



Southern Insight

Newsletter of Southern Insight Meditation, Christchurch, New Zealand

Newsletter 61

August 2018

UPCOMING EVENTS 2018/2019

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 food and accommodation. Teachers receive donations.

Spring Retreat

Love and Liberation in Difficult Times

With **Subhana Barzaghi and Julie Downard**

Friday 28 September (evening) - Friday 5 October

Cost** Full week \$295/\$150*; 3- day option (limited places) \$170/\$85*

Venue: Staveley Camp

In challenging times we're called upon to bring as much love, wisdom and compassion as we can into the world. Through insight meditation and deep inquiry, we can touch the liberating wisdom that has the power to transform the forces of fear, anger and delusion. We will learn the art of welcoming each moment with kind attention, opening our hearts to ourselves and all beings. Suitable for both those new to meditation and those more experienced (see inside newsletter for more information).

Pre-Xmas Treat! Day long retreat with James and Jane Baraz

Sunday 9 December

Cost: TBA

Venue: Te Ahi Kaa, at Waiora (Christchurch)

We are very fortunate to again welcome James & Jane Baraz (from California) to Christchurch for a one-day pre-Xmas workshop/daylong retreat. James Baraz has been teaching mindfulness meditation since 1978 and the Awakening Joy course since 2003. He is co-author of *Awakening Joy: 10 Steps to Happiness*, a book based on the course. The focus of this event will be announced later in the year – check out our website for more information.

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

Dharma Gathering

Friday 11th – 18th January 2019

Venue: Staveley Camp

3 & 7-day options Cost \$ 345* for 7 days/ \$220* for 3 days – see website for info. about youth and family rates

This summer we will be running our long-awaited fourth dharma-gathering event. This family friendly event melds meditation with more interactive practices: workshops, bodywork, poetry, art, movement, debate, and discussion. It is a collaboration between Southern Insight and the Diamond Sangha Zen Tradition and four well known senior teachers from the Zen and Insight traditions are attending: Subhana Barzaghi, Jeremy Logan and Arthur Wells, Sean Weaver.

Registration for our retreats can be by e-mail or post. See the back of this newsletter for more information or see our website: <http://southern-insight.org.nz>.

Costs: Retreats and courses are set to be as affordable as possible. *A sliding scale or subsidised rates for those on a limited income is available. See also "top up" fund information in this newsletter. Please enquire.

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



<http://www.astronomy.com/news/2018/03/all-galaxies-rotate-once-every-billion-years>

“Things don't have purposes, as if the universe were a machine, where every part has a useful function. What's the function of a galaxy? I don't know if our life has a purpose and I don't see that it matters. What does matter is that we're a part. Like a thread in a cloth or a grass-blade in a field. It is and we are. What we do is like wind blowing on the grass.”
— Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Lathe of Heaven*

Future Retreat events

In 2019 we can look forward to a one-day workshop with Sharda Rogell on **28 April** and in **Spring 2019** a week-long retreat with Jeremy Logan & Di Robertson

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>

Enquiries:
Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com

Greetings ...

As winter gives way to spring this year it seems to be sending the message that things return. Back come the bees, the birds, the sun, the light in the evenings. It is a wonderful antidote to that terrible scourge of modern life —‘FOMO’ - the fear of missing out! For me the bright flowers of the kowhai that will only show for 3-4 weeks reminds me that better than trying to shove every last experience into the basket of my life— I can pick the one that is right for this moment now.



For Southern Insight what is shortly returning is our Spring Retreat. This year we will have two teachers - our home-grown Julie Downard and Subhana Barzarghi – who 20 years ago taught our first Southern Insight retreat. Subhana has faithfully returned to us here in the South to teach many retreats since that first one - sharing her wisdom, humour and creativity – and this retreat is likely to be as delightful as always!

Another returning event is the Dharma Gathering (summer 2019) where we join with the Diamond Sangha Zen tradition for shared meditation practices mixed with social activities, workshops and creative practices. Before Xmas we will also have the treat of a return visit by James and Jane Baraz who were last here in 2013.

There is more about the spring retreat in this newsletter as well as an article by Julie about her recent experience with the movement of ‘Buddhist chaplaincy’ and a piece by Di about our recent SIM ‘strategy day’ – as well as poems and other contributions from the Southern Insight sangha

Enjoy
Meg 😊

About the teachers



Subhana Barzaghi has been dedicated to a meditative and engaged spiritual life of inquiry since first encountering Buddhism in India in 1974. Subhana was invited to

teach in the Insight Tradition in early 1990's and is also a Zen Roshi. She has taught numerous silent retreats and Dharma gatherings. Subhana is a guiding teacher for the Insight meditation teachers' community in Australia and New Zealand, Kuan Yin Meditation Centre, Blue Gum Sangha, Southern Insight NZ, and Melbourne Insight Group.



