

An Introduction to Buddhism and its Relation to Mindfulness Practice and the Taking of Refuge with Richard Yin

The teachings of mindfulness and refuge are central to Buddhism. Within the more traditional approach to understanding Buddhism, one that involves study, contemplation and meditation, mindfulness is practised with a set of assumptions and “truths” to be investigated.

Some of these assumptions include the certainty of death, impermanence, and the fragility and preciousness of human existence. Truths include the stress that comes from uncertainty, our preoccupation with self and identity and the nature of freedom.



Teachings within Buddhism offer a framework to further investigate these truths and how this can deepen mindfulness practice and unfold a life with greater freedom from the emotional bonds of fear, guilt, anger or desire.

A commitment to the taking of refuge can only occur when one is clear what one is seeking refuge from; a study of the major concepts of Buddhism offers at least an intellectual understanding to undertaking this commitment.

The approaches to understanding and practice within Buddhism are vast and varied reflecting 2600 years of history and diverse cultural influences as the religion spread from its origins in India. The face of Buddhism in Thailand is very different from how it appears in Tibet or Japan, yet they are of the same essence. The differences nonetheless are profound and shape even the “simplest” practice of mindfulness.

This series will attempt to explore some of the fundamental ideas of Buddhism and the varying approaches across different traditions. It will draw from teachings by Namgyal Rinpoche, Chögyam Trungpa and others and will present a more liberal perspective that opens to greater enquiry and self-reflection.

Over the last 10 years at the studio, we have offered mindfulness classes that have been secular, but nonetheless informed by our own predominantly Buddhist influences. This course is put forward so that like us, students may have a framework within which mindfulness practice and refuge are situated; a framework that

hopefully offers a greater depth and perspective to practise and how it supports the unfolding of a meaningful life.

Pre-requisites: This 9-week series is for those who have attended previous mindfulness or calm abiding courses and continue to engage in ongoing practice. The weekly class will include a meditation followed by teaching and discussions.

Dates: The classes in this course build on each other, hence the course requires a commitment to be present for each class. 9 Thursday evenings: 1, 8, 15, 22 February, 1, 8, 15, 22, 29 March 2018

Time: 7.30pm – 8.45pm

Venue: Centre for Movement Studies Studio/Yoga Moves, 45 Evans Street, Shenton Park (opposite the lake).

What to bring: Your favourite meditation cushion if you have one. Chairs, cushions, bolsters and bolsters are also available at the studio for use.

Bookings: Bookings are required – please register your interest in attending by contacting Sara: sara@yogamoves.net.au or phone 0415 363 313.

Cost: By *dana* / *considered generosity*. Class cards are not applicable for this class. *Dana* is often taken to simply mean donation or gift. *Dana* is a Buddhist teaching about generosity of spirit or the sharing of blessings, the aspiration to generate health and goodwill in all the cycles of giving and receiving; the transactions of daily life. In reflecting on the practice of *dana* one begins to understand the interdependence of life. *Dana* is a gift that supports the livelihood of the teacher and his family. In turn the teachings offered are to support you in meeting with life with wisdom and compassion. Each participant arrives at the amount of *dana* voluntarily. Teachers of



the Dharma are supported by considerate donation. Following Buddhist tradition, Richard charges no fee for teaching. It is customary to offer *dana* at the beginning of the class (there is usually a bowl at near the entrance). Giving prior to the teaching supports the experience of openness and generosity.