



## ***News from the Board, 5/14/21***

### **An Acknowledgement**

We, the members of IWM's Board, are aware that we have not consistently shared our process with the sangha at large or made it easy to find information about what's going on in sangha leadership. We know that this can create separation and solidify a sense of hierarchy or inside/outside. Where this has been the case, it is the result of limited capacity - and is actually the opposite of our intention. That said, we recognize that we need to break this pattern: We can't grow capacity without reaching out and opening up to the sangha.

Where we have fallen short, we humbly ask your forgiveness.

**Our aspiration is to co-create - with you - a warm, welcoming, alive space where we can come together to learn, to practice, and to live the Dhamma in joyful relationship.**

Below, we offer updates and information about what's going on in the sangha from the Board's perspective.

### **Leadership/Staffing:**

Later this month we'll be sharing more information about Board roles and responsibilities and how members of the sangha can self-nominate for consideration as we grow our Board.

In March, we welcomed two new part-time consultants (temporary positions that may become permanent). This approach allowed us to hire quickly while giving us the opportunity to test out the positions and see what fits our sangha's needs best. They've brought new energy and a fresh perspective to our organization and we're so appreciative.

Elizabeth Morris, Outreach, Website, and Social Media Coordinator

Keila Franks, Manager of Special Projects and Administration

With Tara stepping down from her role as Interim Guiding Teacher, we decided to explore a new approach to governance: a sangha-led sangha. To that end, we

established a working group to explore alternative sangha structures. Ruth Folchman (Practice Leader) and Lore Detenber (Beloved Community Builder member and White & Awakening in the Dharma co-facilitator) are leading this effort. We also created a scheduling committee, made up of members of the Board, Teachers Council, and Practice Leaders group. The Scheduling Committee (Candace Cassin, Lore Detenber, Hal Fales, Anne Fine, Keila Franks, Manny Mansbach) welcomes ideas and suggestions; they can be reached at [scheduling@insightpv.org](mailto:scheduling@insightpv.org).

## Re-opening

Our aim is to re-open the Center in the Fall. This will of course be contingent upon health and safety considerations. The trend right now is pointing to September and we are hopeful. We're committed to continuing to make (some/all) offerings accessible to those at home, so we're in contact with other sanghas and are exploring options for hybrid programming when we do re-open in person. In order to provide hybrid offerings, we'll also need to do some special fundraising for new equipment.

## Sila

Two Board members and one teacher from the sangha attended "Community, Transparency, and Accountability," a powerful session on committing to ethical practice in sangha, with Egyoku Nakao Roshi, Tenku Ruff Roshi, and Ann Gleig (moderator). We are taking the learning from the session forward into our planning, looking at how we can express our commitment to sila in all that we do as a sangha. As part of this, our goal is to operate more transparently ourselves. This update is part of that effort.

We also want to make sure that everyone in the community knows where to give feedback ([leadership@insightpv.org](mailto:leadership@insightpv.org)).

## Name Change

We appreciate the sangha's collaboration in finding a new name. We're eager to move forward with changing our online presence to reflect our new name. Our email blasts reflect our new name now; our plan is for the website and all of our materials to be updated this summer.

## Equity & Justice

Two of our Board members sit on the **Beloved Community Builders Committee**, a multi-racial group dedicated to looking at questions of diversity and belonging in our sangha through practicing together, dialogue, and shared contemplative learning.

Inspired in part by the work being done by sangha members in the **White & Awakening in the Dharma** curriculum offered this past fall/winter, leaders in the sangha who identify as white (including teachers, Board members, Practice Leaders, committee members, affinity group leaders, etc.) began to meet in an affinity group setting. In this now monthly group, we are looking at how white supremacy culture and racism have helped to shape the culture of our sangha, and how these forces continue to function when we are not aware and practicing pro-actively to counter them and to create a wholesome culture that does not take whiteness as the default.

We are aware that we, as a sangha, need to educate ourselves about ableism, disability justice, and neurodiversity as they relate to the larger issues of diversity, belonging, and justice that we face as a community. We are therefore in the process of creating opportunities for training and deeper inquiry around these matters for sangha leadership as well as the sangha at large. Please look out for these opportunities.

## **Dhamma Circles**

As a way of building community, offering a sense of belonging and connection, and orienting all participants in our offerings to the Sangha *as a whole*, we are planning to hold ongoing Dhamma Circles: a space to come together in community with teachers, Board members, Practice Leaders, members of the Beloved Community Builders Committee, volunteers, and other sangha members, to share our experiences, hopes, and visions for sangha. Please look out for announcements about upcoming Dhamma Circles.

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We welcome all sangha members to step forward with your ideas and energy. The sangha will move in the direction we take it as a community. If you would like to speak with someone from the Board or staff about your ideas, and have energy to lead, please reach out to us at: [leadership@insightpv.org](mailto:leadership@insightpv.org).

with much metta & care,  
trellis, Hal, Lucy & Bernadine

Summaries of Recent Board Meetings can be found [here](#).