

# along the Path

FALL 2012

The Newsletter of the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax

## **BUILDING BROTHERHOOD IN THE LIGHT OF INTERBEING**

by Anh-Huong Nguyen

After his graduation, Bao-Tich went to Plum Village to spend a gap year before college. The image of seven year-old Bao-Tich holding a rose as he stepped down from the auditorium's stage is still vivid in my mind. He walked with a senior, hand-in-hand, to his classroom to begin first grade.

The senior had given the rose during Rose Ceremony as the school year began. A sense of brotherhood was developed between

Bao-Tich and his senior brother. They had many opportunities to be together in story-telling, water-color painting, handwork, playing, etc... Rose Ceremony helped make the transition from kindergarten into first grade smooth and safe. As for the seniors, it was an opportunity to connect with first graders and to hold them within their hearts.

Another Rose Ceremony was held at the end of the school year when each of the first graders offered a rose to his or her respected senior, who then went off stage by him or herself. With flute and violin accompaniment, it was a deeply moving moment. These roses were carried into the future in the hearts of the high school

graduates. Within the Washington Waldorf School's safe and nurturing environment, brotherhood was established among the students. Regardless of what their future may hold, this one-year friendship will be a warm refuge in their lives.



Bao-Tich 1st grade



Bao-Tich 12th grade

The Rose Ceremony reminded me of building brotherhood through the practice of cultivating joy and transforming suffering in our lives. We each have a Dharma body of mindfulness,

concentration and

insights. Insights nourish and strengthen our Dharma body. Peace and joy radiating from our Dharma body become the threads that weave the fabric of brotherhood. Sisterhood and brotherhood are essence of a true Sangha.

In our practicing community, we learn to look at each other as dharma brothers and sisters. We might have come from different backgrounds and cultures, but we are all children of Mother Earth. Our blood is the same color and our suffering is collective. Just as our individual practice is to recognize and embrace with mindfulness each feeling as it arises, the Sangha's practice is to let all of our joys and pain be cradled by the Sangha's collective energy of

mindfulness. Joy or sorrow in a Sangha member is also that of the entire Sangha, and vice versa. Meditation helps us to look deeply into our hearts and those of others in order to understand suffering. Seeing someone smile, we may have the impression that she is happy but she may be suffering deeply. Lack of understanding often leads us into endless cycles of hurt and blame. Our inability or unwillingness to let go of blame, resentments or anger towards others is an imprisonment. Underlying resentment or anger existing within a Sangha can undermine the fabric of brotherhood and affects Sangha's well-being. The road to deep understanding and compassion is blocked and suffering continues.

With our hearts, let us always remember to return to our Sangha for refuge and guidance. Sangha's wisdom of non-discrimination is the sun that melts away the fog of "a separate self" and allows us to go with the Sangha as a river.

When I was pregnant, Bao-Tich and I enjoyed walking meditation in nature everyday. I loved walking among the trees, breathing and smelling the sweetness in the air. Deep inside I knew that baby fetus Bao-Tich was going through everything with me. There was one moment when I desperately wanted to shield him from my emotions, only because this bud of life was so precious to me. But it was impossible.

Being held in mindfulness and the insight of interbeing, I was able to embrace my emotions in the same way my whole being embraced baby fetus. My breaths led me home to a place in my heart where suffering and compassion became inseparable. Tears began to flow as I felt baby Bao-Tich softening up and swimming happily inside me.

A flare of desperation to shield this precious life from my emotional pain had its roots in fear – a familiar kind of ancestral fear. With the energy of mindfulness, I was able to look deeply and see that I still carried in each cell of my body all of

my ancestors' happiness and suffering. I am their continuation. And the baby in me was also a continuation of his paternal and maternal ancestors.

The suffering in me was not just "my suffering", but rather as a stream running through me from my ancestors. As I came to a deeper understanding, the stream became more clear and calm. The water tasted as delicious as sweet dew – the nectar of compassion. I felt grateful that my baby and I were together in this experience.

