



Southern Insight

Newsletter of Southern Insight Meditation, Christchurch, New Zealand

Newsletter 65

August 2019

UPCOMING EVENTS 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: Spacious Mind, Fearless Heart
With **Jeremy Logan and Di Robertson**

27 September - 4 October 2019

Cost \$295 (150)* plus dana

Venue: Staveley Camp, Canterbury

The practices of Insight Meditation support our inherent capacity to awaken to wisdom and to the open heartedness that is already here. In recognising our own suffering, we recognise our interconnectedness and see that our personal welfare and happiness are intimately interwoven with the wellbeing of all. In these challenging times, deep inner 'work' supports the capacity to engage in the transformation of our inner and outer worlds while remaining steady and balanced.

This silent retreat is suitable for both those new to meditation and those with experience. The programme will include sitting and walking meditation, evening talks, instruction, and time for discussion.

Summer Retreat

With **Subhana Barzagli and Julie Downard**

Friday 10 January (evening) - Friday 17 January

Cost \$295 (150)* plus dana

Venue: Staveley Camp

In the summer we will again warmly welcome senior insight teacher and Zen Roshi Subhana Barzagli who will teach a retreat alongside Julie Downard that will be suitable for both new and experienced meditators.

Registration for our retreats [Please register online](http://www.southern-insight.org.nz) (link can be found on website www.Southern-insight.org.nz).

If you have any problems with registering, then please email or phone us as per below. **Spring retreat registrations close Sunday 15th September.**

Enquiries by e-mail to Southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com or phone Chrys on 0272 86 86 53 , or see our website: www.Southern-insight.org.nz

Costs: Retreats and courses are set to be as affordable as possible to cover the cost of the retreat itself. Teachers receive dana. *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.

NOTE: We offset the carbon emissions from teacher travel to our retreats through EKOS (ekos.org.nz)– see inside newsletter for more detail

***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*



(photo Linda L.)

PRECONCEPTIONS

Just as fog is dispelled by the strength of the sun
and is dispelled no other way,
preconception is cleared by the strength of realization.

There's no other way of clearing preconceptions.

Experience them as baseless dreams.

Experience them as ephemeral bubbles.

Experience them as insubstantial rainbows.

Experience them as indivisible space.

Milarepa

Southern Insight Meditation Steering Group

If you have any questions about retreats or other events, or would like to get more involved we would be happy to talk with you:

- Di 338 7070
- Dermot 381 4617
- Sarah 027 669 3824
- Chrys 027 286 8653
- Lois 332 6106
- Meg 328 8052
- Rachel 382 2019

E-mail: southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com
(checked weekly)

Post: 16 Ward Street, Christchurch

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

Kia ora koutou

We recently put an email out to see if people were interested in helping with the work of Southern Insight and we have had a great response. Part of that is reflected in the many people who offered images, poems and articles for this newsletter – so many we have some for the next newsletter as well!

As we are coming up to our retreat with Jeremy Logan and Di Robertson in September – more of those helping hands will start whirring around, which is actually as lovely an activity as anything that bursts out in spring!

Those of us who have been involved with Southern Insight for a long time (the “original SIM” to quote Kate, our manager for the recent half-day retreat) have met a couple of times already this year to start thinking ahead. After 21 years we did take a moment to reflect on the extraordinariness of it all – so many people who have been part of this journey and who are still here with us; others who go away for a while but pop back up to a warm reunion ; and new folk who bring new energy and curiosity.

The next 20 years may look very different but this friendly, sincere desire to sit alongside others with the same questions and hopes will undoubtedly remain.

Enjoy the lovely offerings in this newsletter
And thanks to you readers and contributors alike!

Enjoy
Meg 😊

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.

Future SIM events in 2020

There are several things “in the pipe-line” for 2020, as well as our usual summer and spring retreats:

Sharda Rogell retreat in March

In March 2020 we can look forward to a one-day (possibly two day) non-residential retreat with Sharda Rogell– more details on our website, as this firms up.

