



Conditioned arising!



Stream Entry!

Southern Insight Meditation is a non-profit, non-sectarian group run by volunteers with the aim of making available the teachings and practice of Insight (Vipassana) Meditation through retreats, courses and talks.
www.southern.insightmeditation.org.nz

Greetings all, the end of another year approaches – one which has been very challenging for many of us in the South Island. With the summer holidays comes a chance to rest and recuperate – though often they can be as hectic as any other time of year.

One opportunity for some time out will be our February weekend retreat. One of the much loved Southern Insight teachers - Subhana Barzaghi will be visiting Christchurch and able to offer a two day workshop exploring the brahmaviharas, or divine abodes of loving kindness, compassion, empathetic joy and equanimity.

We will be doubly lucky to have another visiting teacher – Sharda Rogell offer a one day workshop in Christchurch in March

As non residential retreats these are likely to be very popular. They can be a great opportunity for those whose work and family commitments make attending other retreats difficult. They also provide a focus on integrating practice with daily life.

It may be possible to arrange billets for those out of town. Those seeking accommodation for the weekend and those willing to offer a bed to visiting yogis can e-mail southern insight and we will try and put you together
Southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

Finally – a heartfelt thank you. For the past ten years – with few exceptions Julie has been the devoted scribe that has put these newsletters together. We know they have been enjoyed by many and they have helped enormously to link yogis around the country and the world. Take a well earned break from this Julie – we are truly grateful.

May you have joyful times in the months ahead. We hope to see you in 2011.

STEPHEN & MARTINE BATCHELOR



Stephen

“What [the Buddha] taught flew in the face of the orthodoxies of his time. No wonder he wryly commented after his awakening that it would be “tiring and vexing” for him to teach others. After all, people desire immortality and do not wish to embrace the inescapable reality of death; they long for happiness and shy away from the contemplation of pain; they want to preserve their sense of self, not deconstruct it into its fleeting and impersonal components. It is counterintuitive to accept that deathlessness is experienced each moment we are released from the deathlike grip of greed and hatred; that happiness in this world is only possible for those who realise that this world is incapable of providing happiness; that one becomes a fully individuated person only by relinquishing beliefs in an essential self.”

Stephen Batchelor, “Confession of a Buddhist Atheist”

STAVELEY NOVEMBER 2010 REFLECTIONS FROM THE RETREAT

“This was my first retreat, and first experience of meditation and in both respects it was genuinely inspirational. There was a great atmosphere, with good surroundings and the (silent) company of compassionate and caring people. I appreciated the teachers and the combination of intellectual, philosophical (Stephen) and applied ‘daily life’ approaches. I particularly enjoyed the silence, the community, the shared work time, the routine, and the balance between study and meditation.”

Stuart, from Scotland

“Worthwhile... it brought me back to my humanity and was an opportunity to let go of distractions to practice.”

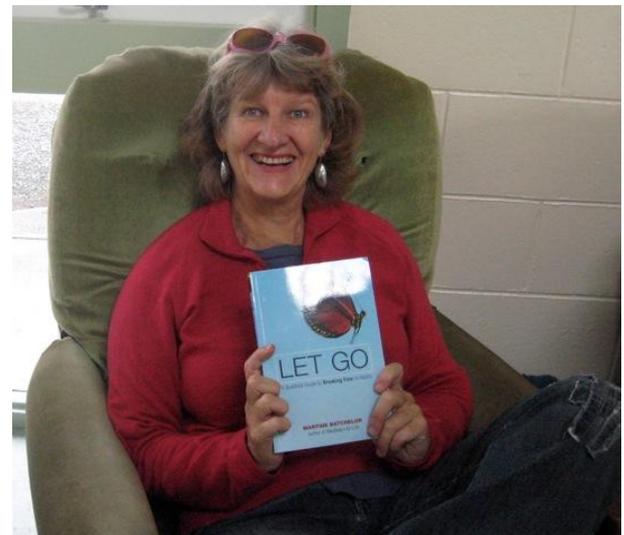
yogi

“It was great to sit with the spring lambs and their mothers next door. Watching them eat constantly from dawn til dark reminded me how lucky to be born human and not have to eat all the time, also on seeing their constant hunger, how like us they are, always craving and not being fulfilled.”

yogi

“A reminder of the simple but profound teachings.”

yogi



Ali – says it all – Martine’s new book

“I had sat with the Stephen and Martine several years ago and was very much looking forward to another treat – and I wasn’t disappointed. Being a ‘study retreat’ meant more discussion than other silent retreats but my depth of understanding around the dharma has **flourished** – a word I take away to ponder on. The other treasure from the retreat is Martine’s delightful approach to the challenges of life –to “**creatively engage**” with situations as they arise.

