

GRASSROOTS DHAMMA



Summer 2018

TCVC Annual Meeting

Saturday, April 6th
10 am – 12 pm
Home of Joanne Hedrick
3518 E. 25th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55406
612-724-1951



SUMMER RETREAT JUNE 7-15, 2019

**With Steve Armstrong and Kamala Masters
assisted by Vance Pryor**

**MINDFULNESS, INSIGHT AND LIBERATION
in the FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS**

*The following article by Steve Armstrong will point the way to
how we will practice on this retreat.*

Life is unpredictable. We cannot control external conditions. To address this fact of life, the Buddha offered a subtler and more powerful training: the development of insight that purifies our understanding of “latent torments.”

Latent torments are the deeply embedded mistaken beliefs and unexamined assumptions that cause us to believe that resorting to the dysfunctional strategies of desire, aversion and delusion will be effective in securing our happiness. Insight into these beliefs and assumptions gradually comes to understand their nature and how they cause us to suffer. When seen in this way, wisdom develops. It is wisdom that removes the now-seen assumptions and the mistaken beliefs. With that, the proliferation of desires, aversions and delusions are cut off at the root within the heart/mind long before they arise in the mind obsessively and/or get acted out.

These three trainings of the noble eightfold path: living in harmony, tranquility of mind and the development of insight wisdom are the work of mindful awareness applied in these three ways. In every case, mindfulness is necessary and the result is less suffering.

**Teacher Biographies and Online Registration are available at
WWW.TCVC.INFO**

Please join us for the TCVC Annual meeting, a potluck and social gathering, with a little bit of official business thrown in. Bring some food or drinks if you wish and your ideas and opinions about our retreats. If you're interested in getting more involved with TCVC, this a good time to join the board, but you're welcome to this or any TCVC meeting without making that kind of commitment. Wishing you well,

TCVC Board

TCVC is a community of people interested in developing and deepening their meditation practice. We provide opportunities to hear and practice the teachings of vipassana (insight) and metta (lovingkindness) meditation, with an emphasis on residential retreats led by senior teachers in the Theravada Buddhist tradition.

MINDFULNESS, INSIGHT AND LIBERATION in the FOUR NOBLE TRUTHS by Steve Armstrong (cont'd)

The Spectrum of Wisdom

“According to the Buddha’s teaching, the practice of insight meditation enables one to realize the ultimate nature of mind and body, to see their common characteristics of impermanence, suffering, and not-self, and to realize the Four Noble Truths.” Mahāsi Sayadaw, author of Manual of Insight

We begin practice with our conventional, consensual, conditioned belief of every experience. With practice we gradually come to understand the Dhamma: the skillful way of not suffering. This is the path of purification of understanding leading to liberation from mental states that cause suffering.

There are many ways to articulate emergent Dhamma wisdom, ie. realization and acceptance of the three universal characteristic. All conditioned experience is impermanent. They are incapable of providing stable satisfaction. They are impersonal, not amenable to personal control.

These characteristics are seen and understood when we look closely. Not seeing them reveals that we are out of synch with the way things are. Being out of synch causes friction experienced as suffering, By coming to realize these characteristics in each moment we move into alignment and stop struggling, stop suffering and enjoy the realization of peace.

The Purification of Understanding

Why are the universal characteristics so important to discover?

The purification of behavior by undertaking the precepts arrests the acting out of dysfunctional strategies of attachment, aversion and confusion that would cause harm to others. This is an immediate and obvious benefit that supports harmonious relationships with others and less interpersonal suffering. But even when we are exercising restraint we may still be tormented by obsessive thoughts fueled by greed, aversion and delusion.

The purification of mind of obsessive tormenting thoughts can be prevented by continual mindful awareness. In the event they do get a chance to arise, mindfulness arrests their proliferation and there is a chance to observe them with interest to learn about their nature. While an obsessive thought of desire, irritation, or confusion is an unwholesome state of mind. Awareness of it is a skillful, wholesome state of mind.

The continuity of mindfulness gives rise to *samādhi*, the seclusion of mind from the obsessive torments resulting in an internal tranquility and stability. This too is an obvious and beneficial result in that it prevents compulsive and obsessive thinking that can easily lead to unskillful addictive behaviors.

Nevertheless, even with purification of behavior and purification of mind, situations arise when we get triggered into obsessive thinking or harmful behavior. This is possible because of wrong understanding. We get hooked when misunderstanding the situation we find ourselves in. When we speak of the insights into the three universal characteristics we are pointing to three unexamined assumptions that are latent within our minds that when activated cause suffering. Dhamma practice of mindfulness for insight purifies our understanding that relieves suffering. This is liberation.

From Mindfulness and Insight, Mahāsi Sayadaw’s Method to be published by Wisdom Publications, Spring of 2019

TREASURY REPORT 2018

Retreat Fund	\$14,345
Retreat Deposits	\$ 4,500
Scholarship Fund	<u>\$ 2,579</u>
Balance	\$21,424

Thanks to everyone who has donated to TCVC. With your support, many people have been able to undertake intensive retreat practice here in the Midwest. In 2018, TCVC funded scholarships of \$4,250.

