV’s expenses, there is a suggested donation of $7-25 for the evening, which will be split 60% for the teacher and 40% for InsightPV.

As always, this donation is voluntary and is a personal decision. Please know that accessibility is very important to us; everyone is welcome at all of our events regardless of ability to donate.

July
3 Harrison Blum: Dharma Burns, Discipline, & Devotion
10 An Evening with Manny Mansbach
17 Rebecca Bradshaw: Vipaninama Dukkha or How to Deal With Suffering Due to Change
24 Kim Weeber: A Practice Deep and Wide
31 Xtionk Rebellion: Engaged Buddhist Perspective on the Ecological Emergency

August
7 Candace Cassin
14 Rebecca Bradshaw
21 Adi Bemak
28 Manny Mansbach

September
4 Rebecca Bradshaw
11 Candace Cassin
18 Dawn Scott
25 Jean Esther

October
2 Transition Celebration
9 Michael Grady
16 Rebecca Bradshaw
23 Jean Esther
30 Devin Berry

November
6 Peggy Gillespie
13 Kim Weeber
20 Jean Esther
27 Candace Cassin

December
4 Tara Mulay
11 Rebecca Bradshaw
18 Kim Weeber
25 No Dharma Talk or sitting

This schedule is subject to change. Please check InsightPV.org for up-to-date listings.
begun a sitting practice. In continuing to practice, open to all those who have already discussions on what experiences and reflections have served us together will consist of silent sitting meditations and can get in the way of practicing despite our valuing it. Our time workshop, we will explore together what has motivated us to not all that surprising that our sitting practice can slip away and require our time, energy, and attention. Given this reality, it’s so many daily activities and long to-do lists that contain the seeds of transformation. This retreat is appropriate for all levels of experience.

**Course**

**Beginners/Beginners Mind Meditation**
Kim Weeber
6 Sundays; September 8 - October 13; 10:00am-12:00pm
Suggested contribution: $48-120 registration + teacher donation

This six-week class will offer an overview of the Buddha’s teachings on meditation and mindfulness in daily life. We will practice concentration, mindfulness, loving kindness, and body meditations. Suitable for beginners and those who wish to “begin again.”

**Course**

**Taking Refuge**
Candace Cassin
4 Tuesdays, September 10 - October 1; 4:00-5:45pm
Suggested contribution: $32-80 registration + teacher donation

It is a classical practice in Buddhism to take refuge in the Buddha, the dharma, and the sangha. What does this mean? Thich Nhat Hahn has sometimes reworded it as “There is home. There is a way home. There are companions on the way home.” In this class, we will look at the refuges more deeply, including our capacity to awaken, the teachings as a guide, opening to things as they are, and the importance of community and spiritual friends. We all need refuge. We will look at our desire for true refuge in this unpredictable life, consider with compassion some of the habits that may provide false refuge along the path, and explore practical ways to “come home.”

**Course**

**Exploring Aging as Our Teacher**
Candace Cassin
4 Thursdays, September 12 - October 3; 10:15am-12:00pm
Suggested contribution: $32-80 registration + teacher donation

Aging often brings the realities of change, impermanence, vulnerability, and mortality closer to home. Opening to the truth of our experience can also bring unique opportunities to deepen wisdom, compassion, courage, and freedom. In this class we will explore the invitations that arise with aging, and draw on the teachings of the Buddha to guide and support us as we journey. If there is interest, this group could continue in some way as a “silver sangha.”

**Course**

**Buddhist Heart Practices for Climate and Social Justice Activists**
Rebecca Bradshaw
3 Tuesdays, October 1 - 15; 7:00-8:45pm
Suggested contribution: $24-60 registration + teacher donation

How do we keep our hearts open when we care so much in dire circumstances that are emotionally challenging, ongoing, and discouraging? The Buddhist practice of love consists of four qualities that support and nurture each other: loving kindness, compassion, appreciative joy, and equanimity. Together these practices teach us to care in a joyful and balanced manner, and help us engage in activism in a manner that is sustainable over the long run. In this class we will learn the formal practices and support each other in integrating them into our work in climate and social justice activism. Open to all those who care about the climate and social justice issues, whatever your level of activism.

**October 2019**

**Half-day workshop**

**Why Sit and Do Nothing?**
Michael Grady
Saturday, October 5; 9:00am-12:30pm
Suggested contribution: $15-30 registration + teacher donation

There are so many daily activities and long to-do lists that require our time, energy, and attention. Given this reality, it’s not all that surprising that our sitting practice can slip away and get lost in the middle of all of these demands. In this half-day workshop, we will explore together what has motivated us to maintain a sitting practice and what challenges that arise that can get in the way of practicing despite our valuing it. Our time together will consist of silent sitting meditations and discussions on what experiences and reflections have served us in continuing to practice. Open to all those who have already begun a sitting practice.

**One-day retreat**

**Tending the Undefended Heart**
Manny Mansbach
Saturday, October 19; 10:00am-4:30pm ~ Suggested contribution: $25-50 registration + teacher donation

Much of our life force goes into protecting ourselves from real or perceived danger, bracing ourselves against the winds of life, trying to look acceptable to ourselves and in the eyes of others. To do so we develop the habit of covering over our hearts with protective gear. Some of this is due to our biological wiring, and is also necessary, especially when we haven’t had the resources or support to safely navigate things like family dysfunction, atmospheres of harsh judgment, competitive schools and workplaces, and the poisonous landscape of contemporary partisan politics. All this can make it difficult to arrive with openness in the present moment.