Wisdom of non-discrimination is crucial for individual and collective awakening. When difficulties arise in relationships, our common tendencies are those of avoidance or attachment. Both tendencies are energies manifesting from discriminative mind, which discriminates between self and others. Suffering perpetuates indefinitely in the absence of the light of interbeing.

After years of practice, I have learned that healing begins the moment we let our Sangha's energy into our hearts' wounds. When we carry this emotional pain, it may not have a chance to heal and can create holes in the Sangha's fabric of brotherhood. If this fabric is torn, what is left for us to hold? How can we transform the violence and suffering that are going on in our families and in the world? So the wisdom of interbeing needs to be the core of our Sangha's teaching and practice. It is the Sangha's North Star.

Happiness is born the moment we are aware that we are holding something very precious inside ourselves. A meditator, for me, is like a pregnant mother. Just as the fetus felt like a precious life bud to his pregnant mother, our despair or the resentment in our dharma sister can be seen as a manifestation of our collective ancestral suffering - a bud of insight - which awaits to open in the light of interbeing.

## ONG NOI

by Thuy Le

On a beautiful spring Thursday afternoon, my husband and I left work early to meet the contractor at our home, and then we were going to Thursday night meditation. The contractor said it would cost one thousand dollars to enlarge the surface of the kitchen island by eight square feet -- and that it would cost much more if I had asked someone else to put in a whole island, but he hadn't even given me that option! A strong angry emotion arose in me so I quietly reminded myself to breathe through it. By the time we left, my husband was happy, looking forward to a cozy new house. I was still frustrated about the cost for the extra eight square feet of granite. We agreed that we didn't need a big island and this is how the business world operates: they are out to make a profit so it is up to us whether or not to take their offer. We didn't accept the unfair deal. But I was still upset; I felt a surge of negative energy in me that usually arises when I am forced into accepting an unfair business deal.

On the way to meditation at the MPCF that evening, I told my husband that the incident in the afternoon still bothered me. "Something, out there or perhaps in me, about me, that I am not aware of, wouldn't let me be in peace."

When we arrived, Sangha sister Jill was sitting in front of the bell. We found an empty spot near her. In this quiet space, I found my breaths were much more gentle and deeper, and I felt

the desire to do everything slower. Gentleness became alive in me. While rolling my mat out, suddenly from nowhere the words "Ong Noi" (paternal grandfather) appeared in my mind. I became exhausted. Jill invited the bell. I laid down and immediately fell into a deep sleep.

Then, during the walking meditation, in my mind I saw a young lad smiling at me. I shook my head, didn't know what to say; he signaled his wish to walk with me. I sighed, I told myself quietly, if there is ever a place and time for me to walk with this person, it must be here and now. So the little boy stood next to me and walked with me. He seemed happy, checking out everything in this space. Everything was new, something he had never seen before. He was a little kid; he was having fun walking. I concentrated on my breaths and my steps. Soon he disappeared, and I was back at my cushion. I couldn't understand why that young kid showed up in my heart.

That little kid was my grandfather, "Ong Noi," when he was young. But why was my mind so

occupied with my grandfather? He is the last person I would think of. This encounter with him was unexpected; I was glad to have a warm group of friends close to me when it happened. After the last sound of the bell, as we were stretching, the noble quietness was still in our space.

I realized that the word and image of "Ong Noi" appearing in my mind was my work to understand how my ancestors are still playing a



Photo by Tuan Pham

big part in my life. After that night, I often sat with my grandfather.

For years, my grandfather was just a name, an empty circle. I never saw any pictures of him. All I knew was my dad was the son of a rich man from the North, though I grew up in a modest neighborhood of Saigon. Despite our limited financial resources, my dad went out of his way to offer his help to others. He told me when I was 8 years old, "Whenever you have a wish to do a good deed, do it immediately because that wish is very fragile. Once you think twice about it, you won't do it." That saying stayed with me. I valued the goodness in me and others as I knew how rare that can be.

