



Sacramento Insight Meditation

Continuing Support for Those Practicing In The Insight/Vipassana Tradition

SIM KALYANA MITTA GROUPS

“Kalyana-Mitta” is a pali term referring to “noble” or “spiritual friendship” based on the teachings of the historical Buddha. Modernly, it refers to two or more individuals, or members of a community, having a common care and concern for each others’ welfare and each others’ progress in practice.

Here’s a description of SIM’s KM Group Network model:

KM Groups’ Objectives

SIM’s KM groups are designed to support two major objectives:

1. To support the development of spiritual friendships and community based on the exploration and cultivation of meditative skills and awareness; and
2. To help participants understand and work with their experience from the perspective of meditative awareness and its underlying psychology. Among others, the groups will help develop habits of skillful speech and mindful listening.

Group Discussion Topics

The discussion topics for KM groups will be tied directly to SIM’s Thursday evening Meditation and Discussion session. Thursday evening presentations will address a specific meditative topic and include an experiential homework assignment similar to that used in SIM’s eight-week Introductory Meditation Courses.

Participants in KM groups will enter into an agreement with their group to attend Thursday evening sessions and to practice the assigned daily experiential homework as a pre-condition to being a member of the group. This requirement is based on the premise that the KM group discussions will focus on understanding meditative awareness and its application to daily life based on participants’ actual experience, rather than intellectual concepts or theories.

Group Format

KM groups will consist of six to ten members. They will usually meet in a member’s home twice per month for a period of four months. Groups will then be open for new members. This is designed to encourage members to focus on the value of sharing and learning in a meditative group process rather than becoming attached to a particular combination of group members.

A typical meeting will be consist of a silent meditation of thirty to forty minutes, a brief check-in on member’s experiences with experiential homework and a mindful dialogue on a predetermined topic or issue relating to the Thursday evening presentation and homework.

Sessions will be led by one or two facilitators whose role is to help the group stay focused on sharing and discussing their experience from the perspective of meditative awareness, rather than through concepts, life stories, or psychological theories. This focus distinguishes SIM's KM groups from a personal support, therapy, study, book, or recovery group.

Facilitators

Facilitators will be selected from individuals who regularly attend SIM's Thursday evening Meditation and Discussions and have a sound Insight Meditation practice. They are not teachers but are dedicated practitioners.

They will receive training in group facilitation in keeping with SIM's KM model. Training will include exploring skillful ways of working with participants to present their experience or conceptual ideas of practice in ways that are consistent with sound Insight Practice.

Further Information

For further information, please contact SIM's KM Group Network coordinator, Rich Howard, at rich@sactoinsight.org.

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