

Voice of the Wind

The Wet Mountain Sangha's Monthly Newsletter
December, 2023



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Dana

The Wet Mountain Sangha survives financially solely through the generosity of its members and friends. Dana, the practice of cultivating generosity, can be an enriching element of Buddhist practice. Our dana permits us to hold space at the Center for Inner Peace, invite teachers to come and provide talks and retreats, and cover operating costs. Contributions are gratefully received through Paypal at:

Donate



Or by check to:

Merrilee Barnett, Treasurer
Wet Mountain Sangha
P.O. Box 566
Rye, CO 81069

Radical Compassion: Two Wings of a Great Bird

Tara Brach (from *Radical Compassion*, 2019)

Yet this very suffering—feeling deficient and disconnected—has also been my most fertile ground for waking up. It has led me to a spiritual path and practices that I cherish. And when I get stuck in painful emotions, it brings me to a repeating realization, an insight that has profoundly changed my life: *I have to love myself into healing*. The only path that can carry me home is the path of self-compassion.

It doesn't matter if I'm caught in anger, fear of failing at something important, a sense of self-doubt or loneliness. And it doesn't matter if I'm facing yet again challenges to physical mobility and well-being. The healing medicine always has some flavor of care, compassion, or forgiveness. On some level I'm telling myself, "Please be kind." This turning toward loving presence is the gateway to living true to ourselves.

"Radical compassion" means including the vulnerability of this life—all life—in our heart. It means having the courage to love ourselves, each other, and our world. Radical compassion is rooted in mindful, embodied presence, and it is expressed actively through caring that includes all beings.

The two parts of genuine acceptance —seeing clearly and holding our experience with compassion—are as interdependent as ***the two wings of a great bird***. Together, they enable us to fly and be free.

The wing of clear seeing is often described in Buddhist practice as mindfulness. This is the quality of awareness that recognizes exactly what is happening in our moment-to-moment experience.

The second wing of Radical Acceptance, compassion, is our capacity to relate in a tender and sympathetic way to what we perceive. Instead of resisting our feelings of fear or grief, we embrace our pain with the kindness of a mother holding her child. Rather than judging or indulging our desire for attention or chocolate or sex, we regard our grasping with gentleness and care. Compassion honors our experience; it allows us to be intimate with the life of this moment as it is.



Just as a bird needs two wings to fly, mindfulness practice requires both awareness and compassion in order to take flight.

Sangha New Years' Service and All-Sangha Meeting

Following a long Buddhist tradition, the sangha will ring in the New Year with a celebration and service! **We'll be gathering at the Center for Inner Peace Monday, on January 1 from 11:00 AM to 2:00 PM.** There will be a service including meditation, chants, readings, a purification ceremony for letting go of the past and embracing a path forward, and the ringing of our temple bell 108 times by all who wish to participate.

A vegetarian potluck lunch will follow the service from 12-1. (Bring a dish for 3-4 people if you can. Don't worry if you can't bring food. Come anyway.)

Following lunch, sangha steering committee chair Doug Mesner will lead an all-sangha meeting and provide the annual "state of the sangha" talk. But most importantly, the meeting is an opportunity for you to ask questions and offer ideas and suggestions for the sangha. Is there an additional program or group that you would like to see started in 2023? Do you have concerns about sangha practices or leadership that you'd like to share? Are there new directions we should explore?



The New Years' gathering is a great place to meet new travelers on the Way and reconnect with old dharma friends. So come.

Solstice Service Wednesday, December 20

The regular Wednesday night sitting on December 20 will include a candlelight Solstice Service to celebrate the return of the light. This will be a good time to bring guests if you know someone who might be interested. Come and find the light inside the dark.

