



GAIA HOUSE  
INSIGHT MEDITATION IN THE BUDDHIST TRADITION

# NEWS

## SPRING 09



### IN THIS EDITION

Recognising our roots  
Awareness of Feeling Tones  
Teachers in Focus

pg 2 Gaia House is going 'greener'  
pg 4 Sangha Information  
pg 6 Sitting Group Register

pg 8  
pg 12  
pg 14

# RECOGNISING OUR ROOTS

At our visioning meeting in February 2008 Gaia House teachers and trustees decided that it would serve our vision to more fully and clearly acknowledge in our publicity materials the central place of Insight Meditation in the Buddhist tradition at Gaia House.

As you may have noticed in our new 2009 programme, we have redrafted our vision statement to more clearly reflect the primary influence of Insight Meditation on the practice culture of the retreat house. The new strapline under our name also reflects this.

As our secular and materialistic Western culture comes to embrace meditation to a greater and greater degree, at Gaia House we are committed to upholding the deepest spiritual vision of wisdom, compassion and liberation that the Buddha taught. When I first came to the UK almost 20 years ago, I often found that to mention my involvement in meditation practice or with the Buddhist tradition was an effective conversation stopper. Today, however, many people are likely to respond with curiosity and interest, or may know someone who practices. Senior Buddhist leaders and teachers are widely known and respected, and the power of meditation has been confirmed by science and adopted by popular culture. While it is wonderful to see mindfulness being more widely used in secular therapeutic contexts, with great benefits, and somewhat amusing to see images of the Buddha and cross-legged meditators placed on advertisements for everything from ocean cruises to home mortgages, at Gaia House we aspire to represent and embody the highest human potential of spiritual transformation.

Without in any way changing our commitment to a non-sectarian vision of spiritual practice, we hope these changes to our vision statement and strapline will clearly communicate that what we do is rooted in the liberating teachings and practices of Insight Meditation and the Buddhist tradition. Just as the heart of the Buddha's teaching is awakening, the

root of the word Buddhism means "awake" and it is this wakefulness that we practise, in the service of all beings. Followers of any tradition will continue to be very welcome at Gaia House and we trust that our offering will continue to be a real contribution to peace and happiness in this world.



**Yanai Postelnik**  
Dharma Director



## From the trustees

Spring is always a time of new beginnings and at Gaia House we are excited by the "greening" of the grounds and surroundings – a wonderful freshness that tells us that winter is on the way out.

It is also a time of new beginnings for Kate Fyfe, our Executive Director who is leaving to take on new ventures starting with a well earned break to live in Spain for a while and to learn Spanish. We are very sorry to see her go. Her time at Gaia House has been very positive and fruitful and she leaves a very well-run and we hope a very happy house to her successor.

At the time of writing Gaia House is without a director. We are now in a position to begin recruiting and you will find enclosed with this newsletter, details of the post that we are looking to fill. It is a challenging position but it brings with it many rewards. Gaia House is a wonderful place to come on retreat but also to work in and we hope that many people will be excited by the prospect and apply for the post.

We are enormously grateful to everyone who works here - managers, co-ordinators and volunteers - who are ensuring that everything runs smoothly and absorbing the extra demands that are being made with good will.

It remains our priority to ensure that Gaia House continues to offer an optimal retreat environment for the teaching and practice of Insight Meditation and the Buddha-dharma, as determined by the Teacher Council, so as to ensure the greatest benefit for all who attend retreats at Gaia House.

**Michael Jeffries**  
May 2009

## CONTENTS

### Regular Articles

Trustees Introduction	pg 3
Teachers in Focus	pg 6
Fundraising Update	pg 6
Sangha Information	pg 12
UK One Day Retreat Information	pg 13
UK Sitting Group Register	pg 14

### Features in this edition

Recognising our roots by Yanai Postelnik	pg 2
Awareness of Feeling Tones by Martine Batchelor	pg 4
Gaia House is going greener	pg 8
Our Co-ordinators: cycles of service by Rachel Davies	pg 10
Future Group Retreats	pg 16

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# AWARENESS OF FEELING TONES

