



Insight Meditation Community of Western Massachusetts

(formerly known as Insight Pioneer Valley)

IWM Sangha News - 10/27/22

Generosity In Action In-Person/Hybrid Update

Last week we put out a call letting the sangha know about an immediate opportunity for generosity to improve our hybrid capacity. The sangha's response is heartening!

The first gift came within minutes of the blast going out and one week later, a total of twenty-five people have contributed gifts ranging from \$10 to \$1500. Much gratitude to all who were willing and able to contribute!

With funds in-hand, assuming all goes well with the purchase and testing of the new equipment, in November we have two offerings that will potentially be hybrids. Watch for updates on our website.

- Starting November 15th, Nick Boutros will be offering a four week course on [“Death, Impermanence, and Climate Change.”](#) The course will definitely be offered on Zoom and Nick is happy to run it as a hybrid if enough people want to come in-person to the center. We'll be reaching out soon to those who have already signed up to see if they plan to come in-person or via Zoom and to see if there might be volunteers to help with hosting.
- On November 19th, Manny Mansbach will offer a half-day hybrid retreat on [“Generosity/Dana”](#) if enough people sign up a week ahead of time (Nov 12). Happily, we already have volunteers to host both in-person at the center and on

Zoom. As you'll see in Manny's retreat description further below, "generosity is one of the Buddha's foundational teachings. Most of us naturally practice generosity in a multitude of ways in our lives, but still yearn to be able to open or give with more ease. Investigating generosity requires that we examine the ways in which we hold on and perpetuate the suffering of the contracted self. The exploration of generosity is a path to discovering our interconnectedness and the selfless nature of the liberated heart, of relinquishing, of letting go and unleashing the beauty and joy of the non-grasping heart."

Now, as we begin to hold more offerings at the center's Eastworks space (Suite 242), we need someone to steward our sangha as IWM's volunteer Facilities Coordinator. This role was most recently filled by Gary N. and before that, Rick H - both took great care of our space. In addition, we also need folks who the Facilities Coordinator can turn to to help clean in advance of in-person offerings. This year, when needed, Cathy R has pulled together a team. If you might be willing to help clean or are interested in learning more about the Facilities Coordinator role, please email volunteer@insightwma.org.

Dharma Dialogue with Jennifer D.

Thinking Mind

This morning, as I sat down with pen and paper in hand, I realized that it was time to meditate. And what I really wanted to do was get to work on this column... first! In the span of a few minutes, the Mind had shared with me at least five good reasons why I "should" wait, write-first-and-meditate-later. Luckily, I didn't believe a word of what it was saying. I caught the "should," put the pen down, and settled in to meditate. The Mind often has good information for us. And I notice when I

meditate that it takes me out of the present moment to make decisions about anything, plan my day, play back yesterday and in general, keep the stories going using advice and its version of clarity to show that it knows best.

Notice is the operative word. Fairly neutral. Yet it carries the compassionate encouragement to step back from all the important stuff that Mind is trying to convey, and return to the present moment. It might be returning to the breath as an anchor. How does that work for you? Can we say, “Oh, thinking Mind is here,” acknowledge it, even accept its presence without harsh internal speech accompanying the recognition? Can we see what part noticing plays in our meditation and in daily life?

Feel free to join in to this Dharma Dialogue at any point by emailing leadership@insightwma.org. Anonymous offerings encouraged, if that helps. And we can always agree to disagree since we are just sharing our experiences with each other without giving advice.

Together in the journey and on the path -

Jennifer D., Community Dharma Steward

Circle of Care

Lauren reports that the Afghan family we are supporting is doing very well. Catholic Charities continues to appreciate donations of household furniture (not beds) and lamps. If you would like to be a part of providing ongoing support to the family or have items for pick up, please email general@insightwma.org.

Downloadable Flyers

Below are downloadable flyers in case you want to share them with a friend or post them on a public bulletin board:

- November Teacher Offerings: [click here](#)
- Fall Courses & Retreats:
- [Death, Impermanence, and Climate Change](#) with Nick Boutros
- [Generosity/Dana](#) with Manny Mansbach
- [Approaching the Winter Solstice: Beginning Again, Here and Now](#) with Devin Berry and Tara Mulay

A Common Read and Feedback

In the coming weeks more information will be shared about IWM's plans for a sangha-wide Common Read of *Radical Friendship* by Kate Johnson. "Grounded in the Buddha's teachings on spiritual friendship, *Radical Friendship* shares seven strategies to help us embody our deepest values in all of our relationships." Here's a link to [learn more about the book](#).

If you have comments, questions, or ideas about the common read or anything else you'd like to share, please contact us: leadership@insightwma.org.

With much care and metta,
trellis, Lucy, Hal, Holly