



# Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center

## A Center for Mindful Living

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413 • Issue No. 42 • Winter 2016

## Finding a Way Forward

by Michael O'Neal

*Disquietude is always vanity, because it serves no good. Yes, even if the whole world were thrown into confusion, and all things in it, disquietude on that account would still be vanity.*

—St. John of the Cross

This fall I have been involved in three basic areas of teaching and practice: basic mindfulness, including the body, breath, and daily life situations; more subtle mindfulness, including mental processes that hinder us; and mindfulness of climate change.

As it turns out, these are all related. And of these, climate change has engaged me with a special vibrancy.

All my adult life I have been aware in a general way that we humans are living in non-sustainable ways. But beyond a sense of concern and very small personal actions, I have been content to be carried along in the stream of social norms, with the vague hope that “decision-makers” would eventually make the right choices on behalf of humans and the planet.

This fall, as part of our “For a Future to Be Possible” initiative, I finally began to study this issue in earnest. I wanted to find out for myself what is going on, and be willing to take action on that basis. I didn’t want to continue to be a bystander, passively choosing not to take responsibility.

This period of study, which has included extensive reading, talking to others and meeting in groups, has been very moving for me. Quite a lot of what I have learned has been difficult to face. But the overwhelming feeling I have is one of relief—that I am involved in a process to become more honest and more whole.

In Buddhist practice we are encouraged and supported in this direction. “Buddha” means “awakened one,” and we practice becoming more fully awake to the way things are. We all have a deep habitual tendency to turn away from ever-unfolding aliveness and instead become carried away in our fantasies, plans, worries, etc. Buddhist practice brings us back, again and again.

One of the great mindfulness challenges of our time is to awaken to the ways we cause destruction to the living systems we are part of, and to find ways of acting that redress this.



Awareness of human-caused climate change has occurred almost completely within my lifetime. We have gone from virtually no awareness of a problem to the understanding that our current ways are putting the viability of the planet as a home for humans and many other species at terrible risk. Just as the pace of climate disruption has proceeded at a pace that is dizzyingly fast, so too the pace we humans need to integrate and respond to these changes is uncomfortably rapid. But we can do it.

Climate change, and sustainability in general, challenges us to make full use of our thinking mind as we also mindfully ground ourselves in the process of living. We remain in touch with feelings and mind states that arise; we take responsibility for caring for our mental stability; we continue to practice kindness and compassion for ourselves and others. And, we press forward in discovering and acting appropriately on our actual situation.

For me, educating myself has been very important, and I am still very much involved with this. I want to have as clear and thorough understanding as possible, even as I realize that no knowledge will ever be final or even satisfyingly sufficient. And I don’t want an endless pursuit of understanding to be a substitute for other kinds of action and engagement.

I have come to realize that there is a tremendous amount of support, on many levels, available to us in this area. Our challenge, and our great opportunity, is to bring this issue out of the shadows and our shared group silence, and find a way forward that is imbued with integrity, caring, and responsibility. Let’s find a way forward, together.

# 2015 Year–End Appeal

Dear Friend,

**One year ago our building renovation was completed and we began using our new space.** What a wonderful beginning! Thanks to the dedicated support of hundreds of people who donated time and money, our Center – and the Twin Cities – has a beautiful new space for practice. For both my wife Mary Jean and myself, our experience with Compassionate Ocean has made a tremendous difference in our lives. An enormous amount of generosity has made all of this possible, and I would like to meet everyone who has contributed and say **“Thank you!”**

**Now, a year later, there is a lot more to appreciate.** Every week the Center hosts two sangha (community) gatherings, plus open meditation periods. There is chanting, singing, and deep dharma talks by our teachers as well as visitors from across the world. Both the introductory and more advanced classes are doing great, with about 30 people taking each this fall. These are more than classes; they are doorways to practices that have helped people transform their lives for thousands of years. We’ve had many retreats, both at our Center and others. We’ve had alumni reunions. We’ve initiated a new program “For a Future to Be Possible,” which is dedicated to taking more responsibility for the health of our world based on our awareness of interbeing. And we have an active Board of Directors, helping our community build more community, now that the community has built the building.

**These activities are open to all.** Many activities are offered without fees. The charges for the classes and retreats are kept low, so that this won’t be a barrier to participation. **Compassionate Ocean is generous.**

**Compassionate Ocean itself depends on generosity.** The revenue from classes covers about a third of what we need to operate. The rest must come from us—people who value what the Center does and want it to grow and thrive. Let’s come together to sustain the Center and its teachers so that many more people can continue to learn and grow and transform the suffering of the world.

