



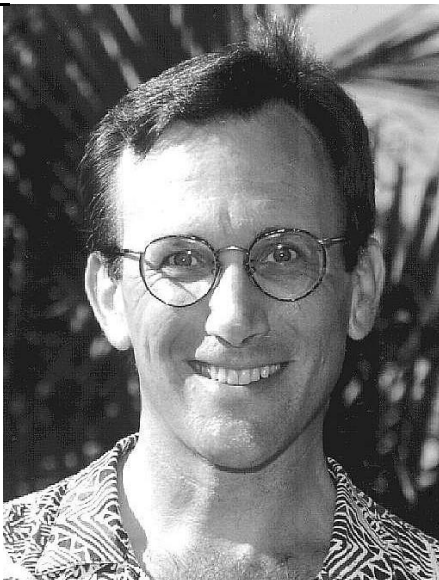
TCVC Ten Day Retreat



with Kamala Masters

Kamala began her dhamma practice with Munindra more than twenty years ago and in recent years she has continued to receive instruction in intensive retreats from Sayadaw U Pandita with whom she has practiced both insight and lovingkindness meditations. She now conducts retreats to share the dhamma including the annual three month retreat at Insight Meditation Society.

Steve has studied the dhamma and practiced insight meditation since 1975. While ordained as a monk for five years in Burma under the guidance of Sayadaw U Pandita he undertook intensive silent practice of insight and lovingkindness meditations. He has been leading meditation retreats since 1990, including the annual three month retreat at Insight Meditation Society.



and Steve Armstrong

See page 6 of this newsletter for details and registration

COMPASSION

by Kamala Masters

It is said that if you remove compassion from the teachings of the Buddha, you remove the heart of the teachings. Compassion is one of the four *Brahma Viharas*, which means divine abodes. These are sometimes referred to as the divine emotions or divine attitudes. Divine abode doesn't mean a geographical place, but rather an attitude or inner virtue we dwell in, we rest in. The four divine abodes are loving kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.

It is said that of all the Brahma Viharas, compassion is most like mindfulness because it develops the capacity to open one's heart to pain and to stay steady with that opening with an element of equanimity. Compassion is experiencing reality with an open heart.

Through my own practice, I came to see that if it were not for compassion, I would not be able to open to the noble truth of suffering. And if it were not for the ability to be more equanimously aware of suffering, I would not be able to deeply develop compassion. It is through compassion that we can allow ourselves to feel the pain of being human, and to open to it with tenderness. To be able to feel tender and broken, and not to touch it with the violence of our judgements, of being not good enough. To experience our vulnerability as a human being, and at the same time to experience the incredible strength it takes to do this.

Compassion asks us, "Can we hold the suffering we experience in the world, of ourselves and others, like we hold a crying child, with the kind of receptivity and gentleness that is not trying to fix or control anything... but simply to be with it without an agenda?" We don't have to go very far to see how fierce this world is. Just below the thin veneer of the busyness and distractions of our lives, we know that anger, blame, rage, judgement, and fear can tear through the terrain of our hearts when there is the slightest turn of events. And many times this happens with barely a warning. That is why compassion practice is an important training. It teaches us to live wisely with the vulnerability of change and insecurity.

True compassion is when you can open your heart to the suffering of all beings, oneself included, and not believe that the pain of others is more important than your own pain, or vice versa. So it cultivates what the Dalai Lama calls an immeasurable impartiality. This immeasur-

continued on Page 2

*Compassion
continued from Page 1*

able impartiality begins to open us to the understanding that suffering is not personal, it's everywhere, it's universal. It begins to open us to the impersonal nature of life. When this wisdom awakens in our hearts, we understand in a very deep way that the suffering we experience within ourselves and others can be transformed into compassion. It is transformed through understanding suffering in a more profound way. That is why the First Noble Truth is called 'noble'—because of the profound wisdom within that understanding.

Opening to the bare honesty of suffering is one thing. Sometimes this in itself can be profoundly healing. The true test of compassion is acting on it, staying centered in our care and wisdom, and not getting pulled into the suffering in such a way that we lose touch with those qualities. Suffering has incredible power to blind us with judgment, anger, overwhelming sadness, and fear. But wisdom and care are stronger.

