

# SOUTHERN INSIGHT

## Newsletter of Southern Insight Meditation, Christchurch, New Zealand

Newsletter 51

March 2015

### UPCOMING MEDITATION RETREATS 2015

All retreats are suitable for both new and experienced meditators, and are accessible to people of any or no religious affiliation. The cost of each retreat covers all food and accommodation. Teachers receive donations.

**Beginner's Course in Insight Meditation**      **April 2015**      Christchurch  
This 6-week course will provide instruction for insight meditation. Beginning with focusing the attention on the breath, the mindfulness practice calms and concentrates the mind, allowing us to live more fully in the present moment. The course is suitable for beginners or those wanting a refresher. Di Robertson will teach the course. She has been meditating since 1994, has undertaken many meditation retreats, and taught beginners' courses since 2001. For further information and registration contact Di on 338 7070 or e-mail [diana.r@xtra.co.nz](mailto:diana.r@xtra.co.nz)

**Half-day non-residential retreats:**      **July/ August 2015 (date TBC)**      Christchurch  
Cost \$15  
Di Robertson and Julie Downard will be running more of these popular half-day retreats: a chance to take a break in the midst of business and to connect with what the practice of meditation can really bring to our lives. Go to our website, or register for local update e-mails to find out more. <http://Southern-insight.org.nz>

**The Spacious Heart**      **Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> (evening) - Friday 9<sup>th</sup> October**      Staveley Camp  
with Jeremy Logan and Di Robertson      Cost \$280\*  
Weekend option (limited places)      Cost \$125\*

Through meditation our capacity to be compassionately present for our immediate experience grows. It enables us to be fully present for joyful moments, and to open to and tenderly hold the most difficult parts of ourselves. It deepens and enriches our experience of life, allowing us to move beyond conditioned patterns and to respond to life creatively. Jeremy and Di are running this week-long retreat together for the first time. They are both warm and grounded teachers with a great capacity to help us find the wisdom to work in daily life. This will be a great experience for beginners and experienced practitioners alike.

**Information about registration** is inside the back cover of the newsletter and on our website.

**Costs:** Retreat costs are set to be as affordable as possible and longer retreats include a sliding scale.

**\*Sliding scale:** *the actual cost of the retreat is the higher amount; however it is possible for those on a limited income to pay a subsidised rate, anywhere from the actual cost down to the bracketed figure. See also "top up" fund information in this newsletter.*

**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. Our website is <http://Southern-insight.org.nz>



**Breaking and breaking  
again on the sea the moon  
so easily mends.**

Choshu

### **Future retreat events:**

#### **Dharma Gathering - January 2016**

The Dharma Gathering is offered by Southern Insight in conjunction with the Diamond Sangha Zen Tradition. The format of the Dharma Gathering melds meditation with more interactive practices: workshops, bodywork, poetry, art, movement, debate and discussion. The event has been very popular, so look out for it again in early 2016.

#### **Enquiries:**

[Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com](mailto:Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com)

**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. We are also a charitable trust and donations are tax exempt. Our website is <http://Southern-insight.org.nz>

Greetings all,

We're a good group – us Southern Insight folk. Actually we're a great group! I say this without personal conceit - rather with incredible gratitude for the many hands and hearts that are involved in making things happen.

Take this newsletter for instance. You are reading it (how wonderful – hope you enjoy it; it connects us right away). It has articles, poems, and images, written and sourced by different people. It has been fact-checked and proof-read (but you can still spot the deliberate errors; we like to keep you on your toes). If you are holding a paper version in your hand it has been taken to the printers and then folded, stamped and mailed out to you. All by the wonderful people who are connected with Southern Insight.

But we don't stop there. This year – still young as it is – we have run our summer retreat, and held the biggest one day event of our 17 years – a workshop with Rick Hanson on Hardwiring Happiness that drew together people from all kinds of backgrounds from Christchurch and even further afield. He was an extremely gracious visitor and a wonderful teacher, so we feel privileged to have been able to host him.