Alternatively, we can undertake with others a meditation practice that establishes an atmosphere of safety and kindness in which we cultivate an undefended heart, listening more carefully to the undercurrents of our being, the subtle impressions in the body and the longings of our hearts. To cultivate the undefended heart is to devote ourselves to being deeply present for our experience and to relax our defensive grip, discovering a greater intimacy with ourselves, others, and all things. Instead of feeling bewildered and crushed by the challenges of our lives, as we find a way to rest peacefully in the middle of things, our wholeness can be revealed.
The two main streams that comprise the Insight Meditation tradition as it is currently practiced in the U.S. came from Thailand and what is now known as Myanmar. Ajahn Chah (1918-1992), one of the most respected and influential teachers in the Thai Forest tradition, was teacher to many western monastic and lay teachers alike. Jack Kornfield has spoken over the years about the strengths and awakened qualities of his various Asian teachers, but he consistently ends these talks by paying homage to Ajahn Chah as the wisest. This course is an opportunity to delve into the extraordinary life and teachings of this Master. For both beginning and experienced students.

Course

Easier Meditation through Neuroscience
Kim Weeber
5 Sundays, October 20 - November 17; 10:00am-12:00pm
Suggested contribution: $40-100 registration + teacher donation
Combining modern neuroscience to understand our brain, and the Buddha’s teachings to work with our mind, we can meditate more easily. We will draw from the work of John Yates, PhD (Guladasa) in The Mind Illuminated, as well as Rick Hanson, PhD. Their techniques include using positive reinforcement to train ourselves to be more kind, mindful and to stabilize our attention. Learn to practice without fighting your mind’s natural tendencies! Suitable for beginners and experienced students.

Course

Freedom From a Fear-Based Life
Michael Grady
4 Tuesdays, October 22 - November 19; 7:00-8:30pm
Suggested contribution: $32-80 registration + teacher donation
In this class, we will explore ways to free our hearts and minds from the limitations of our lives burdened by fear, anxiety, and self-doubt. We will apply specific mindfulness and Insight meditation practices that I have discovered to be particularly useful in my own journey in working with various expressions of fear. Emphasis will be on taking these practices each week into daily life. Each class will include a sitting meditation, a talk, and ample space for discussion. The class is open to new and experienced meditators.

Course

Getting Out of Your Head
Mark Hart
Saturday, November 9; 9:00am-12:30pm
Suggested contribution: $15-30 registration + teacher donation
In this half-day retreat we’ll explore some approaches for stepping out of a mind stuck in thoughts that go beyond the usual “go back to the breath when you notice it” instructions. Students will get a sense of how to shift their energy and to recognize the Silence that they already are.

Course

The Seven Factors of Awakening
Devin Berry and Tara Mulay
4 Mondays, November 18 - December 9; 7:15-8:45pm
Suggested contribution: $32-80 registration + teacher donation
In this four-part class, we will explore how the seven factors of awakening (the bojjhanga, in Pali) manifest in our daily life practice and during intensive practice periods. The seven factors of awakening are mindfulness, investigation, energy, rapture (enrapt attention/joy), tranquility, concentration, and equanimity. These are the wholesome factors of mind that set in motion the unfolding of insight, culminating in the release from grasping and stress. This class is appropriate for all levels of experience.

One-day retreat

What is Really Happening?
Exploring How the Five Aggregates Shape Our Experience of the World
Kim Weeber
Saturday, November 23; 9:30am-4:30pm
Suggested contribution: $25-50 registration + teacher donation
When we understand how we fundamentally experience and react to the world, we can reduce our suffering and live more easily in alignment with life. The Buddha taught that all of our mental and physical experiences come through the aggregates - form, feeling tones, perception, mental fabrication and consciousness. The aggregates can also be seen as aspects of our experience which we tend to identify with. We will practice looking through each of these lenses of our experience in order to understand them. The day will include instruction, meditation, and group sharing (optional). Please come and explore this interesting topic. Beginners and experienced students are welcome.

One-day retreat

Kindling the Light of Awareness: An Insight Dialogue Retreat
Janet Surrey and Florence Meleo-Meyer
Saturday, December 7; 9:30am-4:30pm
Suggested contribution: $25-50 registration + teacher donation
In this season of diminishing daylight, we cultivate and celebrate the light of awareness as we turn toward the darkness of night and winter. The words “make of yourself a light” are said to be the Buddha’s last words. In this daylong retreat, we will introduce the engaged co-meditation practice of Insight Dialogue and explore the flow and rhythms of practicing alone in silent practice and together in contemplative relational practice. We will explore the power of cultivating mindfulness, concentration and loving kindness in relationship and the depth and brightness of illumination when “two or more are gathered” with the shared aspiration of awakening. There will be periods of silent practice, Insight Dialogue, and mindful movement.

One-day retreat

Winter Solstice Retreat
Jesse Maceo Vega-Frey
Saturday, December 21; 9:30am-4:30pm
Suggested contribution: $25-50 registration + teacher donation
Join us for a day of contemplation and silent fellowship as we settle below the hustle and bustle and find nourishment in the stillness at the heart of the season.

Afternoon retreat

New Year’s Day Retreat: Nourishing the Heart with Meditation and Spiritual Friends
Rebecca Bradshaw
Wednesday, January 1, 2020; 2:00-6:00pm
Suggested contribution: $15-30 registration + teacher donation
Given the stresses of our individual lives and our societal struggles at this time, it is important to take time for rejuvenation. In this half-day retreat we will start the year with meditation and community sharing, exploring what nourishes and strengthens our heart. The afternoon will end with a community potluck. Feel free to bring friends and family.

Community is not a goal to be achieved but a gift to be received.

~ Parker Palmer