It is said that the dharma as two great wings: compassion and wisdom. When these two great wings are strong and balanced, then our spiritual life can be truly fulfilling and complete. And each one of those wings supports the other towards more understanding and freedom. The beauty of the practice is that if we ground our practice in compassion, we will attain our highest potential for the benefit of all beings, not just for ourselves.

HOW TO DO COMPASSION PRACTICE

You begin with a person who is going through the most pain or suffering, and someone you can keep your attention with easily. This person may be yourself. The others are in this order, but you can switch around, depending on where you can keep your attention most steady:

Benefactor, Teacher, or Mentor,
Dear Friend or Loved One,
Neutral Person, and
Difficult Person or Enemy

Remember that you can put yourself anywhere within this progression. It may not be that the person you are working with is suffering a lot. It may be just one portion of their lives. Someone may have trouble in their job, a challenge with their health, or in a relationship with one of their family members.

You can use one or more of these phrases. The traditional phrase is:
May you be free of your pain and sorrow.

A phrase that most people like is: **I care about your/this pain.**

Something creative to use for oneself can be: **Out of compassion for myself, may I open to this pain.**

You can also make up your own phrases, but it helps to keep it simple.

One thing that is important to remember when you say the phrases is that your energy is not lost in the pain or the suffering, but that your energy is stabilized in the caring quality of your heart. Compassion is not getting lost in the pain; that is pity. Compassion feels strong and centered, and caring and tender and open, too. It is able to face the truth courageously.

There are tapes on Compassion from the Dharma Seed Tape Library. You can write to them at Box 66, Wendell Depot, MA 01380. Sharon Salzberg has a good tape on Compassion, and I have one available too. It may take a long time to ask for a catalogue and then order, so you may want to send a donation and ask them to send a tape on Compassion by Sharon, myself, or perhaps Mich-

DHAMMAPADA

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.
Speak or act with an impure mind
And trouble will follow you
As the wheel follows the ox that draws the cart.

We are what we think.
All that we are arises with our thoughts.
With our thoughts we make the world.

Speak or act with a pure mind
And happiness will follow you
As your shadow, unshakable.
How can a troubled mind
Understand the way?

Your worst enemy cannot harm you
As much as your own thoughts,
unguarded.

But once mastered,
No one can help you as much,
Not even your father or your mother.



HATRED NEVER DISPELS HATE

"Look how he abused me and beat me,
How he threw me down and robbed me."
Live with such thoughts and you live in hate.

"Look how he abused me and beat me,
How he threw me down and robbed me."
Abandon such thoughts, and live in love.

In this world
Hate never yet dispelled hate.
Only love dispels hate.
This is the law,
Ancient and inexhaustible.
You too shall pass away.
Knowing this, how can you quarrel?

*Both selections from the
DHAMMAPADA,*

POETRY

To Do

The snow falls through still air,
effortlessly. One flake, another,
a billion flakes floating before the dark trees.
Patient as the making of stars,
snowflakes become snowfall become fluffy white blanket.
What is there left for me to do?

The sun turns orange, turns red.
Sky goes to deepest blue.
Birds bed down in quiet, the wind subsides.
What is there left for me to do?

A tulip bulb waits in its darkness;
a tulip is all that it can become,
already has been,
already is.
What is there left for me to do?

–Vera Matich

Heaven

Heaven
it's probably right
here
Have you looked down that well lately?
The echoes replay themselves all the way
Down
Remember the double mirrors in the old beauty parlor?
You saw yourself refracted 10,000
Ways
just the way it is now
the same
and the stillness contradicts
every echo
every glimmer
Would you dive into it? Would you?
Would you go
to heaven?

–Marilyn Habemas-Scher

What's inside
the empty raisin box?
An answer?
A question?
Something else
that cannot be named?

–Ted Tollefson

Grief

Lighter than tears
snowflakes fall,
lose themselves
in deep white snow,
heavy
with grief.

–Merra Young

Where is there to go?
What is there to do?
The mind spins on
In its squirrel cage
Of the world.
But who we are
Is just there.
Always.