**Please help now by contributing to our Year-End Appeal.**

Your donations may be mailed in the enclosed envelope. If you have ideas for the future development of our Center, please put them in as well. You can also contribute online at [www.OceanDharma.org](http://www.OceanDharma.org).

Thank you for considering this request. May mindful awareness and a loving heart be present in us all.

*John Stuart*

John Stuart  
Chair, Board of Director



Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Donations are tax deductible.



# Winter Programs 2016

Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center

652 17th Avenue NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413  
(612) 781-7640 • [www.OceanDharma.org](http://www.OceanDharma.org)

## Mindfulness in Depth Series

### Mindfulness of Dharma: The Factors of Awakening

*Taught by Michael O'Neal  
with Joen Snyder O'Neal*



Mindfulness is our capacity to deeply touch our lives exactly at the point of aliveness.

One of the most influential teachings of the Buddha is the Sutra on the Foundations of Mindfulness. In this discourse the Buddha gives an extensive teaching on four fields of mindfulness: body, feelings, mind, and Dharma. Included in these four categories is the full range of human experience.

This course will begin with an overview of the first three foundations: body, feelings, and mind. We will then turn to the fourth foundation: the awakening process itself. We will look at the mental factors that hinder our practice, and then at the factors that counteract these hindrances and provide the conditions conducive to awakening. These include mindfulness, investigation of dharma, energy, joy, calm, concentration, and equanimity. Each class will include guided meditation practice, lecture, and discussion.

This course is designed to support the continued exploration of mindfulness by those who have already begun their formal practice of it by taking an introductory course (such as Total Dynamic Living) and who are prepared to maintain a regular sitting practice. The format of the course incorporates intellectual study, experiential discovery, and community support.

Member rates apply to members of all local Dharma centers. Reduced fees are offered as needed; please contact the Center at (612) 781-7640.

To register, use the form in this newsletter or visit our website: [www.OceanDharma.org](http://www.OceanDharma.org).

**Minneapolis (#B76)**

**Wednesdays, January 20 – March 9 (eight sessions)**

**7:00-9:00 P.M.**

**\$160 (members \$140) + \$25 materials fee (\$5 for people who already have *Mindfulness* by Joseph Goldstein)**



## Center for Mindful Living: Programs in Mindfulness

### Total Dynamic Living - Introductory Program in Mindfulness

Total Dynamic Living is a thorough, well-structured introduction to mindfulness practice in everyday life. It follows the nationally acclaimed mindfulness-based stress reduction (MBSR) model developed by Jon Kabat-Zinn, presenting mindfulness as a universal practice for people of any (or no) religious background.

The program includes instruction and practice in sitting meditation, gentle yoga, body awareness meditation, and daily-life applications of mindfulness. It also includes information about stress and relaxation. The program enables participants to develop their own base in mindfulness practice integrated into everyday life.

The course includes eight weekly classes, an individual interview with the instructor, a Saturday retreat, the book *Full Catastrophe Living* by Jon Kabat-Zinn, four CDs, and handouts. 27 CEUs are available for all courses.

The course fee is \$295 plus a \$35 materials fee. Payment plans and some scholarship aid are available. Please contact the Center to discuss.

Enrollment is limited, and pre-registration is required. Please let your friends and colleagues know about this program.

#### #188 Minneapolis: Tuesdays Jan. 19 – March 8 • 6:30-9:00 P.M.

**Instructor:** Joen Snyder O'Neal

**Location:** Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center  
652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis (in the Northeast Minneapolis Arts District)

#### #268 St. Paul: Thursdays Jan. 21 – March 10 • 6:30-9:00 P.M.

**Instructor:** Michael O'Neal

**Location:** Clouds in Water Zen Center  
445 Farrington St., St. Paul (near University Ave. and Western Ave.)

### Total Dynamic Living: One-Day Retreat

This retreat is open to all current participants in Total Dynamic Living courses. It is also open to graduates of past Total Dynamic Living courses on a donation basis. People not enrolled in a current course should call the Center in advance to reserve a space.

**Saturday, March 5 • 9:00 A.M.-3:00 P.M.**

**Location:** 652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis (in the NE Minneapolis Arts District)



**Gift certificates** for the Introductory Program in Mindfulness are available. Please email [admin@OceanDharma.org](mailto:admin@OceanDharma.org) or call (612) 781-7640.

### Guiding Teachers



Joen Snyder O'Neal  
and Michael O'Neal

Joen Snyder O'Neal and Michael O'Neal are the guiding teachers of the Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center. They practiced and taught for many years at the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center and Hokyoji Zen Monastery under the guidance of Dainin Katagiri Roshi. They have also practiced with Thich Nhat Hanh in France and the United States, and have completed a training for professionals with Jon Kabat-Zinn. Joen was ordained as a Zen priest by Katagiri Roshi in 1980 and received Dharma transmission from him in 1989.