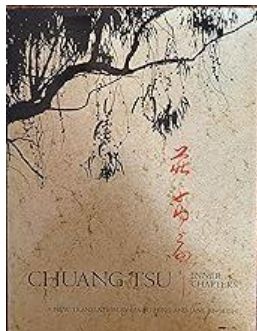
WMS Practice Opportunities

The Wet Mountain Sangha has a full set of practice opportunities, with more unfolding all the time. Current opportunities include the following:

- The Wednesday meditation service
 - Chants, sitting and walking meditation, **every Wednesday** 6:00 – 7:30 pm at the CIP
- Dharma Talks
 - Recorded talks or visiting teachers, **fourth Wednesdays**, second period of meditation. Contact [David Cockrell](#) for more.
- Saturday Morning Two-Hour Meditation
 - Silent meditation, **Second and fourth Saturdays** (9:00 – 11:00 am), led by [Kathy Taylor](#) and [Gary Suda](#) (719) 543-4754.
- Dharma Study Group
 - Study Group of Buddhist teachings and other wisdom traditions, **Third Sundays** 10:00 am – 12:00 pm. Contact [Maureen Kelly](#) for information.
- Dharma Punx Pueblo
 - Peer-led Exploration of Meditation & the Dharma. **Sundays**, 4:30 – 6:00. Center for Inner Peace. Contact [Paul Bradley](#) for information.

Don't forget, many details on all sangha events are posted in the [sangha's Google calendar](#).

Wet Mountain Sangha Dharma Study Group



The dharma study group discusses books, sutras, koans and other readings that help align us with awakening. Our current selection is the [Chuang Tzu Inner Chapters](#), and we're learning much about the influence of early Taoist thought on the formation of Chan (Zen) in China. This classic translation is by Gia-fu Feng and Jane English, who lived and practiced outside Wetmore, CO for years. Copyright 1974. Contact [Maureen Kelly](#) for questions and more information.

The group meets on the third Sunday morning of every month (December 17) from 10 am -12 noon at Monica Stanelle's house, 1974 Kingfisher Lane. Her phone number is 719 369-5584. For questions or more information, contact [Maureen Kelly](#).

Wet Mountain Sangha Full-Day Retreat, October 21, 2023

The full day retreat on October 21, 2023, offered us the space to experience the strength of community in our difficult times.
I cannot say enough how helpful it was to me to center and be able to breathe.
I know a lot of people worked to make the retreat happen and
I think it was of benefit to all of us.
I only wish we could do it more often.
I volunteer to help with the next one, if that can be useful.

--Sandra Yolles

Opportunities Up North

There are many practice opportunities with our neighboring sangha in Colorado Springs, [Springs Mountain Sangha](#). Click the link for more information, instructions for registration, and additional practice opportunities.

- Residential Meditation Retreat Dates to Save:

A Springs Mountain Sangha Retreat
at Pueblo Mountain Park
with Sarah Bender, Roshi
April 15-21

An Open Source Retreat
at Bodhi Manda Zen Center
in Jemez Springs, NM
with Megan Rundel, Sarah Bender, and Tenney Nathanson
September 30-October 5

Have you visited our Founding teacher, [Joan Sutherland, Roshi's website](#)? The Joan Sutherland Dharma Works is the place to access Joan's published writings, videos, and the audio archive of her talks, as well as a growing body of transcripts of those talks. You can find our Sutra Book, reading list, and descriptions of our ceremonies. It is truly a gift to us, awaiting our exploration.



Newsletter Additions?

Do you have artwork, a poem or a volunteer story to share in our newsletter? If so, please send them to David Cockrell at davidcockrell@comcast.net.

We can reject everything else: religion, ideology, all received wisdom. But we cannot escape the necessity of love and compassion. This, then is my true religion, my simple faith. In this sense there is no need for temples or church, for mosque or synagogue, no need for complicated philosophy, doctrine or dogma. Our own heart, our own mind, is the temple. The doctrine is compassion. Love for others and respect for their rights and dignity, no matter who or what they are ultimately, these are all we need.

--Dalai Lama