–Phil Harper

Equanimity (at Assisi Heights)

I walk your long archway corridors
day and night...
Angels on every pillar
(notice) each face slightly different—
I step on reflections of shadow and light
step on both equally,
no difference.

–Merra Young

In the great house of the Franciscans
We meet to sit and walk in silence.

Next week they, aging and few,
will meet to consider their own fate.
They ask our prayers.

Looking down the road
facing impermanence after centuries
they live with ancient wealth
and empty hands.

Walking down the long halls
Surrounded by St. Francis, St. Clare, the Virgin Mary,
and the lives of women of the spirit,
I am held up. The welcome is whole.
Thus come... Thus gone.

–Cedar Spring

TREASURER'S REPORT

Current Balances:

Operating Fund	\$2,636
Retreat Fund	\$81
Scholarship Fund	\$1,555

Send donations for these funds to:

TCVC
P.O. Box 14683
Mpls., MN 55414
Attention Treasurer

Please indicate which fund you wish to support. TCVC operates as an informal club. Donations are not tax deductible.

BUSINESS MEETING

The next TCVC Business Meeting will be held after the June retreat. Please ring the TCVC Infoline (651-229-3139) to find out where and when the meeting will take place. Everyone is welcome to attend.

SHARING EVENING

On Thursday, May 27 at 7:30 P.M. at Common Ground Meditation Center, Terri Hanson will share experiences of her three month retreat in Burma with Sayadaw U Pandita. She will discuss the interview process and how that was a benefit to her practice. She will also share pictures of two meditation centers in Burma. There will be time for questions. For more information, call Terri at 651-674-0658.

MEDITATIVE ABSORPTIONS

Do you want to attend a meditation retreat whose theme is ways in which the meditative absorptions (also known as jhanas) can support Vipassana practice? The retreat would be in mid- or late-2000, in the Midwest, with teacher Leigh Brasington whom Ayya Khema authorized to teach in North America.

If you're interested in a retreat, contact Kay Wicker at 612-373-0824 (Minneapolis, MN) or send email to kwickwriter@netscape.com.

ANNUAL MEETING UPDATE

The TCVC Annual Meeting was well attended this year with a large circle of yogis at the Common Ground Meditation Center. After updates from coordinating committee members, facilitator Sylvester Fernandez recognized sangha members who served the organization this year.

We are especially grateful to Linda Hall for all of her years of service as retreat registrar. Linda has turned over her responsibilities to Vera Matich who was registrar for the last two retreats. We will continue to pursue finding another person to share this responsibility with Vera.

Margie Fagnoli, Marilyn Habermas-Scher, Paul Norr, Joanne Skarjune and Michelle Yoskovich served as retreat managers at our four retreats this year.

The Coordinating Committee consisted of Robin Blake, retreat coordinator; Naomi Baer, secretary; Virginia Robinson, treasurer; Patrice Koelsch, volunteer coordinator; and Joanne Skarjune, newsletter coordinator. We are most grateful for Virginia Robinson's service as treasurer for the past two years.

Sylvester Fernandez has agreed to take on bookkeeping responsibilities, easing the workload for the open treasurer position. We still need a treasurer, but these duties are now reduced to attending the business meetings and administration duties of about one hour per month. Terri Hanson and Virginia will oversee the smooth transition of the treasurer's role.

Paul Norr has continued to update our mailing list and Sylvester has held the mailings party for yet another year. Kay Wicker has kept us updated on the Info-line, and Terri Hanson and Patrice Koelsch handled the mail box..

We are so grateful to Mark Nunberg and Wynn Fricke for offering the Common Ground Meditation Center for gatherings such as these throughout the year and to everyone else that makes the retreats that TCVC sponsors happen.

We are fortunate to practice with many people who have undertaken longer meditation retreats. This year Mark Nunberg attended the three-month fall retreat at the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts. Vera Matich was also in Barre for the six-week retreat. Terri Hanson recently returned from Burma where she attended the inaugural retreat of Sayadaw U Pandita's forest monastery. It was a treat to hear about their meditation experiences at the Annual Meeting this year.