Newly emerging Southern Insight teachers Julie and Di are also busy. Julie and Zen Roshi Arthur Wells are running a support group for those enrolled in the *Awakening Joy* online program, while Di and Chrys Horn have set up a group for those interested in Dharma and Climate change. Di and Fi Graham are also looking at how to work with children and mindfulness (see article here).

At the end of March we are running a one-day meditation retreat with the much respected Insight teacher Sharda Rogell .

So we are indeed busy, but it is happy, connecting and enormously fulfilling – so doesn't really deserve the term *work*. In future newsletters we will be offering some reflections on what it is to do this kind of service and, connected as you are already, we are always happy to hear from you if you want to be more involved.

In joy – enjoy .....Meg ☺

## **Spring retreat 2015**



### **The Spacious Heart An Insight and Mindfulness Retreat**

**with Jeremy Logan &  
Di Robertson**

Friday 2<sup>nd</sup> (evening) – Friday 9th  
October 2015

**Venue** Staveley Camp

Cost \$280/\$140\*

Weekend only (limited places) \$125/\$65

*Through meditation our capacity to be  
compassionately present for our immediate  
experience grows.*

Jeremy and Di are running this week-long retreat together for the first time. They are both warm and grounded teachers with a great capacity to help us find the wisdom to work in daily life. This will be a great experience for beginners and experienced practitioners alike.

For more information e-mail

[Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com](mailto:Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com)

or find registration forms and info on our website <http://Southern-insight.org.nz>

\*Sliding scale is available down to half the full cost of the retreat. "Top up fund" also available. Please ask.



### **Beginner Mindfulness and Insight Meditation Course**

Starting April 2015

6 week course 7:15 - 8:45pm

This six-week course provides instruction for mindfulness and insight meditation, with an emphasis on wellbeing and integration with daily life. Cultivating awareness, the practice begins with focusing the attention on the breath and body. This calms the mind and relaxes the body, and allows us to live more fully in the present moment.

The course is suitable for beginners or those wanting a refresher.

Di Robertson will teach the course. She has been meditating since 1994, has undertaken many meditation retreats and taught beginners' courses since 2000. She is a trustee of Southern Insight Meditation (<http://www.southern-insight.org.nz/>).

For further information and registration  
Contact Di on 338 7070 or e-mail  
[diana.r@xtra.co.nz](mailto:diana.r@xtra.co.nz)

Venue: Addington Haven,  
(19 Church Square, Addington).

Costs: \$60

Contact Di Robertson [diana.r@xtra.co.nz](mailto:diana.r@xtra.co.nz)  
or phone 338 7070.

**\*A note on Dana:** The registrations costs do not cover any payment to teachers for their teaching. They will receive only what you offer as Dana. Dana is a gift by each person in the spirit of generosity to reciprocate the teacher's sharing of their depth of knowledge and expertise. The amount given is up to the giver.

## Insight Retreat at Wangapeka

This four-day retreat is run by the Wangapeka retreat centre. It is not organised by Southern Insight but is led by Jeremy Logan who has been a long-standing teacher with Southern Insight, and whose grounded wisdom and warmth is very much appreciated

This may be of interest to those of you who are close to the top of the South Island

### The Heart of Understanding With Jeremy Logan

16th - 20th September 2015 (Wednesday evening - Sunday 1pm)

Wangapeka Retreat Centre, near Nelson.

<http://www.wangapeka.org>

Registration and further information

Contact Roger Wilde

[rogerwilde1@gmail.com](mailto:rogerwilde1@gmail.com)



Don't worry, spiders,  
I keep house  
casually.

Issa

## About the teachers



**Jeremy Logan** has studied and practiced insight meditation for the past twenty-seven years, and has been teaching retreats throughout New Zealand since 1993. He lives in the Wairarapa and works as a counsellor, supervisor and facilitator of change programmes.



