

# Common Ground Meditation Center

Practicing together in the footsteps of the Buddha

January – April 2012



## 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 exploration of 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, January 17 – February 21, 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.**  
**Intro Workshop with Gail Iverson, Sunday, February 12, 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 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. The Buddha taught that mindfulness is the way to go beyond habits of distraction and grasping. To walk this path of wisdom and compassion, we need the support of a community that shares this intention. Each session includes a guided meditation, dharma talk, and discussion. Both experienced and beginning meditators are welcome. No registration required. Led by Mark Nunberg.

**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 opportunity for children led by community volunteers most Sundays during Sunday morning weekly practice group. Please email [childrenleaders@common-groundmeditation.org](mailto:childrenleaders@common-groundmeditation.org) for more information and schedule.

## Pre-Teen Practice

The pre-teen group is for children 8-12 years who want to explore Buddhism, mindfulness, and compassion for self and others. The practice is held during Sunday morning weekly practice group. For more information and to register contact Debra at [preteen@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:preteen@commongroundmeditation.org).

## Teen Practice

You are not alone! Join others your age who are interested in learning how to be more mindful in daily life, relate to difficult emotions, and show up in a good way for your friends, family and others you care about. We will practice together, learn together, and have fun! If you are interested or at least curious, contact [shelly@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:shelly@commongroundmeditation.org).

**Sundays, January 8 – March 25, 10:30 – 11:40 a.m.**

## 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. This monthly group meets on the first Friday of each month. No registration required. Led by Mark Nunberg.

**Fridays, January 6, February 3, March 2, April 6; 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.

Dear Friends:

Living a skillful and happy life depends on what we pay attention to and how we pay attention. The Buddha tells us that by regularly giving careless and unwise attention to afflictive mind states, we cause them to re-arise and increase. These obsessive patterns are a waste of time and a cause of stress and suffering. When we are angry at someone, for instance, we may habitually bring to mind the exact thoughts or memories that trigger the anger. We then relate to those thoughts with a strong identification: "This happened to me!" It feels personal and important, so the mind repeats this stressful pattern again and again. The Buddha encourages us instead to bring wise attention to those aspects of the present moment that diminish the stressful pattern. This pragmatic approach leads to the mind's release.

It is possible to weaken afflictive states of mind by mindfully observing the stressful consequences that inevitably follow when the mind is caught up or fixated. Clear seeing weakens unskillful habits. Learning what to pay attention to, and with what attitude, depends on mindfully tracking one's mental experience. Otherwise, the strength of our habits will make these choices for us. Buddhist practice is about respecting the central importance of wise attention. Most people understand the ethical implications of killing and stealing. In a more subtle way, we must also understand the ethical implications of our mental activity. The Buddha's teachings point to a profound freedom arising from careful and continuous mindful attention to what the mind is doing.

Wishing us all a peaceful New Year,

Mark Nunberg

## 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 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 25, 10:30 – 11:45 a.m.**

## Courses

Please contact the center to register.

### **Buddhist Studies Program:**

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. Participants will be expected to use the teachings as a focus of their meditation and daily practice. Led by Mark Nunberg. Please contact the center to register.

### *The Five Spiritual Faculties*

This course examines the Buddha's teachings on the five spiritual faculties: confidence or faith, energy, mindfulness, concentration, and wisdom. It is the development and balancing of these five faculties that provide the force that moves the mind from faith to wisdom and release.

**Eight Mondays, January 9 – February 27,  
7:30 – 9:00 p.m.**  
Optional sitting period, 7:00 – 7:30 p.m.

### *The Five Hindrances*

This course examines the Buddha's teachings on the five hindrances to mental unification: craving, aversion, dullness, restlessness, and doubt. These afflictive states of mind are often regular visitors for meditators. Developing patience and the skill to recognize, abandon, and prevent these states goes to the heart of the practice of meditation and skillful living.

**Seven Mondays, March 12 – April 23,  
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. Participants will learn and practice mindfulness meditation techniques, including body scan, sitting and walking meditation, gentle yoga, and qigong.

**Eight Thursdays, March 22 – May 10,  
9:30 a.m. – 12:00 p.m. Day long retreat:  
Saturday, April 28, 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m.**

Led by Debbie Norgaard, who has over 25 years experience 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.