Awakening Joy programme

“Awakening Joy” is a transformative and internationally recognized course created by leading Insight meditation teacher James Baraz. It is designed to awaken joy through engaging themes and practices that incline the mind toward well-being and deeper insight. For the past six years Southern Insight has been offering a supported group programme led by Julie Downard, where participants explore the themes and teachings together. Julie will offer this course again in 2020. If you would like to go on a mailing list for updates - email Julie at Southern Insight Southern.Insight.Meditation@gmail.com

Non-residential retreats 2020

You may notice that our spring and summer retreats in 2019/2020 will not be offering a “weekend option”. This is not necessarily a permanent decision but one that suited our current management team resources and energy, as well as a thoughtful response to some of the expressed needs of those on our retreats.

What we will be offering in 2020 are some “non-residential” retreats in Christchurch. This is a format suited to people who find it hard to get away from the commitments of their family and work, as well as a wonderful opportunity to integrate meditation into our daily lives. Look out for these in the upcoming schedule.

Events offered by other Sangha

There are an increasing number of events in the Insight tradition available around the country these days, which is wonderful. Here are a couple that might be of interest.

Spring 4 -day retreat with Jeremy Logan and Kanya Stewart

Spacious mind, fearless heart

Sept 18 – Sept 22 2019
(Wangapeka, Nelson)

Details available www.wangapeka.org

This spring retreat at Wangapeka precedes the Southern Insight retreat at Staveley – a wonderful opportunity for those who might like to do a back-to-back retreat.

Five-day Study and Practice retreat – With Willa Thaniya Reid, Elizabeth Day & Jill Shepherd

Walking the Buddha’s path to freedom

Tuesday 4- Sunday 9 Feb 2020
(Auckland)

Details available: <https://jill0shepherd-insightmeditation.com/teaching-new-zealand/>

This is a rare opportunity for those with experience in Insight or mindfulness meditation to undertake a study and practice retreat. It will include shared enquiry into core texts and teachings; guided and silent sitting and walking meditation; relational practice, using the guidelines of Insight Dialogue; individual meetings with the teachers; and gentle mindful movement.

About the teachers



Jeremy Logan Jeremy has been involved in Insight Meditation since 1984 spending several years in the east and in Europe learning and practising 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.



Di Robertson has over 25 years' experience in insight meditation. She has taught

beginners' courses since 2000, has led a number of 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. Di also works as an ecologist and is a stepparent and grandparent.



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.

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.

Reminder : RETREAT REGISTRATION - GET IN EARLY!

If you are familiar with our old retreat registration system, please look out for "new registration closing dates" which will ask you to complete your registration and payment earlier than in the past. You can also pay your full retreat fee online before the retreat. 😊



Take the time to pray —
it is the sweet oil
that eases the hinge into the garden
so the doorway can swing open easily.
You can always go there.

Consider yourself blessed.
These stones that break your bones
will build the altar of your love.

Your home is the garden.
Carry its odour hidden in you into the city.
Suddenly your enemies will buy seed
packets
and fall to their knees to plant flowers
in the dirt by the road.
They'll call you Friend
and honour your passing among them.
When asked, "Who was that?"
they will say,
"Oh, that one has been beloved by us
since before time began."
This from the people
who would have trampled over you
to maintain their advantage.

Give everything away except your garden
your worry, your fear, your small-
mindedness.
Your garden can never be taken from you.

Lynn Park
(Poem shared by Heather HL., photo by
Lindsay L.)

Skilful response to climate change

Those of you who know something about Southern Insight will probably be aware that we have several principles that are fundamental to our way of operating. For instance, we take the core Buddhist precepts, such as 'non-harming' into consideration when we plan the food for our retreats. Also, thanks to the work of many wonderful volunteers, we can run our retreats at a low cost that enables them to be freely available, in keeping with the tradition of Buddhist teaching as it has been offered for more than two thousand years.

These are not rules but living guidelines that we revisit regularly. As we do so we become aware of new things that are important for us to consider. The most recent of these is to ask – in a time where climate change is causing us to question many of the things we once took for granted – what is the right way forward?

