

# Common Ground Meditation Center

Practicing together in the footsteps of the Buddha.

March – May 2010



## Introduction to Mindfulness Meditation

Mindfulness meditation leads to insight into the nature of our hearts and minds, revealing an inherent clarity, openness, and ease. This course includes an introduction to the intention behind practice, an introduction to insight (vipassana) meditation techniques, instructions for working with common obstacles, an overview of the practices of lovingkindness, and a discussion of how mindfulness can be part of one's daily life. Please register by contacting the center.

**Intro Class with Mark Nunberg,**  
Six Tuesdays, March 16 – April 20,  
7:30 – 9:00 p.m. or

**Intro Workshop with Gail Iverson, Sunday,**  
May 9, 1:30 – 5:00 p.m.

## Ongoing Programs

### Open Meditation Sessions

Open meditation is available on a drop-in basis for anyone wishing to practice silent sitting or walking meditation. Stay for as many 30-minute periods as you would like. Please arrive and depart with the bells, which are rung every half hour.

Monday – Saturday 7:00 – 9:00 a.m.

Sunday, 8:00 – 10:00 a.m.

Tuesday, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

### Weekly Practice Groups

Common Ground offers drop-in practice groups three times a week: Wednesday and Sunday evenings and Sunday morning. These weekly groups are designed to be a cornerstone for one's practice by providing ongoing instruction and teachings that help illuminate the simple but challenging practice of mindfulness. Both experienced and beginning meditators are welcome. Led by Mark Nunberg and guest teachers.

Wednesdays, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Sundays, 10:30 – 11:40 a.m.

Sundays, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

### Sunday Morning Children's Practice

10:30 – 11:40 a.m.

Please join us for this weekly drop-in opportunity for children, led by community volunteers. The practice for children ages 1 through 8

years is held in the community room during Sunday Morning Weekly Practice Group. Contact Kate Needleman at [okneedleman@gmail.com](mailto:okneedleman@gmail.com), for more information.

### Pre-Teen Practice

Feb. 28, March 28, April 25, May 30;  
10:30 – 11:45 a.m.

For children 9 to 13. Please contact Linda Breitag ([LBreitag@gmail.com](mailto:LBreitag@gmail.com)) for more information.

### Teen Practice

Please contact the center for information about programs for teenagers 14 through 19.

### Metta Practice Group

This practice group is for people interested in developing the heart by training in the four beautiful emotions of lovingkindness (metta), compassion, empathetic joy, and equanimity. Each session includes instruction, a guided meditation, a short dharma talk, and time for questions and discussion. This monthly drop-in group meets on the first Friday of each month. Led by Mark Nunberg

Fridays, March 5, April 2, May 7;  
7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

### Practice Meetings

People interested in meeting with Mark Nunberg to discuss their practice can call to set up an appointment. These practice meetings are usually scheduled for 30 minutes and are available to people with specific questions about their meditation practice or for people who are interested in deepening their practice through regular meetings with a spiritual friend.

### Quarterly Community Gathering

Please join us for this wonderful opportunity to meet the community that practices at Common Ground and recommit to living a life dedicated to kindness, generosity, and the awakening of wisdom and compassion. Mark Nunberg will give a dharma talk, then the community will recite the Refuges and Precepts. A potluck will begin at 11:45 a.m. The Sunday Morning Children's Program will be held as regularly scheduled, as will the open sitting time from 8:00 to 10:00 a.m. No registration necessary.  
Sunday, March 21, 10:30 – 11:40 a.m.

Dear Common Ground Friends:

Anxiety, fear, irritation, and other forms of aversion are often regular visitors to our minds, and yet we aspire to live free from the weight of these afflictive states. How does one go beyond these persistent and heavy habits of mind? The Buddha pointed to an awakening process where seeing clearly the way things are leads to a transformation of one's views. This change in view removes what is distorting, allowing for more clarity, more appropriate responses, and an even deeper transformation of one's view or way of relating. This process continues until one's way of relating to the moment is free of anything extra or unnecessary.