What my dad didn't reveal was the aggression of my grandfather and his own hopelessness as a child when he saw his dad's brutal business dealings. My grandfather hurt people when he took away their property. He even caused families to break apart. He never apologized for all the suffering he caused. In 1955 the Communists performed an act of revenge against my grandfather by having a public trial and shooting one of my uncles in front of a circle of villagers, to bring down the family reputation. Some of my grandfather's aggressive habits were passed on to me. I am now both an aggressor and a victim. As I grew older, the *manas* made it harder for me to see that part of my grandfather in me until I came to the MPCF and Boat of Compassion *sanghas*.

Only my dad and his brother made it to the South when the Communists took over the North. They never said anything publicly about my grandfather, even on his death anniversary. Although there were many stories quietly passed on by others, my dad never said one word about his dad.

I wanted a conversation about my grandfather with my dad. At that young age I knew it would be too painful for my dad to hear my questions

so I decided not to bring them up. When my father passed away, I lost the chance. I developed a disconnect with my grandfather.

At the Spring retreat, during a morning walking meditation, my grandfather appeared again, this time on his death bed. We were both surrounded by the energy of the Three Jewels: The Buddha, the Dharma, and the Sangha. I held his hands on my heart and asked him, now that he has a chance to die again, what would he want to say in his final moments. I heard him say, "I would like to offer my sincere apology from my heart for all the brutality and suffering that I caused people when I took away their properties and children. I apologize that during the course of my life, I pushed people into a corner so that they had no other choice but to end their lives." That was what I wanted to hear from my grandfather. I had longed for such moment since I was little girl.

I learned that the desire to be a better person than my grandfather was still strong in me. I took refuge in the Three Jewels and received the 5 Mindfulness Trainings so that I could be a part of the path to understanding and love. Touching my ancestors gives my grandfather and my dad a chance to live and die again through me. We are all the leaves of one tree; we are rising as birds and falling gracefully as the leaves. May we all be children of Mother Earth who will carry us to the ocean of love. I hope one day my grandfather can have a warm spot in my heart. My heart is beginning to open to him.

## **PARAPHRASING HAFIZ**

**by Emily Whittle**

When the wood  
forgives the ax-man  
and the ax,  
the violin  
is free  
to sing.

## WHAT IS FOUND THERE

by Garrett Phelan

*“Breathing in and out is very important, and it is enjoyable. Our breathing is the link between our body and mind. Sometimes our mind is thinking of one thing and our body is doing another, and body and mind are not unified. By concentrating on our breathing, ‘In’ and ‘Out,’ we bring body and mind back together, and become whole again. Conscious breathing is an important bridge.*

*To me, breathing is a joy that I cannot miss. Every day I practice conscious breathing, ... ‘Breathe, you are alive.’ Just breathing and smiling can make us very happy, because when we breathe consciously we recover ourselves completely and encounter life in the present moment.” (from Peace is Every Step by Thich Nhat Hanh)*

After a Day of Mindfulness at the MPCF, I was riding home with two friends. One, a person new to the practice, asked me how long I had been practicing. I said I started more than 12 years ago. She asked me what was the most important thing I learned from the practice. I didn’t answer very well. I started rambling about my anger, fear, and all kinds of my suffering.

Her question lingered with me through the night. The next morning while I was meditating, I kept asking myself the question over and over. Later

that day, Jane, my wife, asked me what I was going to talk about that night at our little satellite Sun and Moon Sangha in Arlington. I said I didn’t know, but my friend’s question kept itching in the back of my mind and heart.