GrassRoots Dhamma



is published by the Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative. We welcome material relating to your Vipassana practice at home, in retreat, and in daily life. Newcomers and old timers are equally encouraged to contribute. We are happy to include your practice-related announcements as well. Please send copy to TCVCoop@hotmail.com or:

TCVC
P.O. Box 14683
Mpls., MN 55414
Attention Grassroots Dhamma

If you would like to be added to the mailing list, send your name and address to the TCVC address above.

PRACTICE OPPORTUNITIES

Common Ground Meditation Center

Common Ground is a community meditation center that provides practice opportunities for people interested in mindfulness meditation. Mark Nunberg leads a Wednesday night sitting group at 7:30–9:00 P.M. He will also lead a 4-week introduction to mindfulness meditation starting August 5 at 7:30–9:00 P.M. There will be a mindfulness meditation retreat on Labor Day weekend. All programs are offered free of charge in the spirit of generosity. Call for current flyer.

3400 East 26th Street
Mpls., MN 55406

612-722-8260 (Mark and Wynn)

Phat An Temple/Vietnamese Buddhist Association of Minnesota

Vipassana practice. Call for more information.

475 Minnesota Avenue
Roseville, MN 55113 612-927-7231

Sat. 6–9 A.M. Meditation

Center for Mindful Living

Michael O'Neal and Joen Snyder O'Neal offer introductory mindfulness courses modeled on the work of Jon Kabat-Zinn. They also lead ongoing practice groups in Thich Nhat Hanh and Soto Zen style Buddhist practice including classes, retreats and community events. Call for current flyer.

3206 Holmes Avenue
Mpls., MN 55408 612-825-7658

Shambala Center

Tibetan Practice.

1304 University Ave NE (2nd floor)
Mpls., MN 55458 612-331-7737

Sun. 10–12 A.M. Meditation

Clouds in Water Zen Center

Daily open meditation sessions, classes, retreats and individual sessions. Call for newsletter or see our web site at
<http://www.ciwzc.com/ciwzc>.

308 Prince Street (by the Farmers' Market), St. Paul, MN 55101

651-222-6968

(Mike Port, guiding teacher)

Dharma Field Zen Center

Dharma Field welcomes all who would like to practice meditation or learn more about Zen Buddhism. Please call for current schedule.

3118 West 49th Street
Mpls., MN 55410
(49th Street and York Avenue South)

612-928-4868
(Steve Hagen, head teacher)

Minnesota Zen Meditation Center.

Soto Zen Practice. Call for daily sit information or e-mail us at mnzenctr@aol.com.

3343 East Calhoun Parkway
Mpls., MN 55408 612-822-5313

Sun. 9:15 A.M. Meditation
Sun. 10 A.M. Lecture

Buddhist Peace Fellowship

The Buddhist Peace Fellowship is committed to open hearted, engaged Buddhism and is a member of the Fellowship of Reconciliation. Meetings are 10:00 to 12:00 A.M. the second Saturday of the month at the Friends Meeting House, 1725 Grand Avenue, St. Paul. For information, contact Martha Boesing at 612-825-2820 or Lee Lewis at 651-699-1330.

Uptown Minneapolis Sitting Group

Marilyn Habermas-Scher leads an introductory meditation class at the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center (see listing on this page). The group tends to meet on Thursday mornings at 8:30–10 A.M. Call 612-504-1470 for current schedule.

Winona Sitting Group

Rosemary Lyons and James Lenarz lead a sit every Sunday at 8:30–9:15 A.M. at 524 East King Street, Winona, MN 55987. Call 507-454-7875.

Mid America Dharma Group

Mid America Dharma Group is a non-profit organization dedicated to making the practice of vipassana or Insight Meditation available to others in the central region of the United States. Call 573-874-0881 or email Phil@midamericadharmagroup.org for more information or to register for one of the following retreats:

June 25–28 Shinzen Young at Conception Abbey, Missouri.

Sept. 17–20 or 17–26 Stephen Armstrong and Kamala Masters at Conception Abbey, Missouri.

Nov. 11–14 Wes Nisker at Atchison, Kansas.