Julie Downard has been practising meditation since 1991 when living in England. She has practised intensively with teachers in both Insight and Zen

traditions in India, England, California, Australia, France and New Zealand. Julie has been teaching on retreats and Dharma Gatherings since 2007. She lives in Christchurch and is a co-founder and trustee of Southern Insight Meditation.



Jeremy Logan Jeremy has been involved in Insight Meditation since 1984 spending several years in the east and in Europe learning and practicing meditation. He has been teaching retreats throughout

NZ since 1992. Jeremy currently lives in the Wairarapa working as manager of a community counselling and family violence prevention centre and has a small private counselling practice.

A note on Dana: you may notice that most of our retreats mention the word "dana". The registration fees 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 teachers' sharing of their depth of knowledge and expertise. The amount given is up to the giver.



Arthur Wells is Zen roshi (senior teacher) in the lay tradition founded by Robert Aitken in Hawaii. He is leader of the Christchurch Diamond Sangha. He is a counsellor and social worker, and has worked in Lifeline, the Family Mental

Health Service and Stopping Violence Services. He began meditation practice in Hindu traditions in the 70's, and in the early 80's took up Zen, becoming a student of John Daido Looi Roshi and later of Ross Bolleter Roshi, who authorised him to teach Zen in February 2008.



Sean Eiji Weaver Sensei is a teacher in the Diamond Sangha Zen lineage. He has been training in Zen since the 1980s and became a student in the Diamond Sangha in 1998. His teaching focuses on the

intersection of Zen practice and social /environmental action. To this end he and his wife Jo Campbell (Practice Leader in the Diamond Sangha) developed a version of 'stillness and action' Zen training they call 'Ekodo' (ecological way). They have run retreats over the years in Wellington and then Golden Bay where they currently live. Sean and Jo have a strong sense of Dharma kinship with the Southern Insight Group.



Di Robertson has over 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, has led many short retreats and co-taught longer retreats with senior teachers. She lives in Christchurch and is a co-founder and trustee of Southern Insight Meditation.

Spring Retreat



Love and Liberation in Difficult Times

With Subhana Barzaghi and Julie
Downard

Friday 28 September (evening) - Friday 5 October

In challenging times we're called upon to bring as much love, wisdom and compassion as we can into the world. Through insight meditation and deep inquiry, we can touch the liberating wisdom that has the power to transform the forces of fear, anger and delusion. We will learn the art of welcoming each moment with kind attention, opening our hearts to ourselves and all beings; as well as the art of fearless presence - a platform for insight that liberates us from our limited, conditioned, beliefs and behaviours, which cause suffering. Love and liberation help us meet the joys and sorrows of life with steadiness and wisdom.

This retreat is ideal for both beginners and experienced practitioners.

Venue Staveley Camp, Canterbury foothills

Enquiries:

Email: Southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

Phone: Chrys 0272868653

Registration forms and info on our website

<http://Southern-insight.org.nz>

Registrations close Friday 21 September (this is the date registrations must be received by).

Cost Full week \$295/\$150*; 3- day option (limited places) \$170/\$85* plus dana for teacher**

* Sliding scale is available down to half the full cost of the retreat

** Subsidised places are available through our "top up fund" – please ask.

Helping hands



We are looking for helping hands for the upcoming spring retreat and for the Dharma Gathering in the Summer – if you can help with jobs like shopping and picking up people and goods — let us know via E-mail at

Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com

We will also be looking for cooks for the Dharma Gathering so if you think you might be interested drop us a line and we will put your name on a list so we can get in touch later on.

Send E-mail to Southern Insight with words "Retreat helping hands" in the title □

Buddhist Chaplaincy

Until recently if you wanted to train as a Buddhist chaplain you had to go to either the USA or more lately to Australia. The great news is that training is now available in New Zealand, through the Amitabha Hospice in Auckland. Amitabha Hospice is the first Buddhist hospice in New Zealand and was started by Ecie Hursthouse, who is a student of Lama Zopa Rinpoche and who has long years of experience in hospice work. Ecie, a woman of amazing vision and skill, has developed the Chaplaincy training and leads parts of it.

The role of a chaplain is to be present for those who are suffering, in whatever form that may take. Chaplains work with the dying and the bereaved, but also in hospitals, universities, prisons, the military, and until quite recently, in workplaces, particularly in the public services.

“Life is so beautiful that death has fallen in love with it, a jealous, possessive love that grabs at what it can. But life leaps over oblivion lightly, losing only a thing or two of no importance, and gloom is but the passing shadow of a cloud...”