I have read most of Thay’s books, practiced The Five Mindfulness trainings and the Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings, attended many Days of Mindfulness, and local retreats as well as a few of Thay’s. I have listened to wonderful dharma talks by Thay, Anh-Huong, and Thu. The dharma

has touched my heart deeply. I have transformed in some very meaningful ways that have helped direct me to be happier. I enjoy sharing the practice.

My practice has deepened; my understanding has deepened. My suffering has diminished, yet I still struggle and I still suffer, sometimes very deeply. When this happens I find that going back to my breath, not to books, is the path that best helps me.

As I came closer to the time to facilitate the sangha that night, I realized the beginning of

the practice is also the middle and end of practice: Mindful Breathing. The first thing we practice is to pay attention to our breathing. It sounds so simple, yet to paraphrase poet William Carlos William: It is difficult to get the news from mindful breathing, yet people die miserably every day for lack of what is found there. That simple basic beginning of the practice is what we always come back to. What I always come back

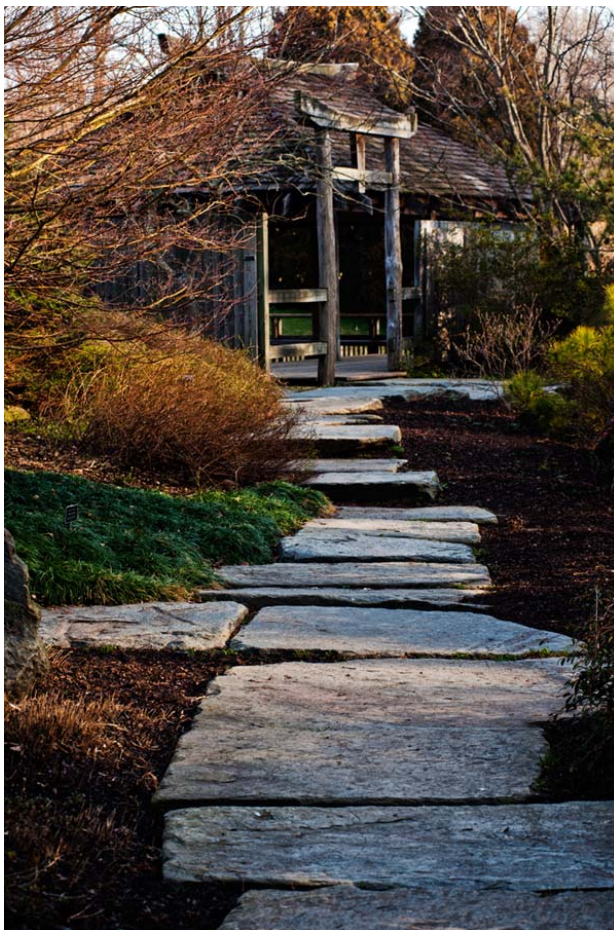


Photo by Tuan Pham

to. This seemingly simple—and yet so difficult -- practice is the beginning, always the beginning.

Going to the sangha each week, or a day of mindfulness, or a weekend retreat, brings me back to my breath. The sitting meditation, the walking meditation, gentle movements, and deep relaxation are all practices that bring me back to my breath.

For me a conscious breath highlights three essentials to improving my mindfulness practice: Wakefulness. With conscious breathing I become awake to the present moment. My body and my mind come together in harmony. I am no longer a fractured being -- my body one place, my mind another. I am fully awake to the present moment and all that is available to me in the present moment.

Liberation. I am free. I can liberate myself from the stories that I have carried inside me for years, some passed down from generations. I am not stuck in the past, nor am I anticipating the future. I take a full breath in. Just that. I allow the full breath out. Just that. I don't run or deny that past. Although I know the future may exist for me, I don't run after the future or fear the future. Past and future are there but they don't control me.

Equanimity. Through the practice of conscious breathing I find my true nature. I become balanced and stable. I create a stillness inside me. No matter what emotions or feelings come up, I am not knocked off balance by them. The old stories become old stories and not the present. Yes, suffering will continue. I cannot escape suffering. But when I can get in touch with my breathing, my thoughts, emotions, and feelings do not overwhelm me. That still, stable and strong nature of my being is present to offer a calm peacefulness.

