



A year-long spiritual practice program

Commit2Dharma 4.0 (C2D-4) is the fourth generation of a year-long program for individuals to deepen their spiritual practice within the Dharma. The intention of this program is about how to live your everyday householder life while having it continually inclined towards the Buddha's teachings. This program is designed for those who: 1) have 12 days of previous retreat practice, 2) are interested in deepening their meditation practice, 3) feel drawn to exploring serious Dharma study, and 4) want to develop their spiritual practice to become one of the primary focal points of their day-to-day lives. C2D is not about changing your life; it is about allowing the teachings of the Dharma to transform your relationship to your Life. We will explore scriptures from the Theravadan lineage of Buddhist practice as well as different dharma topics and life experiences.

Once we enter into a Commitment to our Practice, we begin to become increasingly aware of how the Buddha's Teachings affect and influence our lives. We will explore how the Dharma shapes our life path towards less suffering and more happiness. In this way, the primary teachings of the Buddha will be explored through the lens of our different lived experiences—including our householder lives, our cultural identities, our personal histories, and our visions of whom we see ourselves to be.

The C2D 4.0 will involve two face-to-face meetings every month, one with the whole group and one meeting with a smaller, more intimate group. The large group meeting will be about 4 hours long with the lead teacher, Larry Yang. The smaller group meeting will be 1-1/2 to 2 hours long with one of the four sangha teachers. There will be up to 48 participants selected for the C2D program. It may be that not everyone who applies will get into the program. We regret the limitations of our ability to accommodate more participants.

Everyone will be asked to develop a daily 45-minute meditation practice. Participants will keep in contact by being assigned to a smaller group of 10-12 fellow program practitioners who will meet in between the monthly whole group sessions. The intention is to create support through a mutual commitment towards practice. In addition, participants will have scheduled interviews, either in-person or on the phone (for about 30 min every 4 months), with the sangha teacher of their small group. The purpose of these individual meetings is to explore and support each person's individual life situation and spiritual practice. For the closing practice event of the program, all the participants will do a daylong of practice together in Dec 2014.

This is not intended to be a beginner's program. The pre-requisite of the C2D 4.0 Program is that you have experienced at least **12 days** of silent Vipassana and/or Metta retreats previous to the beginning date of the program. Additional days of retreat practice are desirable. These retreat days can be in any configuration, including residential retreats and/or daylong retreats. If you are accepted into the program, you will be asked to commit to all of the C2D 4.0 Program components (below) in writing. Because this is a program that depends upon building community, preference in program admission will be given to people living in the Bay Area.

Your agreement also will be asked for in 2 important areas:

1. You agree and understand that your participation in the Practice of Dana (or the Practice of Generosity and Giving) is integral to the support and sustenance of the program, the lead teacher, the sangha teachers, and EBMC.
2. You agree not to share any of the materials distributed within the C2D 4.0 Program to any other individual, and will respect the copyright intentions of this agreement.

For applications when they're available, join our email list at admin@eastbaymeditation.org. Please know that it is expected that the number of applications to C2D will be high. There is no guarantee for acceptance into the program, even if you meet the program criteria.

C2D 4.0 Program Components

1. Face to face monthly meetings with whole group and lead teacher
2. Meetings with your dharma group (small groups of 10-15) and your assigned sangha teacher
3. Daily sitting meditation of 45 minutes
4. Keep a Journal of Dharma thoughts, reflections, questions, issues.
5. Interviews with the sangha teacher approximately once every four months.
6. Completing all readings, exercises and research
7. Willingness to do and experience all practices which are offered
8. Practice Dana/Generosity to support the program

Program Application Schedule:

- Oct 1, 2013: Application submission process opens.
Please watch for updates on EBMC website: www.eastbaymeditation.org
- Nov 1, 2013: Application deadline
Review process begins
- Mid-Dec, 2013: Initial acceptances go out
- Jan 12, 2014: C2D 4.0 Program begins

Practice Topics (dates are tentative and to be confirmed):