Yann Martell, from *Life of Pi*

Chaplaincy in the west has largely been the domain of the Christian tradition, and chaplains in other religions have been rare. There is however a large and growing number of people who don't feel comfortable working with a Christian chaplain, and who are seeking alternatives. Buddhist psychology has much to offer in understanding death and assisting the dying, which is the focus of the first level of training offered at Amitabha. All transitions can be challenging and dying especially so if preparing for the fact of our inevitable death hasn't been a part of our life. Many people don't have others they feel comfortable discussing their death with, have unresolved issues they want to deal with, and questions about the deeper meaning of life tend to arise when we know we are close to the end of life, which may never have been considered before. Participants learn about the beliefs and practices around death in the predominant Buddhist traditions, explore their own feelings about death, hear from medical professionals about the dying process and what pain management is possible these days. Skills practice helps participants learn how to talk about death, what to listen for, and how to deal with the difficult questions that come up.

The training qualifies participants to be an Apprentice Buddhist Chaplain, and after completion of 200 hours of volunteer work, a Buddhist Chaplain. The intention is to offer a level two training in years to come, as current apprentices complete their volunteer hours, and this will focus on prison work and other areas where chaplains can assist.

In 2017, three Buddhist practitioners from Christchurch completed the initial course – one in the Tibetan tradition, one in the Zen tradition, and myself. Completing this training has encouraged me to take up death as a practice, to turn my mind towards death as a certainty in life, and to explore my feelings about my own mortality. I reflect with gratitude on the way dharma practice has given me the strength and courage to bring my death into my life and do this exploration, recognising how rare and precious that is. Equally it has thrown into relief that fact that I am alive. We are all dying, one way or another, but right up until the moment of death, we are actually alive. I'd like to be truly alive, right up until the moment I die.

There are now six Apprentice Buddhist Chaplains (ABCs for short) here in Christchurch, available to serve whenever needed. We meet regularly to support each other, to share our experiences and understandings, and to deepen our own practice. If you need a chaplain, please contact me at angulijulie@gmail.com and I will be able to put you in touch with someone who can help you. If you are interested in attending the training, I am happy to discuss it with you.

Julie

Can we afford joy in a world of suffering?

Looking for goodness in ourselves, in others and in life is so vitally important in these times. Seeing what is good and noble about humanity helps us connect with our joy and aliveness. That natural joy and love of life helps remind others to stay connected with that perspective as well. We remember how good it feels to bring out the best in those around us and make this a better world. And we become positive

agents of change, not because we have our heads in the sand, but because life is too precious and miraculous not to want to do everything we can to let our love and goodness shine through and be a force for healing the world.

So can we afford joy in a world of suffering? I believe, in a world of suffering, we can't afford *not* to find joy.

Extract from article by James Baraz in Huffington Post, November 2010

Zorma's dance

24/7 more and more people
for the benefit of humanity
are attending
the omnipresent church
of conscious awareness
thereby activating
the joyous arrival of gratitude
in individuals, communities: All.

(Guy shared this song his neighbour spontaneously composed and danced to in the street – much to his inspiration and delight!)

SIM looks to the future in a strategy day



As you may be aware the strategic direction and day to day organising of Southern Insight Meditation is

organised by a group of trustees and a steering group. We recently spent a Sunday together for an inspiring and heart-warming strategy day. We reflected on the purpose of SIM, on how to create and foster connections with community and sangha, and how best to support those who contribute to SIM.

We have been SIM'ing for over 20 years now and so reflecting on the context of SIM in 2018 was informative and insightful. Just taking the time to reflect on our motivations and intentions was supportive in itself.

This is of course a "work in progress". We look forward to continuing our inner and outer reflections, adapting and furthering the conversations with any of you coming to our events or reading the newsletter

Di



*There are things you can't reach. But
You can reach out to them, and all day long.*

The wind, the bird flying away. The idea of god.

*And it can keep you busy as anything else, and
happier.*

*I look; morning to night I am never done with
looking.*

*Looking I mean not just standing around, but
standing around
As though with your arms open.*

— Mary Oliver

Southern Insight Meditation Steering Group

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:

Di	338 7070
Dermot	381 4617
Sarah	027 669 3824
Chrys	338 0313
Lois	332 6106
Meg	328 8052
Rachel	382 2019

E-mail: 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 of the steering group members listed above.

Registration for retreats –

Online registration: this is a new option available on our website. Visit www.southern-insight.org.nz

Email registration:

1. Visit 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 Word file via e-mail to: 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.

To pay less than the sliding scale, you must talk with a committee member before coming on retreat.

Postal registration

1. Go to our website (<http://www.southern-insight.org.nz/>) and download a pdf of the Registration form. Alternatively, email Southern Insight 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: Kiwi bank 38-9017-0230890-04

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. JLDR2017 for Jeremy Logan & Di Robertson 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. 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 retreat registration, less a \$25.00 charge for administration costs. Deposits cannot be refunded after the retreat registration closing date except for compassionate reasons. 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.

If undelivered, please return to:
13 Dacre Street
Christchurch