The Buddha states, "I see nothing in this world that is to be lost; therefore my heart dwells in goodwill and kindness..." In our busy lives we reflexively identify and react to experiences as they arise. When the mind quiets down and yet remains interested in things as they are, we will notice that our reactivity is born from a sense of ownership or identification. For example, fear and hatred are seen arising in dependence on a particular view of a permanent self aggrieved by the circumstances of the moment.

Daily meditation and regular retreat practice supports the heart's natural capacity to see clearly. As this capacity is strengthened, everything in life begins to change for us. Even though the outer circumstances may or may not have changed, our lived experience is transformed as the mind relates with more and more wisdom and compassion – a spacious engagement with our lives that is both nimble and appropriate.

Wishing us all a peaceful spring,  
Mark Nunberg

## Courses

Please contact the center to register.

### **Buddhist Studies Program: Mindfulness of Feelings**

The Buddhist Studies Program is designed for people who have attended three or more mindfulness meditation retreats and have a commitment to daily meditation practice. This class will examine the Buddha's teachings on mindfulness of feeling as a strategy that develops insight. A direct, moment-to-moment knowing of the experience of feeling (pleasantness, unpleasantness, and neutrality) is often obscured by the mind's reactivity. In this class we will explore the possibility of relating to unpleasant experience with non-aversion, pleasant experience with non-greed, and neutral experience with non-delusion. Participants will be expected to use the teachings as a focus of their meditation and daily practice. Led by Mark Nunberg.

Seven Mondays, March 15 – April 26,  
7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Optional sitting period, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

### **Healing in the Present Moment: Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction**

This eight-week program is an introduction to mindfulness meditation practice following the stress reduction program pioneered by Jon Kabat-Zinn PhD over thirty years ago. Since then, scientific research has shown that this program provides benefits in a multitude of physical and psychological conditions, including chronic pain, anxiety, high blood pressure, and sleep disorders.

Participants will learn and practice mindfulness meditation techniques, including body scan, sitting and walking meditation, gentle yoga, and qigong. Sessions will include formal meditation practice and large and small group discussions. Participants are encouraged to spend 30 minutes per day on daily mindfulness practices. The course is appropriate for people seeking to use mindfulness meditation techniques to improve their general health and well-being. It is open to those willing to commit to the eight-week course and a daily practice.

Debbie Norgaard has over 25 years experience in the healthcare field as an RN/Nurse Practitioner and is certified as a Healing Touch and Shiatsu practitioner. Her formal meditation practice began 11 years ago. In addition to formal retreat practice, she has completed the seven-day MBSR professional training program with Jon Kabat-Zinn and Saki Santorelli.

Eight Thursdays, April 1 – May 20,  
6:30 – 9:00 p.m. Day long retreat:

Saturday, May 8, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

## Workshops

Please contact the center to register.

### **Living the Practice: The Skillful Use of Ritual and Form**

In this workshop we will explore the necessity of using rituals and forms to support our deepest intentions. As we reflect on the obstacles that arise in our lives, many are simply the manifestation of forgetting what we know to be true, and therefore acting in ways that are not in alignment with our deepest values. Ritual and form cannot be avoided. They are primary tools in the skillful remembering of what is of real value. In this workshop we will take the time to recognize and appreciate the forms and rituals that are already active and supportive in our lives. We will also reflect on how we can consciously participate in the creative development and refinement of ritual and form in our lives. This workshop will include talks and discussions, time for guided reflection, small group sharing, and meditation periods. The lunch break will allow for informal discussions and social time. Led by Mark Nunberg.

Saturday, March 13, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.

### **Workshop with Rita Gross**

Teacher Rita Gross is an internationally known feminist scholar-practitioner, a senior teacher in Jetsun Khandro Rinpoche's meditation center, Lotus Garden, and a senior teacher of Shambhala Buddhism. She is professor emerita of comparative studies in religion at UW, Eau Claire.