As part of this we have been encouraged to look at whether the air travel of teachers to run retreats can be justified, and whether there are alternatives we can explore. Responding to climate change needs to happen at many levels — individual, community, corporate, national and international. At the personal level flying is one of the most carbon emitting activities we undertake, and many people are reducing their travel accordingly. In thinking about this we were conscious that there is not one fixed view about the appropriateness of travel for any one person. Travel can bring many wonderful benefits, and in a small pacific country with limited public transport it is particularly hard to avoid.

We decided our first response will be to ensure that the greenhouse emissions

from all our teacher flights are offset through EKOS (see item below). In the future, as we turn our minds towards this, other options and new possibilities will certainly emerge. Thinking about 'right action' isn't always easy but living consciously is also wholesome and joyful. If you are interested in this discussion, we would welcome your input.

"I remember my obligations, taught to me by a Native American elder of Cherokee descent, Stan Rushworth: that we are born onto this planet with the obligations of caring for it, and of making decisions based on what will be best for the future generations of all species.

So each morning, I awake and engage in my morning practice, part of which is pondering what I shall do each day to serve Earth and all her species. When I approach my life from this perspective, no matter how bleak the future appears, I always have work to do and services to perform."

Dahr Jamail
(shared by Christine D.)

EKOS

Ekos is a right livelihood fair trade carbon social enterprise founded by Zen teacher and Southern Insight Meditation friend Sean Weaver. The Ekos purpose is to finance sustainable land management and climate resilience through carbon and other ecosystem markets. As part of this service, Ekos provide carbon footprint measurement and reduction support, carbon offsets from restorative forest carbon projects in New Zealand and the Pacific Islands, and zero carbon certification. For Sean and his team Ekos is a dojo (place of dharma practice). This includes using mindfulness, metta, and karuna as core elements of business

culture. He and his staff attend meditation retreats as a form of professional development.

Learn more about EKOS at ekos.org.nz (material from Sean W.)

Conversations that Connect



(photo: Mike R.)

The August half-day retreat led by Insight teacher Di Robertson and Zen Roshi Arthur Wells helped us explore the everyday challenges of communication that we all experience. The format of the day was based on the 'non-violent communication' (NVC) work by Marshall Rosenberg. This work starts with the premise that it is our nature to enjoy giving. The question then is what separates us from our compassionate nature so that we become defensive, withdraw or attack? Rosenberg came to identify the problem as our moving away from what is observed, felt and needed into judging and diagnosing.

The four steps of NVC are:

1. Say what concrete actions we observe others are doing that we like or dislike without introducing any judgment or evaluation.
2. Identify feelings
3. Express the needs that lie behind our feelings
4. Make a request

Sounds simple and but for many (even most of us) identifying the feelings that lie at the heart of our needs can be very difficult. Yet if we can connect our feelings to our needs, there is more chance that others will act out of compassion for us.

Needs which all human beings have alike are:

Spiritual Communion—beauty, harmony, inspiration, order, peace;

Autonomy—to be able to choose our own dreams, values, goals and actions, and to make our own plans for these.

Integrity: authenticity, self-worth, opportunities to be creative and to create meaning and purpose in our life

Physical Nurturance—to have air, water, food, movement, protection from illness and danger, rest, sexual expression, shelter, touch;

Play—to have fun and laughter; to experience joy and excitement, relaxation and recovery;

Interdependence—acceptance and appreciation from others, closeness, community, consideration, emotional safety, empathy, honesty, love, reassurance, respect, support, trust, understanding, warmth, and to have the opportunity to give from the heart and contribute to others' lives and well-being.

If you are interested in learning more, there are local trainers around the country who hold practice groups (www.nvc.org.nz)

A useful book is: "*Say what you mean - a mindful approach to nonviolent communication. How to find your voice, speak your truth and listen deeply*" by Oren Jay Sofer.

(material from Arthur Wells and Di Robertson)

This Day, this Moment

Come

Let us view this day
It may bring inspiration
For you and I

Come

Let us embrace this day
We see and begin to feel
The life that is here

Come

Let us kiss this day
Let love be shown to a day
That brings love to us also

Come

Let us live in this day
There are no shadows to hide us
Here we sense all possibilities of this
world

Come

Let us be this day
For we are as much this world
As this world is us

Indivisible

Complete

This day

This hour

This minute

This moment

This is where we are

Where we live

Where we love

Where we become

All is here

Now

John Collis

New Helping Hands!