Madison Insight Meditation Group

The Madison Insight Meditation Group is sponsoring the following retreats:

August 26–29 Howard Cohn. Location to be announced Contact John Meyer (608-238-3886), 1615 Cypress Trail, Middleton, WI 53562.

November 4–7 Eugene Cash. Location to be announced. No contact information is available at this time.



Residential Retreat with Kamala Masters & Steve Armstrong

Friday, June 11 8:00 P.M. through Sunday noon, June 20, 1999

Registration 6:30 – 7:30 P.M.



Insight and Lovingkindness Meditation Retreat

Insight meditation is a simple and direct practice: the moment-to-moment investigation of the mind/body process through calm, open and precise awareness. Learning to observe experience from a place of spacious stillness enables one to relate to life with a balance of wisdom and compassion. This experience fosters clarity and penetrating insight into the nature of who we are and increased peace in our daily lives.

Lovingkindness meditation (metta) cultivates our ability to connect and care, in a rare unconditional way, for ourselves and others. Our heart's capacity for patience, acceptance, compassion and forgiveness becomes boundless. An inner and outer environment of safety is created and our hearts and minds can open fearlessly. The result of this practice is an ever deepening stillness, from which the truth of life can be recognized clearly. Metta practice is a sturdy foundation for the wisdom practice of insight.

On this silent retreat, suitable for both beginning and experienced meditators, clear and simple instructions presented gradually, along with evening discourses will provide direction and understanding throughout the alternating periods of sitting and walking meditations. There will be regularly scheduled time for questions in addition to individual and/or group interviews. We will undertake the five precepts: to refrain from killing, stealing, engaging in sexual activity, speaking falsely and using intoxicants, for the duration of the retreat.

Dana (Generosity)

Since the Teachings of the Buddha are considered priceless, they have traditionally been offered freely and out of the spirit of dana (generosity). It is through the practice of dana on the part of the teachers and the students that the Teachings of the Buddha have continued to flourish and benefit many for more than 2,500 years.

The teachers of this retreat do not ask for or receive any payment from TCVC for their teaching. At the end of the retreat, those who appreciate the benefit they have received and wish to support the continued dhamma work of the teachers, will have the opportunity to practice dana by offering voluntary donations. Dating back to the time of the Buddha, there has existed an interdependency between those who offer the teachings and those who receive them.

Scholarships

Scholarships are available for up to 50% of room and board only. There is no scholarship for the registration fee. To apply for a scholarship, attach a letter with your registration giving the background of your need and the amount of your request. Those with financial resources may wish to help others by donating to the scholarship fund.

Meals and Facilities

The retreat includes meals beginning with Saturday breakfast through lunch on Sunday, June 20 (Sunday, June 13 for weekend retreatants). All meals are vegetarian and high in carbohydrates. You may elect to eat none of the food provided by the center if you have special dietary needs. A kitchenette is available for those who must prepare their own food because of health reasons.

Accommodations at the Assisi Community Center include private rooms with towels and bedding supplied. Showers and bathrooms are shared. Please bring comfortable, loose-fitting clothes and a blanket if you tend to get chilly sitting. Bring a cushion and soft floor pad for meditation, or you may sit on a chair if you prefer.

The Assisi Community Center's phone number is (507) 280-2180. **Please use for emergencies only. Do not direct questions to the Assisi Community Center.**

Retreat Fees and Registration

Retreatants are expected to arrive in time for the opening of the retreat on Friday night and to stay for the duration of their retreat. Any exceptions must be approved by the retreat manager. Early departures are not eligible for a reduced rate or refund.

If you have chosen the weekend option, your retreat will end Sunday afternoon. Staying for the Sunday evening meal and/or dharma talk is not an option.

All registrants must pay room and board fees plus a non-refundable registration fee covering retreat center fees and TCVC expenses associated with the retreat. Applications, accompanied by a check for the full cost of the retreat, must be received by Thursday, May 27. You will not receive a confirmation of your registration. Refunds for room and board fees cannot be guaranteed after May 27.

Correspondence about this retreat should be addressed to the registrar, Vera Matich at (612) 317-8668, or TCVC, PO Box 14683, Minneapolis, MN 55414.