## Workshops

Please contact the center to register.

### **With Mark Nunberg: Living the Practice**

These workshops include talks, guided meditations, guided reflections, and large and small group discussions designed to open up our understanding about the essential art of awakening wisdom and compassion in our lives. Mark is the guiding teacher at Common Ground.

### *Relating Wisely to Money, Livelihood, and Worldly Success*

In this workshop we will reflect on one of life's greatest teachers, our relationship to money, livelihood, and success. So much of our sense of self is tied up here. By bringing in the light of awareness, unskillful attitudes and habits become transformed.  
**Saturday, January 14, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

### *Liberation through Love and Compassion*

Although we often talk about the spiritual life in terms of the development of wisdom, it can also be described as a path of deepening love or compassion. In this workshop we will reflect on how love can be the catalyst for awakening, both the means and the fruit of the spiritual life.

**Saturday, April 14, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

### **With Craig Vollmar: Healing through Forgiveness**

The practice of forgiveness is a key to open our hearts to authentic happiness. The goal of this workshop is to help us use the wisdom of our experience and practice to work through difficult emotions. Craig Vollmar is a founding board member of Common Ground and leader in the Twelve Step group.  
**Saturday, January 28, 1:00 – 4:30 p.m.**

### **With Gail Iverson and Ramesh Sairam: 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. Gail Iverson has been practicing mindfulness meditation since 1987 and currently serves as Chair of the Board of Directors at Common Ground. Ramesh Sairam is a practicing psychiatrist in St. Paul

who has been practicing mindfulness meditation at Common Ground Meditation Center for five years.

**Saturday, February 11, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.**

### **With Santikaro: The Healing Power of Emptiness**

In my recent experience with lymphoma, treatment at the Mayo Clinic, and on-going recovery from chemotherapy, emptiness (sunyata) has played a central role. Within the pragmatism of early Buddhism, sunyata refers to being empty of self and stuff belonging to self. We will explore sunyata through talks, meditations, and dialogue. Santikaro is a dharma student-practitioner, translator, and Buddhist meditation teacher who lives at Liberation Park in southwest Wisconsin.  
**Saturday, March 10, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

### **With Mariann Johnson, Wendy Morris, Jean Hammink, & Louise Delagran: Mindfulness and Leadership**

In this workshop we will explore mindfulness practice in the context of leadership, considering questions such as: What does it mean to live out our awareness practice as leaders? Which of the teachings resonate with you and contribute to your own more mindful leadership? The day will include small and large group dialogue, stories and meditation. Mariann Johnson is the Lead Consultant for M.T. Johnson & Associates and an MBSR Instructor. Wendy Morris is the Founder and Director of the Creative Leadership Studio and designs and conducts programs for leadership venues. Jean Hammink does training, coaching, and consulting using the framework of emotional intelligence and her mindfulness meditation practice. Louise Delagran is an Instructional Designer at the Center for Spirituality and Healing, University of Minnesota.

**Saturday, March 31, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

### **With Cheri Maples: Applying Mindfulness in Daily Life**

Cheri Maples was ordained a Dharma Teacher by Thich Nhat Hanh in 2008. She is cofounder of the Center for Mindfulness and Justice, and a keynote speaker, consultant and trainer. Cheri worked in the criminal justice profession for 25 years as a police officer, the Head of Probation & Parole, and the Assistant Attorney General in Wisconsin. She has incorporated all these experiences into her understanding and teaching of the dharma and her practice of engaged Buddhism.

**Saturday, April 21, 9:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.**

## Guest Teacher Talks

Please join us for these special evenings of dharma (spiritual teachings) and connection with the Common Ground community.

### **With Kaia Svien:** *Centering Yourself in Greater Love by Opening the Heart to Earth's Cries*

Kaia Svien, M.S., has been an MBSR instructor for 16 years and a student of Buddhist scholar and deep ecologist, Joanna Macy, for many years.

Friday, January 20, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### **With Louis Alemayehu:** *We are Here to Awaken*

Friday, February 10, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### **With Santikaro:** *Patience, When Life Turns Into Samsara*

Life is full both of things we appreciate and enjoy and stuff that rubs us the hard way. If penetrating insight isn't available at the moment, patience may be our best bet. See workshops for bio.