Saturday, May 15, 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

### **Mindfulness and Physical Pain**

Mindfulness meditation can help practitioners understand the complex nature of pain and provide tools to reduce the suffering associated with it.

This half-day workshop will include guided meditation, lectures, and group discussions. It is open to everyone, but may be especially useful for people experiencing physical pain and those (professional and otherwise) who help people in pain. Led by Gail Iverson and Ramesh Sairam.

Saturday, May 29, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

### **Mindfulness in the Twelve-Steps**

#### **Weekly Practice Group**

This ongoing program is for those seeking spiritual development by practicing the principles of the Twelve Steps and the Buddha's teachings in everyday life. This ongoing practice group meets the second, third, and fourth Friday of each month and is open to all who have an interest in mindfulness and the Twelve Steps. Led by Craig V. and guest teachers Patti S. and Tom J.

Fridays, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m. except the first Friday of each month.

### **Twelve-Step Recovery and Mindfulness Meditation Retreat**

This retreat is an opportunity for Twelve-Step people to come together and experience half a day of quiet meditation. No previous meditation retreat experience necessary. Led by Craig V.

Saturday, April 17, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

### **Meditation Retreats**

Retreating from the distractions of daily life is an essential part of the path of awakening. Please join us for these important opportunities to deepen mindfulness. Those who are new to meditation should attend the intro class or several weekly practice groups before their first retreat.

## Spring 2010 Retreats

### **To register**

for Common Ground retreats, call or email the center:

(612) 722-8260, [info@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:info@commongroundmeditation.org),  
Or drop in and sign up.

### **Half-Day Retreats with Mark Nunberg**

Saturday, March 6, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

Saturday, April 10, 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

Saturday, May 1, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

### **Daylong Retreats with Mark Nunberg:**

Saturday, March 27, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

#### **with Santikaro:**

Saturday, June 5, 9:00 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

### **To register**

for the following retreats, see info below descriptions.

### **Residential Retreat at Holy Spirit Retreat Center with Mark Nunberg**

Thursday, April 22 at 5 p.m. to Sunday, April 25 at noon; for info or to register:

[retreats@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:retreats@commongroundmeditation.org).

Registration begins February 22.

### **TCVC Residential Retreat with Steve and Kamala**

Friday, June 4 – Sunday, June 13. Visit

[www.tcvc.info](http://www.tcvc.info) for more information.



## Monthly Evening Dharma

This drop-in program is an opportunity to hear guest teachers and experienced community members speak about their practice.

### with James Baraz: *Awakening Joy*

James Baraz has been teaching meditation since 1978 and the *Awakening Joy* course ([www.awakeningjoy.info](http://www.awakeningjoy.info)) since 2003. He is a founding teacher of Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, California and leads retreats, workshops, and classes. James is a co-author of *Awakening Joy*.

Wednesday, March 3, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

### with Mingyur Rinpoche:

Yongey Mingyur Rinpoche is among the new generation of Tibetan Buddhist masters. With a rare ability to present the ancient wisdom of Tibet in a fresh, engaging manner, Rinpoche's profound teachings and playful sense of humor have endeared him to students around the world. His first book, *The Joy of Living: Unlocking the Secret and Science of Happiness*, debuted on the New York Times bestseller list and has been translated into over twenty languages. Rinpoche currently teaches throughout the world, with centers on four continents. His most recent books are *Joyful Wisdom: Embracing Change and Finding Freedom* and an illustrated children's book entitled *Ziji: The Puppy that Learned to Meditate*.

Saturday, May 22, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

## Yoga and Qigong

### Mindful Yoga Weekly Drop-In Practice

This series is open to adults of all ages, including those with little or no background in yoga. This class will introduce a basic sequence of yoga poses, emphasizing mindfulness of breathing and sensation.