**Di Robertson** has 20 years' experience in insight meditation, with intensive retreats and daily life practice in England and New Zealand. She has taught beginners' courses since 2000 and led several half-day retreats. She lives in Christchurch and is a co-founder and trustee of Southern Insight Meditation.

## Mindfulness for Children



Practicing and bringing the fruits of our practice into all aspects of our life is clearly what an engaged practice is all about. The role of parents, caregivers, other loving adults and educators of our children is a fertile (and challenging) ground for practice; for both our moment-to-moment relationship with children and the opportunities to model and teach them mindfulness, loving kindness and other wholesome qualities.

This column was sparked by Fi Graham emailing me some of her explorations with her children.

*"I'm continuing my 'mindful mothering' focus. The biggest changes are with me of course which is great; fewer outbursts on my part must be a good thing. I wanted to tell you about two things I tried inspired by the mindfulness material.*

*1. I asked Theo (4 years old) how he was feeling one time when he was in a happy chilled out space (from my perspective). Conversation went like this:*

*How are you feeling Theo?....Happy  
What kind of happy are you? Content, relaxed, chilled out happy or joyful bouncy happy?....Relaxed happy  
Where do you feel that relaxed happy feeling in your body?....in my toes.  
What colour is that happy feeling in your toes?...pink  
What flavour is it?.....Chocolate.  
Wow, so you're feeling relaxed, pink, chocolate flavoured happy in your toes right now?.... Yep (smiling).*

*It was a great way to wallow in happy feelings and to focus the attention on himself, I thought.*

*2. He has been feeling scared at night lately (shadows, spiders etc) so when he was in bed saying good night I asked if he wanted to play the 'make a bubble' game. He did.*

*Close your eyes and take a deep breath. As you blow out imagine you are blowing up a balloon. The balloon is so big it fits right around your body. Keep blowing it up until all your body is surrounded with the balloon. Inside this balloon it's warm and soft and full of loving thoughts. Thoughts like mum loves me, God loves me (they get a lot of God loves me at kindy), I love Mum and Dad and Autumn.*

*What colour is your balloon?....Pink/Blue.*

*Once you blow up your balloon it stays around you all night long, keeping you safe and warm and happy. If you have any scared or worried thoughts they escape out the top of the balloon and only the loving thoughts are left inside. The balloon disappears in the morning as the sun comes up but you can blow it up every night....*

*I thought that was quite a good one, he bought into it at least.  
I've tried the mindful breathing with the animal on your tummy on. Autumn does it but Theo makes his bear fly off and gets pretty energetic about it. Perhaps I chose the wrong moment with him :)*

Di & Fi

Fi is interested in being part of a mindful parenting group, to be able to share the challenges and insights and specific practices that have nurtured their children's wellbeing. If you are interested

Contact Fi at [Fionagrahamster@gmail.com](mailto:Fionagrahamster@gmail.com)

## **Internet ramblings – the benefits of practice**

All the links (and a few more besides) outlined below can be found here ([www.facebook.com/SouthernInsight](https://www.facebook.com/SouthernInsight)), which non-face bookers can access.

This allows you to use the links there rather than having to type or paste them into your web browser.

This time around I've put together a number of articles looking at the benefits of a meditation practice – just in case anyone out there needs some encouragement to keep on practising!

**The benefits of meditation:** This interesting article on the benefits of meditation [liveanddare.com/benefits-of-meditation/](http://liveanddare.com/benefits-of-meditation/) pulls

together findings from a number of studies. As the writer puts it ...

*There are over 3,000 scientific studies on the benefits of meditation, but I have not found any blog that compiles hundreds of researches into an organized article, so I decided to fill in the gap.*

It mentions everything from improving concentration and mood, to reducing the effects of pain and improving physical health. Check it out if you need any encouragement to meditate more.

**Building compassion:** Research shows how metta meditation builds greater compassion and altruistic behaviour in those who practice it and in a remarkably short time.