Friday, March 9, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

### **With Cheri Maples:** *Bringing Skillful Action to Troubled Times*

See workshops for bio.

Friday, April 20, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

## Yoga and Qigong

### **Mindful Yoga Weekly Practice**

Open to adults of all ages and all levels of experience. No need to register, just come.

**Mondays** (Level I Wynn Fricke), starts January 23, **Tuesdays** (Level II Nancy Boler), **Wednesdays** (Level I Nancy Boler); **5:30 – 6:45 p.m.**, **Fridays** (Level I Nancy Boler), **9:30 – 10:45 a.m.**

### **Yoga Nidra Workshops**

The workshop includes explanation of Yoga Nidra, a short practice of yoga poses, then 45 minutes of being guided into deep relaxation and Yoga Nidra. Led by Nancy Boler.

**Sundays, January 15, February 5 & 19, March 4 & 18, April 1 & 15; 3:30 – 5:30 p.m. Attend one or all. No need to register, just come.**

### **Restorative Yoga Workshop**

Restorative yoga focuses on relaxing the body in restful postures. This workshop is appropriate for all ages and levels of yoga practice. Led by Nancy Boler.

Sunday, January 29, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **Yoga Home Practice Workshop**

In this workshop we learn a sequence of yoga poses intended for home practice.

Sunday, March 25, 3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **Pranayama Yoga**

Pranayama is the practice of exploring various breath techniques. Pranayama naturally deepens awareness and prepares the mind for meditation.

Sundays, February 26, April 29;

3:30 – 5:30 p.m.

### **Yoga Teachers**

**Nancy Boler**, was certified in 2000 at the Kripalu Center for Yoga in Lenox, Massachusetts. **Wynn Fricke** has been teaching hatha yoga since 1990 when she became certified at the Integral Yoga Institute in New York City.

### **Drop-in Qigong**

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

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

### **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 practice group is open to all who have an interest in mindfulness and the Twelve Steps. Led by Patti S., Emil J., and Elene L, Gail I, and Craig V.

**Fridays, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m. The group now meets every Friday of the month.**

### **Workshop with Santikaro: Addiction to Self**

See workshops for bio.

Sunday, March 11, 12:30 – 2:30 p.m.

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

These four hours without distractions provide a unique opportunity for self-discovery. We will have periods of sitting meditation, gentle stretching, group discussions, a short talk, and a mid-day break for tea and walking outdoors. If you have a yoga mat, please bring it for the gentle stretching exercises. No previous meditation retreat experience necessary. Led by Craig V.

Saturday, February 18, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

## Community Practice Groups

### **Community Poetry Evening**

Join us for an evening of opening to the heart through poetry. Please feel free to bring a poem or two to share. If you have any questions, please contact us at [poetry@common-groundmeditation.org](mailto:poetry@common-groundmeditation.org).

**Saturdays, January 21, April 14, 7:00 – 9:00 p.m**

### **Dharma Flicks**

Join Common Ground friends for a movie and discussion. Our next film will be announced on the community bulletin board.

### **Dharma Friends**

Dharma Friends is a drop-in, practice/social group for young adult practitioners ("20-30 somethings") in the community. For more information, contact [dharmafriendstc@gmail.com](mailto:dharmafriendstc@gmail.com).

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

## Engaged Mindfulness

For more information, please contact Leigh Rosenberg by emailing the center.

**Sundays, January 29, March 25, April 22; 4:00 – 6:00 p.m.**

### **Full Moon Peace Walks**

Includes chanting, a mindful outdoor walk, and sitting meditation. Weather permitting, the walking and sitting take place outdoors. No registration necessary. **Note: no full moon peace walks for the months of Jan. and Feb.** **Thursday, March 8, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.** **Thursday, April 5, 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.**

### **Gay Men's Group**

This is a supportive network that integrates mindful living with issues relevant to gay men. We typically meet on the fourth Sunday of each month from 1 – 2:30 p.m. For more information, contact Nils ([katannuto@yahoo.com](mailto:katannuto@yahoo.com)) or Tom ([thomashowley80@msn.com](mailto:thomashowley80@msn.com)).

