

BRISTOL INSIGHT MEDITATION GROUP - RESOURCES FOR BEGINNERS

Insight (Vipassana) Meditation uses mindfulness for deepening and sharpening our awareness and helping to release painful mental habits. Loving Kindness (Metta) Meditation is often taught and practiced alongside Insight Meditation. As well as psychotherapeutic qualities these techniques also offer a means for inquiring into what the Chinese have called “this great matter of life and death.”

Our one-day retreats are all suitable for beginners unless otherwise stated.

Our sitting group meetings include a 45-minute meditation sit and no instruction of any kind is given throughout the evening. When you feel familiar enough with Vipassana Meditation to be comfortable with this, you are welcome to come along to the meetings. Some options for learning how to meditate are given below.

LEARNING ONLINE

To learn the basic techniques, you can hear Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Salzberg, founding teachers of the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) in the USA, giving Vipassana and Metta Meditation instructions at http://www.dharma.org/ims/mr_audio.php. This link will bring you to a full page of audio resources - the instructions by Joseph Goldstein and Sharon Salzberg can be found about halfway down the page under the heading ‘Guided Meditations’.

A variety of talks on Buddhist thought and meditation by various teachers can be heard at <http://www.dharmaseed.org/>. Dharma Seed offers this service freely and welcomes voluntary donations. The authors of the teach-yourself sets (see below) can all be heard at this site. Go to the ‘Teachers’ page and select the teacher you want to hear from the pop-up menu offered there.

Talks and guided meditations by Bhante Bodhidhamma, Spiritual Director of the Satipanya Buddhist Trust in Shropshire can be heard at <http://www.satipanya.org.uk/audio.htm>

TEACH-YOURSELF SETS

All the following sets are available from www.soundstrue.com and sometimes also through the Amazon sites in the UK and the USA. When they are available at an Amazon site, there may be customer reviews displayed as well. Please bear in mind that audio material in second-hand sets may be on audio-tape cassettes instead of CDs.

BY SHARON SALZBERG AND JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN:

Insight Meditation: An In-Depth Correspondence Course

There are 17 hours of recorded talks and guided meditations by Sharon Salzberg and Joseph Goldstein and a workbook containing exercises. The course is presented in twelve lessons and it is recommended that the student take a minimum of one week with each lesson. There is one lesson on Loving Kindness Meditation. A teacher (not Sharon or Joseph) to correspond with about the exercises (for a maximum of one year) is included in the price of a new set.

If you buy a second-hand set and want to have a teacher, a further donation of about \$50 to \$80 will be payable in US dollars and you may also need to ask for a new registration form. For more information email Susan O'Brien in the USA. It is possible to use this set without a teacher.

Insight Meditation Kit: A Step-By-Step Course On How To Meditate

Also by Sharon Salzberg and Joseph Goldstein, this kit includes 2 1/2 hours of recorded talks, a 240-page workbook and 12 study cards. There is no teacher with this set.

BY JACK KORNFIELD PhD:

Jack Kornfield is a founding teacher of the Insight Meditation Society and Spirit Rock meditation centres, both in the USA.

Meditation for Beginners

90 minutes of instruction for people new to meditation, available on 2 CDs or in DVD format.

BOOKS

Books giving good guidance on Insight Meditation include *Meditation For Beginners* by Jack Kornfield and *A Gradual Awakening* by Stephen Levine. Both books touch on the subject of Loving Kindness Meditation but Sharon Salzberg's book *Lovingkindness: The Revolutionary Art Of Happiness* deals with it in more depth.

RESIDENTIAL MEDITATION RETREATS

[Gaia House](#) in Devon and the [Satipanya Buddhist Trust](#) in Shropshire both offer residential meditation retreats suitable for beginners.