And I was reminded, yet again, how revitalising a week in silence can be – I have returned to daily life feeling more joyful and spacious and with a bit more of an inner sparkle. Ideally I would do this every three months!”

Sarah

A working retreat!



Stephen and Martine – a synchronised couple



Arthur Wells Sensei - at your service!



Cooking crew Chrys and Catherine create 'celestial' cuisine-



Pierrick has a cushy job

REFLECTIONS ON LEONARD COHEN

It was a delight for me to have the good fortune to attend the recent Leonard Cohen concert in Christchurch. A buddhist for many years, in the 1990s Leonard spent a several years in a Zen monastery in California, and his songs have a distinctly dharmic (dharma – the teachings of the Buddha) flavour. While the songs themselves contain teachings, in between songs he often offered little 'dharmettes' (mini dharma talks), such as reminding us how privileged we were to be living the way we are, in the face of so much suffering in the world. He often ponders the relationship and tension between his understandings and his daily life, which he refers to as Boogie Street, and sometimes his take on this is extremely funny. On the need to take his insights from the monastery back into the 'market place' of daily life, to test his understandings, he says "I'm wanted at the traffic jam. They're saving me a seat." There's a sense of complete acceptance in this statement. He points to the mystery of it all: "There's no one who has told us yet what Boogie Street is for." In the very moving song 'The Land of Plenty', he reflects on where he now finds himself – on his doubt in his ability to speak out, despite having clearly been called, he knows not by who, to share the dharma: "Don't really have the courage to stand where I must stand. Don't really have the temperament to lend a helping hand. Don't really know who sent me, to raise my voice and [speak out]." There is a tangible humility about this man, often singing on his knees, and the quality of lovingkindness communicates itself clearly. And he has an ability with words to say things in ways that just break the heart open, ways that give a new perspective on the teachings.

I was struck in particular by some words in the song 'Anthem'. The Buddha taught that the path to liberation is through suffering, rather than around or away from it. Leonard Cohen puts this more poetically: "There's a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in."

The crack is the unsatisfactory nature of all experience, its inability to satisfy, it's unreliability and ultimate transitoriness. We generally don't value cracks. We don't like looking at the painfulness of our experience. We can sometimes have the idea that as our practice deepens we will somehow get rid of suffering, of

unpleasant experiences. That when we eventually get all our ducks lined up we will have neverending happiness. As we practice our 'ducks' may perhaps change from being external objects of desire such as possessions, relationships, or the right job, to being states of mind, blissful experiences, the latest meditative achievement. We turn away from the pain and suffering and reach for pleasant experience. But it is towards this very crack, towards our suffering, that we are encouraged to turn if we are to allow the light in. "There's a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in." Beautiful.

Leonard says it again in the same song, with different words: *Every heart to love will come, but like a refugee. We take refuge in our very suffering, but only once we realise that there is more suffering to be had in continuing to resist it. And this brings us to the heart.*

Leonard Cohen's album 'Ten New Songs', released just after he left the monastery, covers themes of letting go, surrender, impermanence, awakening, not-self, compassion and lovingkindness. The beauty of both the message and the music makes it highly recommended.

May all beings find the path to liberation. Or as Leonard Cohen says:

*Don't really know who sent me, to raise my voice and say:
May the lights in the Land of Plenty
Shine on the truth someday.*

Julie

Stephen Batchelor's version of *There's a crack in everything. That's how the light gets in:*

"Freedom, for Gotama, meant freedom from greed, from hatred, and from confusion. Moreover, such freedom (nirvana) was to be found not by turning away from the world but by penetrating deep into its contingent heart."

Ajahn Sumedho on cracks and light:

"Compassion tells us to enter our helplessness [vulnerability] and make that, strangely enough, our refuge."



**Many colourful offerings from the
Retreat's work period**

To purchase a newly made meditation cushion please contact Julie Downard
angulijulie@gmail.com

\$60.00 each, available in a wonderful range of colours (red, purple, pink) and patterns (orange and pink with white daisies)

"Can you accept the moments of anger and fear as guests, be willing to receive them with kindness without feeling obliged to serve them a five-course meal?"

Christina Feldman

SITTING GROUP NEWS

Our new format has been operating for a few months now. People from the southeast side of town are enjoying being able to get to sitting group more easily once a month. To recap in case you are confused, the following happens each month:

First Wed: Normal sitting group
Second Wed: Talk/Facilitated Discussion
Third Wed: Public Talk by Russell
Fourth Wed: Held at Opawa Zendo

Over the summer Russell will take a break from his monthly talks – these will resume in March 2011.

Apart from the fourth Wed of the month meetings take place at 104 Merivale Lane in the staffroom of Ferndale School. The evening starts at 7.30pm and runs through to 9.15pm.