*“Dependent on eye and visible forms eye-consciousness arises; the coincidence of the three is contact; with contact as condition, there arises what is felt as pleasant or as painful or as neither-painful-nor-pleasant. If, on experiencing the contact of pleasant feeling, one does not relish it or welcome or accept it, and if no underlying tendency in one to lust for it any longer underlies it – if, on experiencing the contact of painful feeling, one does not sorrow or lament or beat one’s breast, weep or become distraught, and if no underlying tendency in one to resistance to it any longer underlies it – if, on experiencing the contact of neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling, one understands, as it actually is, the arising, disappearance, gratification, dangerous inadequacy, and escape, in the case of that feeling, and if no underlying tendency in one to ignorance any longer underlies it – then indeed, that one shall make an end of suffering, by abandoning the underlying tendency to lust after pleasant feeling, by eliminating the underlying tendency to resist painful feeling, and by abolishing the underlying tendency to ignore neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling that is possible.”*

M. 148 translated by Bhikkhu Nanamoli

The Buddha encouraged his disciples to be aware of the basic tonality of their feelings before they become more complex emotions. Our emotional responses are so fast and so intricately connected with stories about the past and the future that it is quite difficult to see how it all begins.

For this reason the Buddha suggested to be aware of the feeling arising immediately after contact through the senses – eye contact, ear contact, nose contact, tongue contact, body-contact, and mind-contact. So in this meditation one focuses on something one sees or hears for example and examines the feeling arising from that contact: is it pleasant, unpleasant, neutral?

Over time by becoming more aware of these basic feeling tones one is less caught in the feeling itself, the emotion and story it might give rise to. Generally when we experience a pleasant feeling, we do not question it, we accept it as natural. Moreover we feel that it should continue and the desire to repeat the experience that produced this pleasant feeling is created. The Buddha’s way is to be aware of the quality of the feelings without grasping at it. One knows it fully as it happens but one is not disturbed or destabilised by it.

The Buddha saw two processes at work – how we react to the feelings and how we imagine our future feelings based upon that experience. The Buddha understood the danger of being ahead of ourselves. The Buddha recognized that people spent a lot of time living in anticipation – hope for a pleasant future, and anxiety for an unpleasant future, instead of creatively engaging with pleasant and unpleasant as they arose and responding accordingly.

The Buddha saw two types of suffering -- suffering when we experience painful feelings and suffering when we imagine future painful feelings. The terms he used are: ‘to sorrow, lament, beat one’s breast, weep or become distraught’. To do this when we encounter difficult situation is natural but if we become overwhelmed by these emotional reactions it will not help the situation, on the contrary it will diminish our possibility to respond skillfully to the situation. Furthermore if we develop anxiety and fear about future difficult situations, this will be painful and stressful and will stop us from developing and cultivating our abilities now when we do not suffer from that specific situation.

The Buddha was conscious of the existence of neutral feeling tones and thought that it was essential to be mindful of them as much as pleasant or unpleasant feelings. The Buddha felt that in general people ignored neutral feelings and this might make them indifferent. When the feelings are neither pleasant nor unpleasant we do not feel much, but the Buddha wants us to become aware of even these subtle neutral feelings and to learn to be with them in a different way.

*“Friend Visakha, pleasant feeling is pleasant when it persists and painful when it changes. Painful feeling is painful when it persists and pleasant when it changes. Neither-painful-nor-pleasant feeling is pleasant when there is knowledge [of it] and painful when there is no knowledge [of it].”*

M. 44 translated by Bhikku Bhodhi

Here the Buddha made an interesting point about our reactions to feelings and their transiency. He shows that a pleasant feeling will continue to give us pleasure if it lasts, but if it stops it will be transformed into an unpleasant feeling. A painful feeling will be perceived as painful the longer it persists but will be felt as pleasant when it stops. Recently medical scientists have confirmed this by observing that people can handle short sharp pains more easily than longer less painful ones even. Their memory of the stopping of the first type was more pleasant than that of the second one, due to a greater contrast I would surmise.