Wednesdays, 5:30 – 6:45 p.m. and Fridays, 9:30 – 10:45 a.m. No registration, just come.

### Yoga Nidra Workshops

Yoga Nidra is the state where the mind and body are awake and alert but relaxed to the level of deep sleep. These workshops include instruction and explanation of Yoga Nidra, a short practice of yoga poses, then 45 minutes of lying on the floor and being guided into deep relaxation and Yoga Nidra. Please bring 3 blankets and a yoga mat.

Sundays, March 7, March 21, April 4, May 2, May 16; 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. Attend one or all: please contact the center to register.

### Yoga Asana Workshops

In these workshops, we learn the asanas practiced during our weekly Mindful Yoga class. We will learn and practice pranayama (breathing) techniques and end with a long relaxation.

Sundays, March 28, April 25, May 30; 2:00 – 5:00 p.m. Attend one or all: please contact the center to register.

All yoga is led by Nancy Boler, who was certified in 2000 at the Kripalu Center for Yoga in Lenox, Massachusetts.

### Drop-in Qigong

Qigong is a deeply satisfying healing practice that integrates mindful awareness, breath, and movement. Led by Mark Nunberg and Merra Young.

Wednesdays, 9:05 – 10:05 a.m., ongoing

## Community Practice Groups

### Full Moon Peace Walks

Includes chanting, a mindful outdoor walk, and sitting meditation. Weather permitting, the walking and sitting take place outdoors, so dress appropriately. No registration necessary.

Tuesday March 30, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Thursday April 29, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Thursday May 27, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

### Dharma Friends

Dharma Friends is a drop-in, practice/social group for young adult practitioners ("20-30 somethings") in the Common Ground community. We meet at the Groundswell Coffee Shop on the corner of Thomas and Hamline in St. Paul (1342 Thomas Ave).

For more information, contact [dharmafriendstc@gmail.com](mailto:dharmafriendstc@gmail.com).

Third Saturday of the month, 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

### Chant and Song: An Evening of Sound and Silence

Come join voices as we create the space for opening to joy, compassion, lovingkindness, and equanimity. This guided session of chanting and singing is open to all – no musical experience required. Tea and social time follows. Led by Scott Jensen and Robin Blake.

Last Saturday of the month: March 27, April 24, May 29, 7:00 – 8:15 p.m.

### Mindfulness for Educators

The group is for anyone who is committed to mindfulness practice and is currently teaching in a public or private school or educational organization, or providing one-on-one private instruction. Contact Paul Sackaroff at [paulsackaroff@hotmail.com](mailto:paulsackaroff@hotmail.com) or Robb Reed at [2bRobb@gmail.com](mailto:2bRobb@gmail.com)

Second Saturday of the month at 3:30 p.m.

### Engaged Mindfulness

This monthly practice group explores the interaction of mindfulness with community service, social justice, environmental work, politics and activism. New participants and ideas welcome. For more information, or to be added to the group's email list, please contact Leigh Rosenberg at [larosenberg@gmail.com](mailto:larosenberg@gmail.com). Meetings are at River's Way Meditation Center in the Ivy Arts Building, 2637 27th Ave S, Suite 201.

Sundays, February 28, March 28, April 25, May 23; 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.

## Supporting Common Ground



**All programs are offered free of charge in the spirit of generosity.** This offering is possible because of the generosity of people like you who wish to support the continuation of the center.

Mindful giving and receiving frees the heart of clinging. Please join us in the practice of generosity, which leads to both joy and wisdom. Because each person's circumstances are different, we do not provide suggested donations or constant reminders to give. The center, however, is completely dependent on your gifts.

**Your contributions pay for all the center's expenses**, provide Mark's livelihood, support our teachers, maintain the center's building, and pay the mortgage and our administrative staff.