The practice of conscious breathing seems simple, but is difficult. Although conscious

breathing is always available and our true nature is always present, yet we still forget or push them away at crucial times or we just forget as we get caught up in the business of our life.

Coming back to the breath is difficult, but is the essential in our practice. That's why we need the sangha to remind us, support us, and to bring us back to our breathing. To practice with the safety of the sangha.

This consciousness of the breath is what I have found most valuable to this point in my practice. I know: it is difficult to get the news from mindful breathing, yet I suffer miserably every day for lack of what is found there. I have much more to practice.

## **CATCH THE SMALL ONES**

**by Bill Menza**

Be vigilant at all times,  
For the small, subtle ones,  
At the edge, in the background,  
Just arising, appearing,  
Almost unseen, maybe hidden.  
You know: doubt, castigation, irritation,  
Resentment, regret, despair, fear,  
Pride, entitlement, envy, competitiveness,  
Confusion, unsatisfactoriness.  
Stop everything!  
Go to that calm abiding island,  
At your core essence.  
Take control of our mind.  
Catch them before they grow big,  
Look deeply,  
To know these passing apparitions,  
Potential nightmares of no value,  
And replace them with uplifting thoughts.  
Call on the Buddhas and Bodhisattvas  
Throughout space and time to help you.  
Be vigilant!  
All the time!

## WHAT I CAN'T SAY

by Sara Becker

This morning i find myself in reflection about the ways in which hiding from each other can seem like keeping the peace.

At a few key points in my most intimate relationships, i've felt that there were things i just could not say. They were unreasonable, obscene, unfair, or unworthy of the person i want to be. They would irreparably hurt the person i loved. They would damage our relationship beyond repair.

At the same time, these things continued to burn terribly at my heart. They kept me up at night, trembling with a despair i felt i couldn't share with anyone. Telling myself i was embracing the feeling or thought and caring for it, i did my best to fade it out, to lullaby it to sleep or rationalize it away.

But it wouldn't go. And each time i was with the person i loved, it was like my love needed to divert around this obstacle. And each time, the obstacle grew bigger, took up more and more space, burned at my heart more and more.

I felt pinned by it. I couldn't make the obstruction go away, and i couldn't bear to share it with my loved one and risk un-healable damage to them and to our relationship. Underneath this was also a fear for myself: i shouldn't have this thought, this feeling. Or i should at least know how to make it disappear. I shouldn't be—can't bear to be—a person who feels this. A person who feels this doesn't know

how to love. A person who feels this is unlovable.

What i can't say takes me to the point of breaking. Because finally, the obstacle in my heart grows so big it's taking up all the room, and love doesn't have any space anymore. And because the only other option is for the love to die, i risk everything. From the depth of my ability to practice loving speech, from my most tender heart, i say what can't be said.

And something breaks in me. In my heart, something breaks open. Because the other person has survived. My love has survived. And what seemed so solid, so immovable, begins to seem permeable. I'm human. I'm asking for help. This thing that i was trapped with all alone, separating me from you in a way that felt unbridgeable, i set out for both of us to contemplate together. My dear one, i offer you my best: my whole heart, just as it is. Whether you stay or leave.

And as i finally speak my reality, somehow in the same movement i also begin to see its emptiness, its impermanence. Here is an idea arising in my mind. It's causing so much suffering. It's not absolute truth. It's not unchanging. It's not me. My love is so much vaster than just this.

It does hurt; it's terrible. And there's also great relief. At some point, i find i'm feeling so alive. All the love that has been blocked in me begins to flow free.

It has been a vital learning for me that caring for communication goes way beyond saying only what seems right or harmless. This learning has transformed my marriage, and my closest relationships. Little by little over time, it's helping me open to truly loving myself, to holding myself tenderly, in strong and caring arms, the way i aspire to care for all the world.