([tinyurl.com/qzp2anz](http://tinyurl.com/qzp2anz)). Matthieu Ricard's argument that altruism is a way through the environmental crisis that we are facing ([tinyurl.com/lgdnzn4](http://tinyurl.com/lgdnzn4)) makes this a very good thing!

Tara Brach's observation posted on Facebook is also a useful comment on the benefit of observing thoughts and learning to direct attention wisely:

*I recently read, in the book *My Stroke of Insight* by brain scientist Jill Bolte Taylor, that the natural life span of an emotion—the average time it takes for it to move through the nervous system and body—is only a minute and a half. After that we need thoughts to keep the emotion rolling. So, if we wonder why we lock into painful emotional states like anxiety, depression, or rage, we need look no further than our own endless stream of inner dialogue.*

An article ([TinyURL.com/ldf3ejy](http://tinyurl.com/ldf3ejy)) on some myths about mindfulness is well worth a read. The author discusses the idea of mindfulness without the Buddhist teachings that go with it about *right* mindfulness and points out (amongst other things!) that *Mindfulness as a practice is inseparable from the intentions of the person practicing it.*

Finally, this reminder

[www.newrepublic.com/article/119477/science-generosity-why-giving-makes-you-happy](http://www.newrepublic.com/article/119477/science-generosity-why-giving-makes-you-happy)

about the happiness that being generous creates is well worth reading. While it is not about meditation as such, it is a central

teaching of the Buddha, and one that is increasingly supported by science.

Happy ramblings  
Chrys

## Coffee



(Inspired by the confessions of an addicted yogi on the Summer Retreat)

Coffee; my old travelling companion.  
I have missed our morning appointments.  
Your grounded loveliness is the holy communion of friendship,  
And the soothing moment in a busy day.  
But Coffee, I am curious about the rumours.  
What do you do to make people say you're bad?  
Do you make their hearts flutter and knees quiver?  
You incorrigible old rogue!  
Is there no limit to your fragrant wickedness?

**Heather**



*Once during a Mountain Seat ceremony at San Francisco Zen Center, a student asked the incoming abbot, "What can the dharma teach me about serving others?"*

*The abbot answered, "What others? Serve yourself!"*

*"How," the student persisted, "can I serve myself?"*

*The new abbot responded, "Take care of others."*

True service is always mutually beneficial. When we care for others, we are also nurturing ourselves. This understanding fundamentally shifts the way we provide care.

**Frank Ostaseski** from article “serving others, transforming ourselves” Buddhadharma | February 2013

## Love after Love

by Derek Walcott

The time will come  
When, with elation,  
You will greet yourself arriving  
At your door, in your own mirror,  
And each will smile at the other's welcome,

And say, sit here, Eat.  
You will love again the stranger who was your self.  
Give win. Give bread. Give back your heart  
To itself, to the stranger who has loved you

All your life, whom you ignored  
For another, who know you by heart.  
Take down the love letters from the bookshelf,

The photographs, the desperate notes,  
Peel your image from the mirror.  
Sit. Feast on your life.

## Christchurch Sitting Group



### Normal schedule for 2015

Wednesdays 7.30pm – 9.15pm

Our “two venue” format for Sitting Group is working well. All are welcome to join us.

**1<sup>st</sup> Weds of the month:** Ferndale School

**2<sup>nd</sup> Weds of the month** Opawa Zendo

**3<sup>rd</sup> Weds of the month** Ferndale School

*Facilitated session*

**4<sup>th</sup> Weds of month:** Opawa Zendo

If there are **five Wednesday's** in a month, the default for the 5<sup>th</sup> Wednesday will be Ferndale School.