Moreover the Buddha suggested that neutral feelings are pleasant when we are aware of them and unpleasant when we are not. If nothing special is happening to us, nothing specifically joyful or painful, we do not feel much. If we were aware of that neither-pleasant-nor-unpleasant feeling, it could be deeply restful, because we actually feel calm and tranquil then. Because nothing special or extreme is happening, we can rest and just be aware of being alive in this moment and do whatever is required. We might feel like that at work or at home. In a way it might be easier to work in that state as nothing will interfere, we will not be too anxious or too excited, but stable and open in this moment. At home we can use these moments to rest and breathe for a few moments – nothing special to do, nothing special to be.

But if we do not cultivate mindfulness and we feel a neutral feeling, it can turn into an unpleasant feeling because of its association with boredom. We will feel that nothing special is happening -- nothing specially good, nothing specially bad, and from that we will often generate painful stories about being a boring person, having a boring life, the world being boring and actually end up in a painful place. Sometimes it seems that we prefer to have painful feelings because they are somewhat exciting and we seem to feel more alive in them, than neutral feeling that

we equate with non-existence. The Buddha was saying that the problem is not with the neutral feeling but our relationship to it and our interpretation of it.

**An extract from *Spirit of the Buddha*, a forthcoming book by Martine Batchelor.**



# Teachers in FOCUS



## John Peacock

John became interested in Eastern religions and philosophy at about the age of eleven. His interest culminated in him going overland to India aged seventeen and spending about a year and a half there. It was among the Tibetan refugees dwelling in Dharamsala that he first

encountered the teachings of the Buddha as a living entity practised by a Buddhist community. It was this encounter that led to him studying in South India with Tibetan teachers in the resettled monasteries of Gyume and Ganden. Because of a deep interest in Buddhist psychology he eventually began to study the Abhidhamma and early Sutta (Discourses of the Buddha) material in depth. Both of these influences find their way into his teaching.

John has been a teacher at Gaia House for the past nine years. At present, there are a number of key areas which he feels are important for retreatants to reflect on. John, because of his ongoing studies, stresses the importance of the original texts of the Buddha. As he says it is the movement back to 'the source of things'. Having begun by studying Tibetan commentaries on the original literature, early on he wanted to study the Abhidhamma itself (earliest compilation of Buddhist psychology), and this interest has never gone away.

For John, these texts are very radical. They are all about the radically contingent nature of everything, that leaves us with nothing left to grasp onto. Human minds have such a tendency to grasp after something to hold onto and to solidify it, but as the Buddha said 'Everything is evanescent; strive on diligently'. This is not an easy teaching but can be very liberating, helping us from looking for fixity, for certainty. As John says:

*'We put a burden onto the other – which the other can never actually live up to – of being certain, of being unchanging. In fact love has to do with negotiating change.'*

A second area of the teachings that John stresses is the importance of ethics, and without the sila dimension much of Western Buddhism has been ungrounded. This is ethics but grounded in mindfulness. As he says:

*'Forget your prescriptions, "thou shalt, thou shalt not". Every situation, here and now, is an ethical situation. How we act depends on the amount of awareness we can bring to it. Sila, the deep integrity one brings to each moment, is one of the dimensions that is often missing in Western practice.'*

Finally, John offers another radical challenge: 'There is no zone of comfort – anywhere. So relax in your discomfort, instead of trying to fight it, or shore it up, or escape it'. Come and respond to these challenges.

John is teaching in the following retreats at Gaia House in 2009:

**Mindfulness and the Way of Insight**  
**24 July – 2 August**

**Dependent Origination Retreat**  
**Co-Teaching with Christina Feldman**  
**14 – 21 August**

## FUNDRAISING UPDATE

### Save Water Campaign

All of us at Gaia House would like to thank you for your support for our Save Water Campaign letter sent out last year. To date nearly £7,000 has been received. With your help we have been able to build a new shower in the Garden Wing and start the process of putting in a water borehole. Thank you for your generosity in these hard times.

### £1,000 Raised for the RSF !

Congratulations to all involved in the The Sponsored Walk/Run/Cycle on the 25th Anniversary Celebration Day last September. Together we raised over £1,000 for the Retreatant Support Fund, to help those unable to meet the costs of doing a retreat at Gaia House. A big thank you to all who took part, and to all who sponsored someone to walk/run/cycle. And especially thank you to the main organisers, Kirsten and Jason, who generously offered their time and energy to make the event possible.