Photo by Tuan Pham

## CHASING THE PRACTICE

by Jim Ebaugh

Yes, it is true: I crashed an Order of Interbeing Retreat. I didn't want to wait a year to go to the retreat, and a friendly dharma teacher far, far, far away had agreed to mentor me the following year. So I went with a giant chip on my shoulder. For the last two years, I have played the following drama to any dharma teacher or brown jacket I could corner.

"We' just poor country Pennsylvania ridge-running buddhists with only one pair of cowboy boots, far from you big city nation's capital boys, not to mention Blue Cliff. Why we got nary a one dharma teacher up here in the hills, and I'm gonna find me a dharma teacher to train all of my people including me and I am going to do it RIGHT NOW."

And so, no papers in hand, I put on my best "I'm on a mission from Buddha routine" adopted from my idols, the Blues Brothers, and set off for the retreat. Two hours from Blue Cliff my phone rings, I see the number. A chill ran up my spine; I knew who it was. Two days before I had received an email, "This Dharma teacher wants to speak to you." Much as I love and have the utmost respect for this teacher, I crossed myself, prayers said in Latin at the message: this could *not* be good, like the ancient dreaded message in the Roman empire that struck terror in the hearts of the regional governors: "You

have been summoned to Rome," an order to return to Rome for displeasing Caesar (Lion bait). I had sent this particular dharma teacher my agenda. *Never, ever* send dharma teachers *your* agenda unless you're ready to sit on a Size Ten thorn. And there, on the phone, all five foot two of *her* and me six feet, 180 shaking in my one pair of cowboy boots. She found my agenda "less than skillful."

I went on to New York anyway because the suffering of arrogance and defiance are the only things that really get my attention. But Blue Cliff being the citadel of love and compassion that it is, let me in with minor embarrassment. Within 24 hours, I knew in my heart that not only was I lacking completely the kind of mentorship required, but that the Five Mindfulness Trainings which I love in honesty I had practiced -- at best -- to the heights of absolute

mediocrity. In fact, a woman in my Sangha was far more experienced, a more disciplined practitioner and in fact is the heart of the Sangha. A more skillful use of my arrogance would have been trying to find a way to get her mentored for OI candidacy, which is what we are now trying to do.

Finally, here is what I saw. Five dharma teachers from all around the country had labored endless, countless hours to organize a future for the dissemination of Thay's teachings. Truly, blood, sweat and tears I am sure, "For a Future to be Possible." I saw a sea of brown jackets, many of whom I know, and who I know are far more experienced practitioners than I. I didn't have to make things happen; the dharma teachers were visibly being pulled in a thousand directions to make this happen for me, for my children and for



Photo by Tuan Pham



my country; she is in such trouble. I don't have to be CEO of this practice by Tuesday next. They don't send you to the islands for making your corporate goals here.

And so I returned to my hills to do what I do best, to help nurture growth of a baby Sangha, organize the days of mindfulness we commit to every three months, take care of the social media connections, set up the meditation hall, and answer endless emails from Facebook and Meet-up. None of it very sexy is it? But the brown jacket doesn't look so sexy anymore either. Like all seduction, there is a price to be paid. I look at the jacket in a very neutral non-discriminatory way now. Wanting it too much too soon is suffering, getting it could be egoically dangerous for a personality like mine (I might put a badge on it). It is better left to those with the skills and years of work that often goes into that jacket. What I do now is important, it contributes to the dissemination of Thay's teaching -- the reason I joined this crazy outfit in the first place -- that, and you all would have me. I have the love and respect of my local Sangha community: I am a very wealthy man! There is nowhere else to go, nothing to do but enjoy the inexplicable good fortune this community and practice have given me.