Addresses:

**Ferndale School** 104 Merivale Lane, staffroom  
**Opawa Zendo** 4 Kennedy Place, (off Opawa Rd)



## Registration for retreats – new e-mail option!

We offer two options for registering for our multiday retreats: e-mail and post. Instructions are below:

### Email registration:

1. Visit [www.southern-insight.org.nz/](http://www.southern-insight.org.nz/) and download a pdf or Word file of the registration form.
2. Complete this form by hand or on your computer.
3. Send a scanned version or Wordfile via e-mail to:  
[Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com](mailto:Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com) with the words “*Registration for XXX retreat*” in the title.
4. **Please note on your form whether you are paying online or by cheque and how much you have paid.**  
Your \$50 deposit can be paid online (see instructions below) or by cheque posted to the address provided in the retreat information.
5. You will receive a response acknowledging receipt of your registration along with more information about the retreat.

### Postal registration

1. Go to our website (<http://www.southern-insight.org.nz/>) and download a pdf of the Registration form. Alternatively call Paul Sapstead 381 0444 and request a form by post.
2. Complete the registration form and post to the address shown for that retreat
3. **Note on your form whether you are paying online or by cheque and how much you have paid.**

Your \$50 deposit can be paid online (see instructions below) or by cheque posted with the registration form.

Please include your return address for correspondence (a stamp addressed envelope is appreciated)

### Online payment instructions

Account for payment: Southern Insight Meditation...

Account Number: [.ASB] **12-3148-0078078-00**

Please note the following in your payment:

In the *Particulars* box, put the initials of the teacher followed by “rt” and the year (e.g. SBrt2015 for Subhana Barzarghi retreat).

In the *Code* box, put how many people you are paying for (e.g. 1 person).

In the *Reference* box, put your name

e.g. Particulars Code Reference SB RT 2015 2 people J Smith

**Please note on your registration form that you have paid your deposit online and say how much you have paid.**

### Refunds of Deposits

The deposit for retreats is refundable up to the closing date of the retreat booked, less a \$10.00 charge for administration costs. Deposits cannot be refunded after the retreat closing date. That 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.

*To pay less than the full retreat cost, you must talk with a committee member before coming on retreat.*

## Getting our newsletter and hearing about local events

If you did not receive this newsletter by mail and would like to be on our mailing list, please phone Dermot on (03) 381 4617. Any donation towards the cost would be appreciated.

### Get it by e-mail!

In addition to the regular mail-out of the newsletter, we send out the newsletter as a PDF attached to e-mail. If you think you would like to be on our e-mail newsletter circulation list, all you need to do is send an e-mail to [Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com](mailto:Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com) with the words “**subscriber**” in the title.

If you would like to replace your hard copy with this E-version, include your name and address in the body of the e-mail and state “**remove from hard copy list**”.

### Hear about local events!

If you would also like to go on [the local sangha contact list](#) to receive updates of local events in the Christchurch area, also state “**add to local list**” in the e-mail.

### Unsubscribe

If at any time you want to be removed from our e-mail contact list, just send us an e-mail with the words “**unsubscribe**” in the title.

## Contact Details for Southern Insight

**E-mail:** [southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com](mailto:southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com)

**Post:** 16 Ward Street, Christchurch

**Website:** <http://southern-insight.org.nz>

E-mail is generally checked weekly. For a more immediate response, call one the steering group members listed above.

## Southern Insight Steering Group

The steering group has six people who volunteer their time to run the organisational end of southern insight. There is also a number of folk out there who help us in many ways – thanks very much to all of you. If you feel you would like to get more involved, there are lots of little (and medium sized) jobs that we would very much appreciate a hand with. It is a tremendous group of people – very welcoming!

If you have any questions about retreats or other events, or would like to get more involved, here are the contact details of the steering group, all of whom would be happy to talk with you:

<i>Di</i>	338 7070
<i>Meg</i>	328 8052
<i>Dermot</i>	381 4617
<i>Rachel</i>	382 2019
<i>Sarah</i>	027 669 3824
<i>Chrys</i>	338 0313

**E-mail:** [southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com](mailto:southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com)



If undelivered, please return to:  
13 Dacre Street  
Christchurch