## Wings of Awakening

### Kittisaro and Thanissara

#### Fri 5 – Fri 12 June 2009

**Code: 9151 Cost: £259 (£220) £311**

The Buddha highlighted five spiritual faculties (indriyas) that need to be developed for awakening to manifest: trust, persistence, mindfulness, concentration and wisdom. As these qualities mature, their power frees the heart from suffering, giving rise to compassion, joy and equanimity.

This retreat will explore and cultivate these qualities using the body and mind as the ground of practice. Within an atmosphere of silent contemplation, there will be instruction, Dharma talks, meditation, chanting, discussion, Qi Gong, and a closing devotional ceremony focused around Kuan Yin, the Bodhisattva of Compassion.

### Our prices and what they are:

**Code: 8130 Cost: £157 (£134) £188**

Standard Price ————  
Supported Price ————  
New Sponsor Rate ————

## Sitting Group Organisers' Weekend

### Sat 5 - Sun 6 September 2009

This weekend is for sangha members who organise sitting groups and day retreats. During this non-silent weekend, we will reflect upon the challenges involved in facilitating Dharma activities and ways to enhance the benefits they provide. It will be an opportunity to meet one another, share experiences and discuss topics of interest. If you are an organiser, or regular participant in one day events or sitting groups, or thinking about initiating such events in the future, you are warmly invited to participate in this event. The weekend will be facilitated by Jenny Wilks and Chris Cullen who have lots of experience of such events.

The weekend is offered by Gaia House without a fixed charge, and there will be an opportunity to offer dana at the end.

To book call 01626 333613  
or email [info@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:info@gaiahouse.co.uk)

# Retreats in FOCUS

## SHARDA'S LAST RETREAT AT GAIA HOUSE

**Insight Meditation and Creative Inquiry,**  
**5-9 July 2009**

**Code: 9154 Cost: £165 (£140) £198**

Sharda Rogell has been teaching regularly at Gaia House for 23 years and spent several years living in the South Devon area in the mid 80s and late 90s, during which she was very involved in the running of the retreat centre. She has contributed an immense amount to both



Gaia House and the retreatants we serve, and it is our great loss that Sharda will not be making the long journey from California in forthcoming years. The retreat she is teaching with Catherine McGee this July will be a last and precious opportunity to sit with Sharda at Gaia House.

*I have known Sharda for around 20 years and have great appreciation for the depth and breadth of her wisdom and kindness as well as her passion for exploring and sharing the dharma. On behalf of the the teachers, trustees, staff and retreatants of Gaia House, I would like to express our profound gratitude to Sharda for her immense Dharma service and extend our best wishes to her.*

**Yanai Postelnik**  
Dharma Director



# GAIA HOUSE IS GOING GREENER

Caring for our precious environment has always been an important consideration in the running of Gaia House. In the first precept we refrain from killing, but it is more than this. In undertaking this precept we acknowledge the interconnection of all beings and our respect for all life. We agree to refine our understanding of not killing and non-harming in all our actions. This is the essential background to our wish to care for our environment, and the environment of our earth.

The last six months have seen us focus on how we care for this wonderful place we occupy in rural Devon, also considering our impact nationally and globally. All of us have been considering how we can decrease our energy usage (and thus carbon footprint), take care of our water supplies, and ensure that our waste does not hurt the environment.

### Our Carbon Footprint

Gaia House is an old Grade 2 listed building and we have been looking at a number of different ways to reduce our impact. This is not straightforward or easy but there are some simple ways we have been able to help ourselves:

- Changing the light bulbs to long life ones as they go
- Being careful to turn off all electrical appliances wherever possible
- Insulating windows.

These small changes have meant that our electricity usage has decreased by 20% during the day, and 50% during the night, in the last two years (2006 to 2008). We also use the only energy producer who uses 100% renewable resources (Green Energy). This is a more expensive option but we feel it is important to support ethical green companies.

We have also been increasing insulation around the windows and have ensured that our loft areas are suitably insulated to help us keep the heat in.