*The guiding teachers are available for individual meetings regarding life and practice. To set up an appointment, call the Center.*

#### Membership:

You are invited to become a member of the Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center. Membership is a way to support the programs of the Center, and is encouraged for those who participate regularly as well as those who simply would like to help make possible the continued life of the Center. A membership brochure is available at sangha gatherings or can be sent out by mail; please call if interested.

### Sangha Gatherings

The Compassionate Ocean Sangha is a group practicing in the Buddhist mindfulness traditions of Soto Zen and Thich Nhat Hanh. Throughout the year the sangha (community) has weekly gatherings that include sitting and walking meditation, dharma talks and discussions, mindful movement, chanting and singing, and other spiritual practices. Dharma talks focus on aspects of Buddhist teaching and their application to everyday life.

Everyone is invited to participate in our sangha gatherings. There are no prerequisites to participate, and people are welcome to come when they wish. There is no fee; donations are welcome.

There are two weekly gatherings of the Compassionate Ocean Sangha. The Sunday group is co-led by Joen Snyder O'Neal and Michael O'Neal. Joen leads the Friday group.

#### **Sunday Gatherings: 9:00-11:15 A.M.**

Schedule: 8:15 orientation for new people, 9:00 sitting, 9:25 walking, 9:35 sitting, 10:00 dharma talk and discussion, 11:15 ending

*Note: No Sunday gatherings on Dec. 20 or Dec 27.*

#### **Friday Gatherings: 9:30-11:00 A.M.**

Schedule: 9:30 sitting, 10:00 dharma talk and discussion, 11:00 ending. *Note: No Friday gatherings on Dec. 25 or Jan. 1.*

### Welcome Sessions

New people are always welcome at sangha gatherings. To provide a special welcome, welcome sessions that include an orientation to our practice are offered periodically. These are excellent opportunities to find out more about sangha gatherings if you are curious but haven't got around to coming.

**Friday, Jan. 8, 9:30-11:00 A.M.**

**Sunday, Jan. 10, 9:00-11:15 A.M.**

### Orientation to Zen Meditation

Basic instruction in Zen sitting practice offered

**Sunday mornings at 8:15 A.M.** (Not offered on Dec. 20 or 27.)

### Introduction to Zen Practice with Joen

A two-class introduction to Zen meditation and related practices. No fee; pre-registration required.

**Mondays, Jan. 25 and Feb. 1, 7:00-8:30 P.M.**

### Meditation Sessions

Wednesday mornings: 7:00 A.M. zazen (sitting), 7:30 kinhin (walking), 7:40 zazen, 8:10 chanting service, 8:30 temple cleaning (to 8:45). People are welcome to come for any part of the schedule.

### Sangha Retreats

These extended practice sessions are open to community members as well as others who have had some experience with Buddhist practice and meditation. Each retreat offers an opportunity to settle the mind and body and open to the deep wisdom of human life. These are excellent opportunities to strengthen and deepen the practice of presence, including benefiting from the support of others.

### Day of Mindfulness

**Saturday, Jan. 23, 9:00 A.M.-4:30 P.M.**

Led by Joen Snyder O'Neal and Michael O'Neal

This day will include sitting and walking meditation, yoga practice, body scan, and a dharma talk. Participants should bring a bag lunch. Fee: \$20 members, \$25 nonmembers.

### Weekend Sesshin

**Friday, Feb. 19, 7:00 P.M.-Sunday, Feb. 21, Noon**

Led by Joen Snyder O'Neal, and Michael O'Neal.

Sesshin means "to gather or collect the mind." Includes sitting and walking meditation, chanting services, dharma talks, and formal meals. Register at least one week in advance. Fee: \$60 (members \$50) (includes four meals)

### Weekend Sesshin at Ryumonji Monastery

**Friday, March 18, 7:00 P.M.-Sunday, March 20, 1:00 P.M.**

Location is in northeastern Iowa.

Led by Shoken Winecoff, Joen Snyder O'Neal, and Michael O'Neal. Fee due in advance: members \$110, non-members \$130 (includes meals and lodging). Register two weeks in advance.



Joen about to give a dharma talk at Ryumonji Monastery.

## Winter 2016 Registration Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Phone

H: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

W: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

C: (     ) \_\_\_\_\_

To register, please check the appropriate activities.