The Opawa Zendo is located at 4 Kennedy Place, Opawa on the corner of Opawa Rd opposite the Hillsborough Domain. By car you need to be travelling south to turn into Kennedy Place. Parking is not allowed on Kennedy Place, so please park in the Bremca Ltd carpark at 10 Kennedy Place.

First Sitting Group of 2011 will be Wednesday January 5th at Ferndale School, Merivale Lane

***Lost and found at
Batchelor retreat***

- ❖ woven shawl, brown pattern
- ❖ pair of socks, about an English size 6.

Plus several towels:

- ❖ 1 blue full sized bath towel
- ❖ 1 reddish brown small bath towel or large hand towel
- ❖ A similar sized white towel with green/brown stripes on one end of it
- ❖ A grey face cloth

Please contact:
Chrys, 027 86 86 53

AWAKENING THE WISE HEART



Non residential workshop
12th -13th February 2011

Subhana Barzaghi – Insight Vipassana teacher

*A Peaceful heart gives birth to love
When love meets suffering it turns to compassion
When love meets happiness it turns to joy.
(The Buddha)*

We look forward to having Subhana with us once again. She will be offering a two day non-residential retreat here in Christchurch. It will run from 9am to 5pm on Saturday 12th and Sunday 13th of February. This is a great opportunity for those people who are unable to attend a longer residential retreat to access a time of practice with teachings and guidance from a highly respected and experienced teacher. A time to pause and reflect, with the support of other practitioners in the midst of our busy lives is exceptionally valuable and the benefit of engaging in a retreat of this nature, even for two days, cannot be underestimated. A time just to be present with ourselves and life is a tremendous gift. It is an opportunity to slow down and experience our minds within the context of our daily routines and this is the immediate ground for insight and compassion to arise.

The retreat will explore the Brahma Viharas, or the Heavenly Abodes, four of the most precious qualities of the human spirit: Loving-kindness, Compassion, Sympathetic Joy and Equanimity. These qualities flower in our hearts and minds. Over the two days the retreat will explore how they can be strengthened and can revolutionise our relationship with ourselves, others and the world, nurturing inner and outer harmony.

Subhana has a wealth of teaching and practice experience. Her teaching embodies a beautiful balance of direct inquiry, which looks deeply into the truth of our experience, with heartfelt compassion, which acknowledges the realities of being human as well as our highest potential. She is one of a few teachers who is authorised to teach in both the Zen and Insight meditation traditions and teaches with authority and passion. Her teaching is also informed by the many years she been a practising Psychotherapist, making her very skilled in working with people.

Lovingkindness, compassion, joy and equanimity are among some of the most beautiful and powerful states of consciousness that we can experience. Awakening the wise heart shares the same ground as mindfulness practice, it requires the same openness, receptivity and non-grasping orientation towards life and our relationships. Our fears of intimacy only create pain, alienation and a general sense of disconnection with life. By practicing these immeasurable qualities of heart and mind we can learn to love ourselves more deeply and find a greater sense of connection with others. These heart-felt Buddhist teachings help us discover the radiant, joyful heart within each of us, and help cultivate genuine compassion for all beings.

About the Retreat/Workshop

This two day workshop will include guided meditation practices, a series of dharma talks on the four divine abodes and interactive experiential exercises.

The workshop is suitable for both beginners and advanced students.

*Restraint offers a space between
intention and action and the
opportunity to protect others from
actions or reactions that should exist
only in your imagination*

Forgiveness and other acts of love -
Stephanie Dowrick

*Something inside me
has reached
to the place where
the world is breathing.*
- Kabir

New Books in the Southern Insight Library

Southern Insight has a small library of books and magazines – a wealth of creative and beautiful writings about the practice of insight meditation. This is a great resource for those both new to practice and those seeking some fresh ideas. Access to this is through the Wednesday evening sitting groups held at Ferndale School in Merivale.

Recent new titles added to the library include:

Confessions of a Buddhist Atheist by Steven Batchelor:

This is a personal account of the author's thirty-eight year engagement with Buddhism. The first part of the book (Monk) follows the author's journey from his departure from England at the age of 18, his first meeting with the Dalai Lama in 1972, his six years training as a Tibetan Buddhist monk, his disillusion with the Tibetan tradition and departure for a three year Zen training as a monk in South Korea. The second part (Layman) recounts the author's return to lay life in Europe and focuses on his quest to find out who was Siddhattha Gotama, the historic Buddha, and discover what is truly distinctive in his teaching. This quest interweaves reflections on early Buddhist doctrine, a journey through modern India to visit the sacred sites of Buddhism, and a detailed reconstruction of the Buddha's life on the basis of the Pali Canon.