- Jan 12, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Beginner's Mind into a New Life: Program Introduction
- Feb 9, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Refuges of the Practice: Spiritual Friendship and Our Lineage
- Mar 9, Sun, 12:30-4:30p The Beautiful Community: Building of Sangha through the Practices of Intention, the Refuges and the Precepts
- Apr 6, Sun, 12:30-4:30p The First Teaching: The Four Noble Truths
- May 11, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Freedom in Our Everyday Lives: The Eightfold Path
- Jun 15, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Anytime is a Good Time for Practice:
The Four Foundations of Mindfulness
- Jul 13, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Transformation of the Heart:
Lovingkindness, Compassion, Joy, Equanimity, Gratitude
- Aug 10, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Ripening the Fruit: The 10 Perfections of Virtue and Goodness—Generosity, Ethical Behavior, Renunciation, Wisdom, Energy, Patience, Truthfulness, Determination, Lovingkindness, Equanimity
- Sept 14, Sun, 12:30-4:30p Allowing Awareness to Flow: The 7 Factors of Awakening—Mindfulness, Investigation, Energy, Rapture, Tranquility, Concentration, Equanimity
- Oct 12, Sun, 12:30-4:30p The Difficult Teachings: The Three Characteristics of Existence—Dukkha, Anicca, Anatta (Suffering, Impermanence, Non-Self)
- Nov 9, Sun, 12:30-4:30pm The Constant Inspiration: The Life of the Buddha
- Dec 13, SAT, 9:30-5:30 Daylong retreat to close the C2D Program

Larry Yang

Lead Teacher

Larry Yang, MSW, LCSW, teaches in meditation and mindfulness nationally, and has provided support for deepening Dharma teachings within multicultural communities. Larry is a core teacher at EBMC, and designed the Commit2Dharma Study Program. He is on the Teachers' Council at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, and is part of the lead teaching team of the Spirit Rock Community Dharma Leader Training Program. Larry is the Guiding Teacher of Insight Community of the Desert (Palm Springs, CA). Larry is trained as a psychotherapist and has spent six months as a monastic in Thailand. He considers retreat practice, family practice, livelihood practice, and householder practice all integral to a spiritual path towards Freedom. His website is: www.larryyang.org

Joan Doyle

Sangha Teacher

Joan Doyle founded the East Bay LGBT Vipassana group that has grown into EBMC's Alphabet Sangha for LGBTQI and same-gender loving practitioners. In addition to co-teaching the Wednesday group at EBMC, she is active with the family programs at both EBMC and Spirit Rock, where she teaches meditation classes for young people. Joan has been meditating and practicing Dharma for over a decade, has sat many retreats and has completed Spirit Rock's DPP program.

John Mifsud

Sangha Teacher

John Mifsud was born on the Island of Malta and has practiced Insight Meditation for eleven years. He graduated from the Community Dharma Leaders Training Program at Spirit Rock Meditation Center. John has sat 145 days in retreats across the county and traveled throughout Asia on four Buddhist pilgrimages. John teaches nationally and has a special interest in delivering mindfulness tools to marginalized communities. He is a Community Teacher at the East Bay Meditation Center and the founding leader of EBMC's Deep Refuge Sangha for Alphabet Brothers of Color. He is the Executive Director of Next Step Housing and develops affordable housing for people living with special needs.

Noliwe Alexander

Sangha Teacher

Noliwe Alexander has been a student of Vipassana meditation for over 15 years. She became a dedicated practitioner after attending the 2nd POC Vipassana retreat at Spirit Rock in 2000 and the African American Retreat in 2002. She is a graduate of Community Dharma Leaders 4 program through Spirit Rock Meditation Center, completed the Commit2Dharma (C2D) program through EBMC and delivers Dharma talks at the Alphabet and POC Sanghas at EBMC and throughout the SF Bay Area. Noliwe is a Life & Business Coach, empowerment workshop facilitator, dedicating her coaching & Dharma practice to the LGBT, At Risk and Elder communities.

Susana Renaud

Sangha Teacher

Susana Renaud is a Xicana who began her formal contemplative practices in 1987, moving to San Francisco to study yoga at the Iyengar Yoga Institute. She apprenticed with Janet MacLeod and Kathy Alef and, continues to study with Kathy Alef. She dove deeply into the 'formal Dharma' practices in 1999 and is a graduate of the Community Dharma Leaders Program 4 at Spirit Rock in Woodacre, CA. Her intention is to continue to teach Yoga and the Dharma in marginalized communities who have not had access to these teachings. She is the founding teacher for the 'La Casa del Corazón' Sangha. She speaks Spanish/Spanglish and is bicultural. She is a trained psychotherapist. Visit her site: www.MindfulnessforEverybody.com, www.AtenciónPlenaParaTodos.com