## **BUDDHA MOUSE**

**by Mike Adams**

Dark bright eyes lit by candle light,  
smoke of incense dances about you.  
With soft steps you cross Buddha's path.  
Suddenly aware, you sit upright...  
You are in me, I am in you.  
We are one, buddha mouse.

## **OUR SOCKS, OUR SANGHA**

**By Jill McKay and Joyce Bailey**

During our retreats at Claymont Court, we always enjoy the moment when Anh Huong's mother, Kim, brings out the bag of socks, scarves and hats that she has created during the previous three months. All proceeds go to the charity that Anh Huong started when she first came to America from Vietnam: The Committee for the Relief of Poor Children in Vietnam ([www.mpcf.org](http://www.mpcf.org)).

While Kim offers the gift of her skills with knitting and crocheting to relieve some of the suffering of those young children who live so far away, something wonderful is happening right here and now. We have a Sangha of sock, scarf, and hat wearers! We smile when we wear our brightly colored items and feel joyfully connected to Kim, each other, and to the children whom we have never met.

When we walk in our socks, we are in touch with the need to feel safe, nourished, and taken care of. We step for ourselves, and for the children, and for our brothers and sisters in the Sangha. There is a joy in it: looking around the circle and seeing the different colors of socks makes our hearts smile. When we go outside for mindful walking wearing our hats, it gives us a deep sense of happiness and connectedness.

We see and feel Kim's loving workmanship in each stitch. We can see young children in a small village in Vietnam seated around a table having a nutritious lunch at school. We see the smiling teachers working so hard to educate their students. We see our own history with Vietnam. We feel a deep connection with humanity, with life and with hope. Walking on the soft cushion the socks provide reminds us to be gentle with ourselves and with others.

By offering her skill and mindfulness in crocheting and knitting to serve the children,

Kim teaches us that it is the intention within the action that ripples far beyond the act itself. How wonderful that so much is embodied in such a simple item as a hat, a scarf or a pair of socks.

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Our socks, our Sangha

## **BOW WOW!** by Emily Whittle

Under pressure  
from the Dean  
at the University of Life,  
I registered for a course  
in Dog.  
I vociferously objected  
but She insisted  
I needed the extra instruction.  
The professor  
is a miniature schnauzer,  
who speaks no English,  
so I've had to learn  
a whole new language.  
Zen Masters come  
in all shapes and disguises.  
If you're looking  
for a teacher  
to look up to,  
you may have to kneel  
and bend low  
to the ground.

## **BODHICITTA** by Bill Menza

It starts with suffering  
And wanting to be free,  
Or for another's liberation,  
A flash of Bodhicitta,  
The mind of kind understanding love.  
You have touched the Bodhisattva Path.  
The curtain of delusion slightly lifts,  
The grip of the ego lessens,  
The apparition of self recedes.  
These are the greatest moments of your life.  
Honor and live them fully.

## THE FIVE MINDFULNESS TRAININGS TRANSMISSION CEREMONY JANUARY 5TH



Photo by Denise Nguyen

### THE FIVE MINDFULNESS TRAININGS TRANSMISSION CEREMONY

On Sunday morning, January 5th, 2013 at the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax, a number of practitioners from the Washington DC area will receive the Five Mindfulness Trainings.

Led by Dharma Teachers Anh-Huong Nguyen, Thu Nguyen, and Mitchell Ratner, in the tradition of Zen Master Thich Nhat Hanh, the formal ceremony includes Touching the Earth in Gratitude and reading of the Five Mindfulness Trainings. Those practitioners receiving the transmission are given a certificate of their commitment with a dharma name that their Dharma Teacher has chosen for them.

Everyone is invited to this special ceremony. Even if you will not be receiving trainings, we encourage you to attend the ceremony. It is a joyous and heartening event and your presence will support those who are receiving trainings.

The ceremony will be held at the Unitarian-Universalist Church of Fairfax (2709 Hunter Mill Road, Oakton, VA 22124), and will be followed by a tea ceremony.