We are also considering possible renewable energies, but this will take more time. None are easy, and some are very expensive. We are looking into all the possibilities, having invited Devon Renewable Energy to visit and help us consider these issues. One possibility is placing solar panels onto the flat roofs of the Garden and Hermitage Wings. However, being a Grade 2 listed building this may not be easy. So watch this space!

### Water Update !

As we wrote in our fundraising letter in September last year, we want to investigate the potential of having our own water borehole. Thanks to your generosity, this is now going forward. At present we are awaiting a visit of a dowser to help us find water on this land. If found, we can then begin the process of putting in the borehole.

All these possibilities are exciting and we want to thank all involved at Gaia House for their commitment and enthusiasm for these important developments.



### A Bio-digester is a must .....

After many years we have recognised the need for a new way to deal with our waste. As we are in such a rural setting the mains sewage pipes do not run out this far, and the house uses a Victorian septic tank. More retreatants have visited us each year and this tank was just not built to cope with these numbers! So a major investment for this year will be the purchase of a bio-digester, which will be able to deal with all our waste safely, cleanly and in a very "green" way. It is not a particularly exciting purchase but absolutely essential to ensure we continue to support and care for our local environment.

### Taxi Share

As part of our efforts to 'green' Gaia House, we are trying to minimise the traffic coming to Gaia House at the start and end of retreats by working with a local taxi company. As well as offering Gaia House preferential rates, A and A taxis will try to organise taxi sharing when people are arriving at Newton Abbot train station at similar times. If you would like to share a taxi, you need to book in advance, and 'A and A' will meet you at the station with a board saying 'Gaia House' and the names of people they are meeting. If there is no one arriving at the same time you won't be able to share but often there will be so the more we book in advance the better this system will work and the better the chance of sharing a taxi. And the benefits are many: fewer cars making journeys to Gaia House, less traffic and noise for our neighbours and cheaper taxi fares!

Call Dave at A and A taxis on 07905 612824 to book your taxi in advance .

So as you can see making Gaia House "greener" is something we continually review. In future editions we'll let you know how we get on with this important work.

## OUR CO-ORDINATORS: CYCLES OF SERVICE...

As spring blooms all around us, I'm reflecting on the cycle of co-ordinators who spend a year or more offering service to Gaia House and to the dharma. Last autumn we waved farewell to Justin Andrews in reception. One of Justin's greatest skills was communicating his considerable experience as a yogi to people calling us to find out about what happens at Gaia House. Many thanks to Justin for his work in reception and for his service. In February, we said goodbye to Karen Smith who spent a year in the household department. Karen brought her creative talents to making new cushions and zabutons, refurbishing, and greatly improving, the old and rather noisy curtain rails in the Hermitage Wing, and much more besides. Great thanks to Karen for all the energy that she brought to this role. Phil Wilkes has also recently come to the end of his year-long term in reception and before he leaves us, he has volunteered his professional skills as graphic

designer to re-design the boards we use to record information in reception. Appreciation to Phil for this offering and all his hard work.

Meanwhile, Aoife Valley arrived to offer service as reception co-ordinator back in September. Aoife had been working as a gardener and artist in Ireland and, as well as doing a grand job in reception, has recently had a children's book published. In January we welcomed Tony O'Connor into the household department, who left behind his work as a maths and numeracy tutor in adult education to join us here and who brings lots of experience from his involvement with the running of London Insight. Recently arrived in reception is Juliet Grace, who brings with her experience from working in a similar role at a complimentary therapy centre in Sheffield, and a most gentle and friendly phone manner. What a team we have!

Thank you to all co-ordinators for this continued and greatly appreciated service.

**Rachel Davies**  
Retreat Manager



Far back row: Doug Aitken. Back Row: Andy Weir, Juliet Grace, Aoife Valley, Neil Croom.  
Front row: Richard Reid, Tony O'Connor, Phil Wilkes. Front Kneeling: Gavin Milne

## NAME CHANGES!

Following our Vision Day last year staff and volunteers decided that we needed to change the names of our roles here at Gaia House. After much discussion it was agreed that the volunteer managers would become volunteer co-ordinators and the (staff) co-ordinators would become managers. There was great support for this positive change as it was felt to be a truer reflection of the work carried out.