### **Total Dynamic Living–Introductory Program in Mindfulness (\$25 deposit)**

☐ Minneapolis, Tuesday evenings (#188)

☐ St. Paul, Thursday evenings (#268)

### **Total Dynamic Living: One–Day Retreat**

☐ Saturday, March 5, 9:00 A.M. – 3:00 P.M.  
(by donation, for program alumni)

### **Buddhist studies class – Mindfulness of Dharma**

☐ Minneapolis, Wednesday evenings (#B76)

### **Day of Mindfulness**

☐ Saturday, January 23 (enclose payment of  
\$25, members \$20)

### **Weekend Sesshin**

☐ Friday, Feb. 19 – Sunday, Feb. 21  
(enclose payment of \$60, members \$50)

### **Weekend Sesshin at Ryumonji**

☐ Friday, March 18 – Sunday, March 20  
(enclose payment of \$130, members \$110)

### **Introduction to Zen Practice with Joen**

☐ Mondays, Jan. 25 – Feb. 1

### **For a Future to Be Possible**

☐ Friday, January 15

☐ Friday, February 12

☐ Friday, March 11

**Enrollment for these activities is limited, and  
early registration is encouraged.**

Please call if you have any questions  
(612) 781-7640

To register, send this form along with the non-  
refundable deposit listed (payable to CODC) to:  
Compassionate Ocean Dharma Center  
652 17th Ave. NE, Minneapolis, MN 55413  
or register online at: [www.OceanDharma.org](http://www.OceanDharma.org)

## A Prayer Before Surgery

May the hands  
and hearts  
of all the many beings  
performing and assisting  
with this surgery  
move and be moved  
with skillfulness, understanding,  
and compassion.

May all things  
find their true place  
within and without.

— Joen Snyder O’Neal

## Wish List

Please contact the Center if you would be able  
to donate any of these items.

- Video Projector (highest need)
- Blu-Ray or DVD Player
- Stainless steel serving pots (need 4 sets of 3)
- Scanner, 300 dpi or better
- Up to 20 zabutons (large sitting cushions)
- Sound system with recording capability
- Help with graphic design
- Help with marketing/promotion
- Help with computer technical support

## Volunteers are needed and welcomed...

to help sustain and grow Compassionate Ocean.  
Special areas for volunteer help are the Finance  
Committee, Promotion Committee, Fundraising  
Committee, marketing, graphic design, and building  
maintenance and cleaning.  
Please contact the Center for more information.

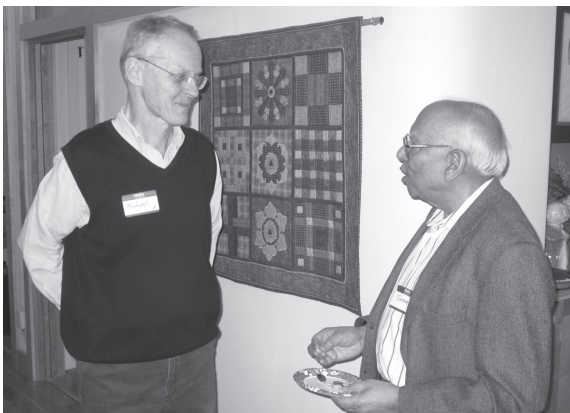




Workday at the Center in September



Social hour at the Donor and Doer Dinner



Conversing at the Donor and Doer Dinner



Busy kitchen crew at the Donor and Doer Dinner



Adam Kuenzel performing at the Donor and Doer Dinner



Enjoying the Donor and Doer Dinner in October



Daishin Eric McCabe visiting from Des Moines in October



ChiSing visiting from Texas in October



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## Winter Program Highlights

- **Introductory Programs in Mindfulness (MBSR)** offered in Minneapolis and St. Paul
- **Buddhist Studies course –**  
*Mindfulness in Depth: The Factors of Awakening*
- **For A Future to Be Possible series**
- **Introduction to Zen Practice**
- **Monthly Retreats Plus Sangha Gatherings and Open Meditation**

## For a Future to Be Possible

This is an ongoing series of events to help us become more aware, knowledgeable, and active in preserving the natural and social health of our world. It is one of the great challenges of our time to find a way of living that is truly sustainable and in harmony with our planet and with each other.

Each evening is a “stand-alone” event, so people can attend any that they wish. Most evenings will be a combination of sharing information and group dialogue.

Winter sessions will focus on information from the Global Climate Summit in Paris, the developing scientific understanding of climate disruption, psychological barriers and supports, and actions we can take.

There are no fees, but sign up in advance by emailing the Center at [admin@OceanDharma.org](mailto:admin@OceanDharma.org). Also email if you would like to be added to the “For a Future” email list.

**7:00-9:00 P.M. Fridays, January 15, February 12, and March 11**