(from the author's website)

Radical Acceptance: Embracing your life with the heart of a Buddha by Tara Brach

For many of us, feelings of deficiency are right around the corner. It doesn't take much--just hearing of someone else's accomplishments, being criticized, getting into an argument, making a mistake at work--to make us feel that we are not okay. Beginning to understand how our lives have become ensnared in this trance of unworthiness is our first step toward reconnecting with who we really are and what it means to live fully.

--from **Radical Acceptance**

The Wise Heart by Jack Kornfield

Psychologist and pioneering Buddhist teacher Kornfield writes his best book yet (and his previous ones were pretty good). His newest uses the same sweet narrative voice, provides convincing and illustrative anecdotes and stories, and reaches into world traditions and literature as well as contemporary scientific research. This book offers a systematic and well-organized view of Buddhist psychology, complete with occasional diagrams. Concepts and practices are placed in a framework that explains and connects them. It's all done with an eye toward application; most chapters end with exercises. Kornfield has been practicing Buddhism for close to 40 years, a lasting discipline that has produced this masterful book and a seasoned view of life that acknowledges a lot of oopses. As a mediator and psychologist, he has also witnessed some serious angst, including his own, and draws on it for illustrative power. Not everything here is new, least of all the title, but then the Buddha isn't either. The best is left for last: joy you can seek for yourself and others. Just keep your meditative seat, and this book by your bed. Kornfield comes across as the therapist you wish you'd had.

(from Editorial Review - Publishers Weekly)

Booking Procedures

Please phone **Paul** on **381 0444** for a retreat registration form. **The completed form and a deposit of \$50.00 should** be sent to **6 Trent St, Christchurch**. Please make cheques payable to **Southern Insight Meditation**. Stamped addressed envelopes are appreciated when booking. Further information will be sent to you on receipt of your deposit. Please note that retreats will only run if there are sufficient registrations.

Refunds of Deposits

The deposit for retreats is refundable up to the closing date of the retreat booked, less a \$5.00 charge for administration costs. Deposits cannot be refunded after the retreat closing date, and the money will be put into the Top-Up Fund.

Top Up Fund

The top-up fund is for those who are unable to afford the cost of a retreat. Southern Insight aims to make retreats as accessible as possible to all, and it is possible to pay less than the lower amount in the sliding scale for a retreat. We encourage people to make use of this fund, which, thanks to the generosity of others who attend our retreats, is currently in a healthy state.

Christchurch non-residential workshop locations:

Cracraft House 151 Cashmere Road
Te Ahi Kaa (Wai-ora Trust) 48 Watsons Road,
Harewood

Receiving our newsletter

If you did not receive this newsletter by mail and would like to be on our mailing list, please phone Dermot on 381 4617. Any donation towards the cost would be appreciated.

If you would like to receive this newsletter and retreat information electronically just contact us at southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

TEACHERS

Subhana Barzaghi has practised meditation for over 20 years, is an acknowledged teacher in both the Insight meditation and Zen Buddhist traditions. She teaches 7 day intensive retreats in India, Australia and New Zealand. In 1996 Subhana became the first Australian Zen Roshi and is the spiritual director of the Sydney and Melbourne Zen Centres. She is also the founder of the Kwan Yin Zen Centre in Lismore. Subhana is the mother of two children and works as a counsellor and psychotherapist in Sydney.

Jeremy Logan has been involved in Insight Meditation for the last nineteen years, spending several years in the east and in Europe learning and practicing meditation. He has been teaching retreats since 1991 in New Zealand and he has taught in India. He currently lives in the Wairarapa working as a Counsellor and facilitating Stopping Violence programmes for men.

Sharda Rogell is a member of the teacher council at Spirit Rock Meditation Centre in northern California near her home. She began meditating in 1976 and began teaching Insight Meditation in 1986. She has also been influenced by the non-dual teachings of both Dzogchen in the Tibetan tradition and HWL Poonja during her many trips to India. She is currently a student of the Diamond Approach with A.H. Almaas.

INSIGHT AOTEAROA

Insight Aotearoa is an e-newsletter for New Zealand's insight meditation practitioners and communities. Posted monthly, it includes articles by and interviews with dharma teachers from around the world as well as a comprehensive listing of events in the insight meditation network across New Zealand. To subscribe (free) visit:
newsletter@insightaotearoa.org
or write to PO Box 6626, Wellington 6041, Aotearoa New Zealand.

Contact Details for Southern Insight**E-mail:** southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com**Post:** 16 Ward Street, Christchurch**Web:** <http://southern.insightmeditation.org.nz>

If you'd like information about retreats or about the group and insight meditation (including lots of opportunities to help with our work) here are the contact details of the Steering group, all of whom would be happy to talk with you:

Di 338 7070
Meg 328 8052
Julie angulijulie@gmail.com
Dermot 381 4617
Rachel 379 2548
Sarah 027 669 3824
Russell:southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

If undelivered, please return to:
13 Dacre Street
Christchurch