### **Mindfulness for Educators**

This group is planning a retreat in the winter or spring of 2012. Please check the bulletin board or contact Paul Sackaroff ([psackar-pawn@gmail.com](mailto:psackar-pawn@gmail.com)) for more information.

## 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.

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

Saturday, January 7, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday, February 4, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday, March 17, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.  
Saturday, April 7, 1:00 – 5:00 p.m.

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

(Please bring a bag lunch)  
Saturday, February 25, 9 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.  
Saturday, March 24, 9 a.m. – 6:00 p.m.

To register for half and day-long retreats, email the center: [info@commongroundmeditation.org](mailto:info@commongroundmeditation.org). You can also call (612) 722-8260 or drop in and sign up.

### **Common Ground Residential Retreats**

At Holy Spirit Retreat Center with Mark Nunberg.

Thursday, January 26 at 5 p.m. to Sunday, January 29 at noon. Registration begins November 26. To register for Common Ground residential retreats, go to the retreats website: <http://links.commongroundmeditation.org/residential-retreats>.

### **TCVC Residential Retreats**

January 27-February 1, 2012 (or weekend option) with Rebecca Bradshaw. Visit [www.tcvc.info](http://www.tcvc.info) for more information.

## Supporting Common Ground



**Continuing a tradition** from the Buddhist monasteries in Southeast Asia, 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.

■ 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 Donate Now.

■ If it is convenient for you to schedule electronic deductions on a regular basis, it helps simplify the center's bookkeeping. You can schedule regular deductions from a credit card (go to [www.commongroundmeditation.org](http://www.commongroundmeditation.org) and click on the Donate Now button on the home page to set up a single or ongoing donation). 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 [shelly@common-groundmeditation.org](mailto:shelly@common-groundmeditation.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. All contributions to Common Ground are tax deductible.

## Common Ground Leaders, Staff, and Program Teachers

### Board of Directors

Board Chair: Gail Iverson; Vice Chair: Jean Choe; Treasurer: Doug Swanson; Secretary: Wynn Fricke; Director: Mark Young; Guiding Teacher: Mark Nunberg

### Advisory Board

Steve Armstrong, James Baraz, Joseph Goldstein, Kamala Masters

### Program Teachers

Gail Iverson, Merrra Young, Nancy Boler, Ramesh Sairam, Debbie Norgaard, Wynn Fricke, Patti Sloan, Emil Jalonen, Elene Loecher, Craig Vollmar, Ollie Stocker, Dennis Gilsdorf, Debra Lach, Shelly Graf

### Office Manager

Shelly Graf

### Bookkeeping Manager

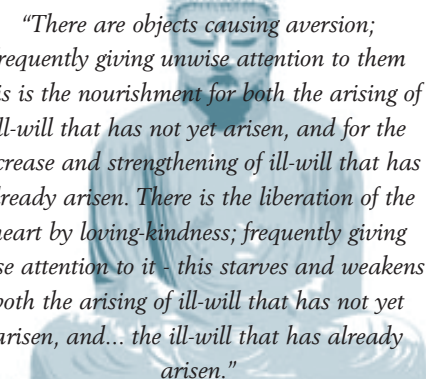
Debbie Norgaard

### Guiding Teacher

Mark Nunberg began his practice in 1982 and has been teaching meditation since 1990. He co-founded Common Ground Meditation Center in Minneapolis in 1993 with Wynn Fricke and continues to serve as the center's Guiding Teacher. Mark has studied with both Asian and Western teachers and finds deep inspiration in the teachings of the Buddha. Mark practiced as a monk for five months in Burma and completed four three-month retreats at Insight Meditation Society Retreat Center, as well as many months of intensive retreat practice at The Forest Refuge. Mark continues to be a grateful student of Buddhist practice.

## 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.



*"There are objects causing aversion; frequently giving unwise attention to them this is the nourishment for both the arising of ill-will that has not yet arisen, and for the increase and strengthening of ill-will that has already arisen. There is the liberation of the heart by loving-kindness; frequently giving wise attention to it - this starves and weakens both the arising of ill-will that has not yet arisen, and... the ill-will that has already arisen."*

*The Buddha AN 46:51*

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

Common Ground Meditation Center  
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