Please bring unscented or lightly scented personal products, such as shampoo, lotions and deodorant. Do not use essential oils, perfumes or hairspray at the retreat. Scented products are distracting and may trigger allergies.

Directions to Assisi Community Center

1001 14th Street NW in Rochester MN

From the North on US 52:

19th St NW exit. At the top of the ramp, the street name is Elton Hills Drive (to the left) and 19th St NW (to the right). Turn left, and cross over the freeway.

Immediately upon crossing the freeway, take the first right, which is 11th Ave NW (there might not be a street sign at this intersection).

Drive approximately one block on 11th Ave to a Y. Turn to the left, onto 14th St NW, and continue on 14th St. NW.

Watch for the Assisi Heights sign, on the left. Turn into the entrance and up the hill.

From the South on US 52:

19th St NW exit. Turn right and another sharp right, onto 11th Ave NW (there might not be a sign at this intersection). Follow remaining directions for people arriving from the North on US 52.

From the North on US 63

Right at 13th St NW (becomes 14th St NW), to 10th Ave NW, right at entrance and up hill.

From the South on US 63

Left at 13th St NW (becomes 14th St NW), to 10th Ave NW, right at entrance and up hill.

Please mail the form below with your payment to: TCVC, PO Box 14683, Minneapolis, MN 55414



June 11–20, 1999 TCVC Retreat Registration Form

Registration must be received and paid in full by Thursday, May 27. Registration priority is given to full-time participants. Retreatants are expected to arrive in time for the opening of the retreat on Friday night and stay for the duration of their retreat. Any exceptions must be approved by the retreat manager. Early departures are not eligible for a reduced rate or refund.

Name _____ Phone (____) _____ M F (Circle One)

Address _____ City, State, ZIP _____

\$80 Registration fee. Not refundable after Thursday, May 27.

\$ _____ Room and board (with meals): Weekend is \$79, Full time is \$369

\$ _____ Room (without meals): Weekend is \$47; Full time is \$200

\$ _____ Kitchenette use: \$20

The kitchenette is available to those who can't eat provided meals because of health issues.

\$ _____ Commuters (meals only): Weekend is \$36; Full time is \$182

\$ _____ Optional contribution to TCVC funds (please specify)

Scholarship Fund Operating Fund

\$ _____ TOTAL (payable to TCVC) Enclosed

Please check all that apply

- This is my first TCVC Retreat.
- I would like someone to contact me prior to the retreat so that I can ask questions about the practice and/or retreat.
- I need a ride. I can give a ride.
- I volunteer to host a post-retreat party. (The retreat manager will contact you to confirm.)
- I volunteer to help the retreat manager. Tasks vary but may include arranging for gifts and flowers, helping set up at the retreat center, and greeting retreatants. (The retreat manager will contact you.)
- I would like to volunteer to manage a future TCVC retreat.
- This is a new address or phone number.

TCVC RESIDENTIAL RETREAT CALENDAR

The Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative (TCVC) offers retreats to anyone interested in Vipassana and Metta Meditation practice.

Date	Teacher(s)	Location	Contact
June 11-13 or June 11-20, 1999	Kamala Masters & Steve Armstrong	Assisi Community Center, Rochester	Vera Matich 612-317-8668
Oct. 7-10, 1999	Eugene Cash	Tau Center, Winona	TBD
Jan. 14-23, 2000	Matthew Flickstein	Tau Center, Winona	TBD
April 7-9 or April 7-11, 2000	Marcia Rose	Tau Center, Winona	TBD
June 9-11 or June 9-18, 2000	Kamala Masters & Steve Armstrong	Tau Center, Winona	TBD
Sept. 22-24 or Sept. 22-26, 2000	Wes Nisker	Tau Center, Winona	TBD



TCVC INFOLINE 651-229-3139 provides information on TCVC-sponsored retreats



Visit the **TCVC WORLDWIDEBE SITE** <http://www.wordimage.com/tcvc.htm>

Twin Cities Vipassana Cooperative
P.O. Box 14683
Minneapolis, MN 55414