This may be a bit confusing for a little while but for all of you who may be visiting this year we hope that the transition will be relatively smooth.

We're in the process of changing the signs throughout the house and also in all of our publications and documentation. We will do our best to change all the signs as quickly as possible, but this may take a few months.

With appreciation for your patience

From all of us at Gaia House.

## VOLUNTEER CO-ORDINATOR OPPORTUNITIES

At Gaia House we are always looking for people who have an interest in community, service and dharma teachings to come here as volunteer co-ordinators for a year to 18 months.

Various posts become available throughout the year, and as well as recruiting for other co-ordinator posts, we are particularly looking for someone to take over in reception from late August.

If you enjoy communicating with people, are confident using a computer and are interested in engaging with dharma practice within a community context, we would love to hear from you.

Please contact Sarah on [admin@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:admin@gaiahouse.co.uk) for more information, or contact reception on [info@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:info@gaiahouse.co.uk) for an application pack

## SPRING AT GAIA HOUSE

by Neil Croom

*On the arm of a garden seat, flies jostle for a place in the sun. Uniformity in the same direction, like a team of pursuit cyclists each taking a turn at the front. Pigeons flap vigorously twice or three times at the top of their arc of flight before loopily gliding on.*

*Not long after sunrise, with two short squeaky caks, a pheasant announces its presence on the front lawn. Unperturbed. The bold agility of the squirrel's leap tests the give of the slim branches, with its tail saving it from embarrassment. Have you ever seen a squirrel fall out of a tree?*

*A rapid almost anxious scuffle of leaves, parallel to my hearing, and a fox jumps out in front of me. Beautiful. Red, bright, sleek. Healthy looking. Pure instinct, jumps straight back in from whence it came.*

*The rabbits seem to have a lot of free time. After a munching lurching on daisies and dandelions, they chase after each other in simple circles of play. Reminds me of that idea about the mark of a civilised society being how much time its members spend playing.*

*As much of the ground as of the air, the blackbird, short skippy hops, jerks its head from side to side, then stabs out a worm. Wandering around with a full beak wondering whether to gobble now or find a plate of ground.*

*White blossom, like coracles on the air, float to the ground. Tracing their flight back to tree there's a small bird feeding on juicy spring growth.*

*The rooks! Screech, caw, regurgitate, gargle flap, bark. Tree-house artisans. An obvious dominance in decibels. When I get home I'm gonna buy a pair of binoculars and join the fraternity of twitchers. (An acceptable indulgence of planning mind!)*

*The cows just seem to want to make friends. Just such beautiful doe-eyed creatures. They approach in a kind of lazy obedience, almost genetic by now. Then a few frightened steps back from the gate when I advance.*

*The lamb's head pummels and barges its way to the nourishment from mother's teat. She walks on. The goldfish go 'glup,glup'. Easily startled by movement in the world above theirs, they dart off together.*

*Just above them the water boatmen are the most delicate dancers. Moving at nimble tangents to create the tiniest series of ripples which kiss into each other and then fade.*

*And further above still, a butterfly. Three quarters cabbage white-like but with the most deeply embered orange wing tips. Like Johan Cruyff's shirt.*

*Total Nature.*

*Seeing all of this, it makes easy sense to have my own little Slug Protection League going when I wash the lettuce leaves each morning.*

# SANGHA INFORMATION

## MINDFULNESS IN SCHOOLS PROJECT

A research project is being set up, in conjunction with the Wellbeing Institute at the University of Cambridge, to study the effects of teaching mindfulness to Year 10 pupils as part of the curriculum in secondary schools.

No equivalent study has yet been undertaken, and we are keen to produce as robust and effective a piece of research as possible. We are therefore looking for secondary school teachers who have some experience of meditation and mindfulness practice who would be interested in taking part in the project.