### Two Programs for the Five Mindfulness Trainings Ceremony

In preparation for those who wish to receive the Five Mindfulness Trainings there are two programs that will help you study and understand the Five Mindfulness Trainings

### Six Sessions on the Five Mindfulness Trainings at The MPCF

**(Thursdays Nov. 1-Dec. 13)**

From Nov 3rd-Dec 13<sup>th</sup> (excluding Thanksgiving on Nov 22) The MPCF will hold dharma talks and sharing led by teacher Anh-Huong as part of the Thursday evening meditation. People who attend these sessions may receive, if they so choose, The Transmission of the Five Mindfulness Trainings in a formal ceremony on January 5<sup>th</sup>, 2013 at the MPCF.

### Day of Study of the Five Mindfulness Trainings in Annapolis, MD.

**(Saturday Nov. 3, 2012)**

Saturday, Nov. 3, 10:30-4:30 Jane and Garrett Phelan offer a day of study of Thich Nhat Hanh's version of the Lay Precepts: the Five Mindfulness Trainings. This day of study will permit participants to receive Transmission of the Mindfulness Trainings at the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax on January 5, 2013. All are welcome to the Day of considering the Five Mindfulness Trainings whether or not they plan to receive the Trainings in Fairfax.

Suggested donation: \$20. No one turned away.

For more information or to register,

email [mpg@uuca-md.org](mailto:mpg@uuca-md.org)

web page: <http://www.mpg-annapolis.org/mpginfo.html>

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*(Please visit the MPCF website for updates and directions.)*

### *Ongoing Activities in the UUCF Chapel (Program Building)*

#### **Morning Guided Sitting Meditation:**

Opportunity to relax, sit quietly and comfortably. Practice enjoying each moment of sitting and mindful walking.

Monday to Friday 8:15-9:15 am (except Thursday)  
Thursday 8:00–9:00 am

#### **Morning Mindful Movement:**

Learn to be mindful with movements. Improve one's health and vitality with soft physical exercises, Taiji and Qigong.

Thursday 9:15-10:00 am

#### **Noon Guided Sitting Meditation:**

Thursday 12:00-12:45 pm

#### **Thursday Evenings Meditation:**

A peaceful evening of meditation, mindful movements, walking meditation and dharma sharing. Every Thursday from 7:30-9:00 pm

#### **First Thursday of month: Recitation of the Five Mindfulness Trainings and Dharma talk by Anh-Huong.**

Tea and cookies 6:45-7:25pm. Sitting begins at 7:30pm. Before meditation you are invited to join us for tea and cookies any time between 6:30 and 7:20 pm.

### *Workshops & Classes*

#### **Five-Day Retreat in West Virginia in 2012 led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen December 7-12**

From 6:00 pm Friday to 3:00 pm Wednesday  
Practicing mindfulness in a rural setting for five days, together with a loving and supportive community.

#### **Days and Half Days of Mindfulness**

(see website for details)

#### **led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen**

*Saturdays at the MPCF in Oakton, Virginia (in the Chapel)* Oct. 27 (half day), Nov 24 (all day), and Dec 15 (half day).

## Special Classes and Events

(see the website for updates)

### *Submission Guidelines*

*Along The Path* is a newsletter of the art of mindful living. Practicing mindfulness cultivates understanding, love, compassion, and joy. This practice helps us to take care of and transform suffering in our lives and in our society.

*Along The Path* is intended as an inspiration and teaching resource for those practicing mindfulness in daily life.

Writers please submit stories, poems, photos, art and teachings on mindfulness, based on your direct experience of transformation through the practice of mindfulness. Instead of giving academic or intellectual views, the teachings emphasize simple and successful ways to transform the difficulties and limitations in our lives so that each day becomes an experience of peace, happiness, and freedom.

Send submissions to Garrett Phelan at:

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## Along the Path

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Contributions are tax-deductible and may be sent to the above address.