Thanks very much to all of those who have replied to our emails about helping with the work that we do at Southern Insight. We have been delighted with the response! 😊 Marion, John, Mike and Jane have offered to help with the work of the steering committee, (including revitalising our library – thanks Jane!) Kate, stepped up to manage our recent half day retreat (with shopping for afternoon tea provided by Heather), and Rachel, Lucy and Trevor have all offered to help out with organising the food and shopping for retreats. Ali Begg has taken on a specific role to help plan for special diets. When you add this to all the wonderful folk who volunteer to cook and manage retreats or pick up people and equipment (so many we can't name), and those who send in items for our newsletter – our core steering committee is feeling greatly strengthened.

There is always room for more and it is good hearted and enjoyable work so feel free to get in touch if you would like to be more involved. Email "Helping Hands": southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

Meditation Super-power!

Gaining a certain degree of continuity of mindfulness is like getting a super-power. The super-power of seeing more clearly. The super-power of greater clarity.

As our clarity increases, we get to see how we resist that which we don't want to feel and try to keep hold of that which we do wish to feel. We get to see our ongoing attempts to take control of the feeling world, in an effort to have a more pleasurable, pain free life.

With our newly acquired super-power, we get to see how in actual fact this habitual,

deeply ingrained, part of the scenery struggle of resisting and clinging causes us to miss being present to life. Causes us to be vulnerable to the condition of discontent.

With our super-power we get to see how instead of resisting we can welcome; instead of clinging we can free. We get to see how remarkably formative, and transforming, this alternative attitude can be.

It is an about turn, a bend in the road, a loving undertaking (within love, the present is lovelier), it is relaxing our hold (relaxed, the present is more available), it is letting it all in lovingly, and letting it all go (when it is ready to go) gracefully and confidently.

It is both wholly engaged, and a surrender.

Guy W.



(photo Mike R.)

Christchurch Wednesday Sitting Group

All Welcome!

Our Wednesday night sitting group is currently in great heart! It is held each week from 7.30 – 9.15pm at the Opawa Zen Do (4 Kennedy Place). Wednesday nights are open to all who want to practice meditation / mindfulness in the insight tradition. The evenings have a varied programme including meditation, teachings for daily life, facilitated discussions, and mindful movement.

We continue to make Wednesday nights available freely. A donation / koha is invited to contribute to room hire (suggested \$3) and any koha / dana for the facilitator.

Registration for retreats

For **Online registration for all our retreats** visit www.southern-insight.org.nz

Online registration:

1. Visit <http://southern-insight.org.nz/about/how-to-register-and-pay-for-our-retreats/> to find the online registration form.
2. Complete this form and pay your deposit.
3. Payment of \$50 is required to confirm registration and many people choose to pay the full amount for the retreat when you register. **Please note on your form whether you are paying online and how much you have paid.**

Online payment instructions

Account for payment:

Southern Insight Meditation

Account Number:

Kiwi bank 38-9017-0230890-04

Please note the following:

- *Particulars* box: put the initials of the teacher followed by "rt" and the year (e.g. JLDR2019 for Jeremy Logan & Di Robertson retreat).
- *Code* box: put how many people you are paying for (e.g. 1 person).
- *Reference* box: put your name e.g. J Smith

Having trouble registering online?

If you have any difficulties registering online or would like to post a cheque rather than pay by direct debit then

please feel free to call the retreat contact person (see website for specific contact for the retreat you are registering for) or email us at

southern.insight.meditation@gmail.com

Sliding scale of payment:

Retreat costs are set to be as affordable as possible and longer retreats including a sliding scale. The actual cost of the retreat is the higher amount, however it is possible to pay a subsidized rate, for those on a limited income, anywhere from the actual cost down to the bracketed figure.

Top-Up Fund

The top-up fund is for those who find even the sliding scale rate is a barrier to coming on 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.

NB: To pay less than the sliding scale, please talk with us before coming on retreat.

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.

If undelivered, please return to:
13 Dacre Street
Christchurch