Anyone interested should contact Chris Cullen at [c.cullen@hamptonschool.org.uk](mailto:c.cullen@hamptonschool.org.uk)

### BUDDHA DHARMA SANGHA Summer Camp In Dartmoor National Park

**With Yanai Postelnik, Catherine McGee and Brad Richecoeur 21-29 Aug 2009**

You are warmly invited to participate in the ninth BuddhaDharmaSangha camp – an annual gathering of dharma friends old and new. The camp is a wonderful opportunity to practice Dharma in the beauty of nature supported by a likeminded Sangha. We combine Insight Meditation, Qigong and Inquiry with the transformational quality of the natural world. Some time is spent in smaller groups for sharing our experience in seeking to apply the dharma to our modern lifestyles and exploring ways to nurture spiritual companionship. As well as space for formal practice with mornings in silence, there is also time to enjoy being in nature and with others, walks on the moor, nights around the campfire, star gazing, songs, stories and more on a secluded site on the moor.

We cook communally and all food is vegetarian. The price covers all basic costs and teaching is offered on a 'dana' basis. We are limited to 80 adults and 20 children. Pre-booking is essential to secure a place.

For more information or to book call Brad on 0845 3305086, email [bradr@qigong-southwest.co.uk](mailto:bradr@qigong-southwest.co.uk) or visit [www.qigong-southwest.co.uk](http://www.qigong-southwest.co.uk).

### Mountain Walking Retreat in the French Pyrenees

**With Yanai Postelnik 5-11 July 2009**

Following a very rich, powerful and enjoyable walking retreat this summer, in 2009 we will again offer a rare and wonderful opportunity to practise the Dharma while walking in the beauty and wilderness of the French Pyrenees, carrying backpacks and camping. We will spend time in silence, meditating together and in solitude, and also take time for sharing our experience and exploring the Dharma together. The retreat will require a reasonable degree of physical fitness as the route will involve some moderately challenging mountain terrain.

Contact Simon Thompson, telephone 01803 840397 email: [simonanthonythompson@yahoo.com](mailto:simonanthonythompson@yahoo.com)

## GATHERINGS 2009

The monthly 'Sangha Sunday' meetings which offered opportunities for Sangha associated with Gaia House have now been replaced by Sangha Gatherings!

The programme will include time for meditation and discussion. We hope for lively Dharma discussions on topics related to how we engage with the teachings of the Buddha in everyday life.

These gatherings are open to people who have sat retreats at Gaia House or similar retreats elsewhere. The overall organisers are Kirsten Kratz and Jenny Wilks. We hope that the gatherings will enable people to make connections with each other and perhaps lead to other local initiatives.

The meetings will be on Sunday afternoons from 2.30-5.30 (with supper after) on the following dates and you are welcome to attend any of these:

**19 July (provisional)**

**4 October**

**29 November**

For topics look up [http://groups.yahoo.com/group/totnes\\_dharma](http://groups.yahoo.com/group/totnes_dharma). We look forward to seeing you!

**Jenny and Kirsten**

## UK ONE DAY RETREAT INFORMATION

### BRIGHTON

Sat 8 Aug Yanai Postelnik  
Sun 20 Sept Rob Burbea  
Sat 3 Oct Martin Aylward  
Venue: The Bodhi Garden, 7a Ship Street, Brighton  
Time: 10am-5pm  
Cost: £20 (concessions available) plus dana. Advance booking advisable  
Web: [www.bodhigarden.org](http://www.bodhigarden.org) for booking details

### BRISTOL

Sat 27 June Catherine McGee an interactive inquiry day not suitable for beginners  
Sun 20 Sept Brad Richecoeur a qigong and meditation day  
Sat 14 Nov Bhante Bodhidamma  
Venue: Oddfellows Hall, 20 West Park, Clifton, Bristol  
Time: 9.30am-5pm  
Cost: £8/£5 (or £10/£7 on the day)  
Web: [www.bristolmediation.org.uk](http://www.bristolmediation.org.uk)  
Post: BIMG, 87 Avonleigh Road, Bedminster, Bristol BS3 3JA (enclosing SAE)

### CAMBRIDGE

Sat 6 June Bhante Bodhidamma  
Sat 19 Sept Yanai Postelnik  
Sat 7 Nov Christina Feldman  
Venue: Friends Meeting House, 12 Jesus Lane, Cambridge  
Time: 10am-5pm, registration 9.30am  
Cost: £8 (in advance) / £10 (on day) plus dana. Concessions: £5 (students, unwaged, retired)  
Contact: Liz DeMarras 01223 460966