Dana, or generosity, is an essential part of TCVC and the Buddhist path. It sustains our organization, and we are always looking for members of the community who have means to give in the capacity they are able. Donations support both our Retreat and Scholarship funds, which help immensely in making the Dharma accessible to a wider range of individuals. The Retreat fund reduces the cost of fees for all attending. The Scholarship fund is for those who make a specific request. If you feel inspired by the Buddha’s teachings and the retreats offered by TCVC, please consider making a donation at www.TCVC.INFO or mailing a check to P.O. Box 14683, Minneapolis, MN 55414

Registration for June 7-15 With Steve Armstrong and Kamala Masters, assisted by Vance Pryor

Registration opens March 1, 2019. There is a \$25 late fee after May 10, 2019.
Register online at WWW.TCVC.INFO or mail your registration to Todd Stitt,
4532 46th Ave S, Minneapolis, MN 55406

Name _____ Please identify your gender _____

Address _____ City _____ State: _____

Zip code _____ Phone _____ Email _____

This is my first retreat I can help set up or clean up I need a ride I can give a ride

I have special accessibility, dietary or other needs. (Please enclose a description or email the registrar.)

I use a CPAP or other medical device. (Please specify or contact the registrar.)

I need an assisted listening device.

Enclosed is a scholarship request for \$ _____ Maximum scholarship is \$280

Optional Roommate Request _____

\$ _____ Retreat Fee* Shared \$560 Single \$740

\$ _____ Add \$25 late fee if mailing after May 10th.

\$ _____ Optional tax-deductible donation to TCVC

\$ _____ Total Enclosed (Make check payable to TCVC)

*The teachers that we ask to lead our retreats do not request or receive any compensation from us for their teaching. At the end of the retreat, students are encouraged to practice *dana* (generosity) by offering a donation to the teachers.

Vipassana (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.

Held in noble silence, the retreat includes sitting and walking meditation, instructions, Dharma talks, and group and individual meetings with the teachers.

As the teachings of the Buddha are considered priceless, they have traditionally been offered freely. The teachers do not receive payment from TCVC for teaching. The registration fee covers room and board, travel expenses for the teachers and other expenses.

At the end of the retreat, students are encouraged to offer a donation to the teachers to support their living expenses so they may continue to practice and teach.

To apply for a scholarship, include a letter with your registration giving the background of your need. Scholarship requests must be received by the due date and are limited to one retreat per person per calendar year. Those who wish may help others by donating to the TCVC Scholarship Fund or Retreat Fund.

Accommodations at the Koinonia Retreat Center have modern plumbing. Handicap accessible and single rooms are available on a first-come basis. You may leave Koinonia's phone number, 888-801-7746, with family for emergency contact only.

Retreat Schedule

Fri. 6/7	Registration	3:00–6:00 PM
	Evening meal	6:00 PM
	Retreat opens	7:30 PM
Sat. 6/15	Retreat ends	After 10:30 AM brunch

Attendance Yogis are expected to arrive by 6:00 PM on opening day and to stay for the duration. There are no exceptions.

Yogi jobs are included in the schedule for all participants. These mindful work periods are assigned on a first come, first served basis at check-in time.

Meals Vegetarian meals begin with an evening meal from 6:00–7:00 PM on Friday night and end with brunch on the last day of the retreat.

Registration

Send a check for the full amount to secure your registration. If you are applying for a scholarship, subtract the scholarship amount requested from the registration fee.

You will receive an acknowledgement of registration by email. Shortly thereafter, you will receive a confirmation of your status for the retreat (registration or wait list). Approximately one month before the retreat, you will receive an email giving you more information about the retreat.

If you have any questions or special needs, please email the registrar, Todd Stitt, at retreats@tcvc.info or call 651-500-1469.

Cancellations Notify the registrar if you need to cancel. TCVC retains a \$50 fee for cancellations received before 5/10/19, \$75 after that date.

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MINNEAPOLIS, MN. 55414**

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*Retreats are held at Koinonia Retreat Center near Annandale, MN
www.KoinoniaRetreatCenter.com*

Contact Us

retreats@tcvc.info

TCVC retreats are appropriate for both beginning and experienced meditators. We are committed to cultivating a retreat environment that is welcoming to people of diverse identities, including those of all races, ethnicities, cultures, sexual orientations, gender identities, religions, abilities and ages. It is our aim that all may feel safe and respected on their TCVC retreat.

TCVC CALENDAR

Dates	Teachers
June 7-15, 2019 <i>Registration opens 3/1/19</i>	Steve Armstrong and Kamala Masters, assisted by Vance Pryor
February 14-21, 2020 <i>Registration opens 11/1/19</i>	Chas DiCapua & Rebecca Bradshaw
June 19-27, 2020 <i>Registration opens 3/1/20</i>	Kamala Masters

Directions to Koinonia from Minneapolis
394 West to 169
North on 169 for 1/4 mile
West on Highway 55 2.5 miles past Annandale
South (Left) on County Road 3 for 4/10 of a mile
West (Right) on 80th Street for one mile
South (Left) on Pilger Avenue for 2/10 of a mile
Allow two hours travel time from Minneapolis.