### How to donate:

- You may leave financial donations in the dana bowl at the center or mail your gift to 2700 E. 26th St. Mpls, 55406.
- To make a gift online, visit: [www.common-groundmeditation.org](http://www.common-groundmeditation.org) and click on Supporting Common Ground.
- If it is convenient for you to schedule electronic deductions on a regular basis, it helps simplify the center's bookkeeping. You can either schedule regular deductions from a credit card at [www.NetworkforGood.org](http://www.NetworkforGood.org) (search for Common Ground Meditation Center). Or you can contact your bank for instructions on setting up electronic payments from your account, then get the center's account information from Debbie at [Debbie@common-groundmeditation.org](mailto:Debbie@common-groundmeditation.org).

**Volunteers** do many of the center's day-to-day tasks. Please email [debbie@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:debbie@commongroundmeditation.org) if you have time and skills that you would like to contribute.

The generosity of your practice and financial support make this center a great resource for us all.

**Please keep in mind that all cash contributions to Common Ground are tax deductible.**

## Common Ground Leaders and Volunteers

**Guiding Teacher:** Mark Nunberg

**Office Manager:** Debbie Norgaard

### Board of Directors

Board Chair: Gail Iverson; Treasurer: Kay Christianson; Secretary: Wynn Fricke; Director: Jean Choe; Guiding Teacher: Mark Nunberg

### Advisory Board

Steve Armstrong, James Baraz, Joseph Goldstein, Kamala Masters

### Program Teachers

Gail Iverson, Craig Vollmar, Merrra Young, Nancy Boler, Debbie Norgaard

### Community Group Facilitators

Adrian Strinmoen, Sue Magee, Dick Jones, Steve Burt, Melis Arik, Marta Fahrenz, John Russell, Kate & Corey Needleman, MaryAnn & Hans deRuiter, Julie Corty, Kathleen Zuckerman, Cole Kampen, Jimmy Schnobrich, Ramesh Sairam, Merrra Young, Kyoko Katayama, Elena Walker, Jan and Mark Young, Robb Reed, Paul Sackarof, Becca Thielen, Jen Alexander, Scott Jensen, Kari Binning, Josh Allard, Dennis Gilsdorf, Robin Blake, Linda Breitag, Matt Buzzard, Nancy Nair

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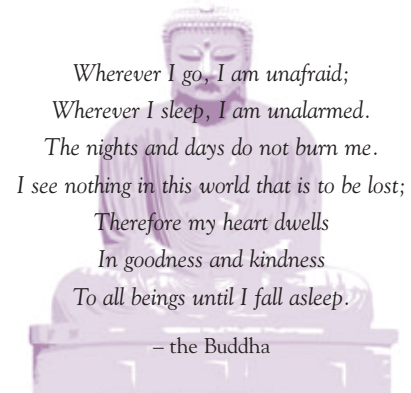
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**Webmasters:** David Skarjune, Jill Meyer, Scott Jensen, CJ Hordynski

## Statement of Purpose

Common Ground is a community meditation center dedicated to the practice of mindfulness. Mindfulness is the practice of being present with the moment and learning to be at ease with the unfolding conditions of life. With practice, mindfulness reveals deep wisdom, compassion, and freedom. Common Ground is an independent center founded on the teachings of the Buddha. This center follows in the spirit of Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts, and Spirit Rock Meditation Center in Woodacre, California and is part of the greater insight meditation, or vipassana, community in the West. Common Ground welcomes skillful means from all Buddhist traditions as well as other spiritual traditions dedicated to wisdom and compassion.



*Wherever I go, I am unafraid;  
Wherever I sleep, I am unalarmed.  
The nights and days do not burn me.  
I see nothing in this world that is to be lost;  
Therefore my heart dwells  
In goodness and kindness  
To all beings until I fall asleep.  
— the Buddha*

For more info: (612) 722-8260 • email: [info@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:info@commongroundmeditation.org) • [www.commongroundmeditation.org](http://www.commongroundmeditation.org)

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