### SHEFFIELD

Sat/Sun 13-14 June Jake Dartington  
Sat/Sun 24-25 October Catherine McGee  
Cost: £10/£20/£30 plus dana  
Contact: River Wolton on 01433 631350

### SOUTH WALES

Sat 13 June Yanai Postelnik  
Sun 15 Nov Bhante Bodhidamma  
Time: 9.30am-5pm  
Venue: Bridgend  
Cost: £15 suggested donation  
Contact: Tim Blanch 01656 841625 [blanchtim@googlemail.com](mailto:blanchtim@googlemail.com)

### London Insight Meditation presents

**AN AFTERNOON WITH JOSEPH GOLDSTEIN Sun 5 July**

This is a rare opportunity to spend time with one of the most respected teachers in the Buddhist tradition.

Joseph is co-founder and guiding teacher of the Insight Meditation Society in Barre, Massachusetts as well as author of numerous books including One Dharma and The Experience of Insight.

The afternoon will include meditation, teaching and discussion.

Time: 2.30pm-5.30pm

Venue: Kings Place, 90 York Way, Islington, London N1

For booking details and further information on this and all our events go to [www.londoninsightmeditation.org.uk](http://www.londoninsightmeditation.org.uk)

# UK SITTING GROUP REGISTER

We have now revised our sitting group listings and show only those located in the UK; our overseas listing had become so out of date that we have made a decision to remove them from the newsletter. If your name and details are not featured here and you run a sitting group in the UK then please do let us know and we can add you to this feature of the newsletter. Please keep us up to date with your plans so that we can ensure we always publish the most up to date information. Keep in touch via email on [pa@gaiahouse.co.uk](mailto:pa@gaiahouse.co.uk).

## AVON & SOMERSET

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# FUTURE GROUP RETREATS

For retreat descriptions see our main programme

Dates	Retreat Name	Teacher	Code	Price
14 June	Meditation Day	Jenny Wilks	9152	£23
5 – 9 July	Insight Meditation and Contemplative Inquiry	Sharda Rogell Catherine McGee	9154	£165 (£140)
12 – 19 July	Meditation & Study Retreat	Martine & Stephen Batchelor	9155	£259 (£220)
24 Jul – 2 Aug	Mindfulness and the Way of Insight	John Peacock	9156	£321 (£273)
7 – 9 Aug	Inhabiting the Truth of the Moment	Martin Aylward	9157	£101 (£86)
14 – 21 Aug	Dependent Origination CDPP Study Retreat	Christina Feldman John Peacock	9158	£259 (£220)
28 Aug – 4 Sept	Dharma Flower Turning Dharma Flower	Tenshin Reb Anderson	9159	£259 (£220)
8 – 13 Sept	Unbinding the Heart	Rob Burbea	9160	£197 (£167)
18 – 23 Sept	Flow of Existence	Yvonne Weier Max Weier	9161	£197 (£167)
26 Sept – 2 Oct	Mindfulness, Insight, Liberation	Christina Feldman John Teasdale Rob Burbea	9162	£228 (£194)
9 – 13 Oct	Stillness & Movement Insight Meditation & Qi Gong	Catherine McGee Brad Richecoeur	9163	£165 (£140)
17 – 25 Oct	Embodied Openness, Awakened Presence,	Yanai Postelnik Leela Sarti	9164	£290 (£247)
Sat 31 Oct	Meditation Day	TBC	9165	£23
1 – 29 Nov	November Solitary Retreat	Christina Feldman Yanai Postelnik Catherine McGee Rob Burbea	9166	1week £224 (£190) 2weeks £448 (£381) 3weeks £609 (£518) Full £770 (£654)
4 – 6 Dec	The Wilderness of the Heart - Relationship on the Path	Akincano	9167	£101 (£86)
11 – 13 Dec	Lovingkindness Weekend	Yanai Postelnik	9168	£101 (£86)
18 – 20 Dec	Stillness, Clarity & Freedom	Chris Cullen Jenny Wilks	9169	£101 (£86)
27 Dec – 3 Jan 2010	New Year's Retreat	Christina Feldman, Catherine McGee and Rob Burbea	9170	£259 (£220)