

Insight Dialogue and the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program: The Commonalities and Differences

For understanding and coherence through our global sangha we encourage Insight Dialogue Teachers, ID Facilitators and Interpersonal Mindfulness teachers to study and understand the commonalities and differences between Insight Dialogue and the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program (IMP). To promote clarity for our teaching communities and for participants attending ID and IMP offerings, we encourage transparency, clarity, and integrity in promotional materials. These materials should accurately convey whether the offering is Insight Dialogue (Relational Dharma) or Interpersonal Mindfulness (Relational Mindfulness.) In this way we maintain ethical standards, avoid unnecessary confusion and unintended impacts as we respect one another and care for our practice communities.

Interpersonal Mindfulness Program Relational Mindfulness	Insight Dialogue Relational Dharma
<p>1. Based on a Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction (MBSR)/Mindfulness Based Programs (MBP) format and the ID Guidelines, the IMP is a secular entryway into relational mindfulness. It is intended as a public health initiative. Drawing from universal sources of wisdom, there is no specific emphasis on any religious or faith tradition.</p> <p>The program reveals the transformative power of deep listening and mindful attuning to our inner worlds and outer relationships in moments of relational contact and stress. Participants contemplate core human experiences in dialogue while establishing mindfulness and concentration together. It is committed to a holistic approach to health that cares for people, communities, and the good of all.</p>	<p>1. Based on early Buddhist teachings, Insight Dialogue is grounded in the Buddha’s early teachings (Pāli Canon) and the practice of Insight or Vipassanā meditation, people of all faiths and backgrounds are welcome and find benefit in the practice.</p> <p>The Insight Dialogue Community (IDC) is a global community dedicated to the practices of relational Dharma as a vehicle for awakening together. Their mission is to share teachings and practices that incorporate a relational understanding of the Buddha’s teachings for the benefit of all. The IDC is an ‘Integrated Auxiliary’ of the Metta Foundation (MF) and receives substantial funding from MF both under its previous guise of ‘Metta Programs’ and in its current form as IDC. MF is legally recognized in the US as a church, which gives it several important rights and responsibilities.</p>
<p>2. Taught by professionally trained mindfulness teachers with committed personal practice and training in teaching meditation, participant led inquiry/learning, trauma sensitivity and the psychology of group process. Teachers have completed the Interpersonal Mindfulness Teacher Training and Development Pathway and abide by the ethics of their professional training.</p>	<p>2. Taught by Insight Dialogue Teaching Community (IDTC) members in the form of retreats and short courses. IDTC members are recognized and approved by the Teachers Council to offer teachings at different levels: Retreat Teachers, Teachers, and Facilitators. They are committed to ongoing silent and relational meditation practice and study the Buddha’s teaching. They abide by the ethical guidelines of the IDC which include Ethics for the Community of Teachers and Event Coordinators.</p>

<p>3. The Interpersonal Mindfulness Program (IMP) is a standardized curriculum of 10 sessions with a psycho-educational approach and a clear pedagogy. It is offered to participants who have completed a Mindfulness Based Program such as MBSR, MBCT, MBSC or who have prior meditation experience and the permission of the IMP teacher.</p>	<p>3. Insight Dialogue is a whole life path of Dhamma study, practice, and dharma friendship. The curriculum for retreats and courses is generated by those offering them and grounded in their study and practice. While there is no set curriculum, teachings are supported by and align with the three bases of ID: Meditation, Relationship, and Wisdom (meditative awareness, the wisdom teachings of the Buddha and the power of relationship to support insight.)</p>
<p>4. It is offered in secular settings based on a fee or sliding scale.</p>	<p>4. It is offered on a dana or donation basis; teachers and facilitators are not paid to teach. Fees may be collected to pay venue, teacher travel expenses, and administrative costs of events.</p>

Insight Dialogue

The Insight Dialogue guidelines and relational meditation form were developed by Gregory Kramer and are rooted in Buddhist principles, interpersonal neurobiology, social psychology and recent Western scientific understandings of what it is to be a human being in relationship. Both the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program (IMP) and the broader framework of Insight Dialogue (ID) utilize the same meditation guidelines and the relational meditation form.

Insight Dialogue is grounded in the Buddha’s early teachings (Pāli Canon) and the practice of Insight or Vipassanā meditation. It is offered in the form of online and in-person retreats and short courses. The curriculum for retreats and courses is generated by those offering them and grounded in their study and practice. ID Retreat Teachers, Teachers, and Facilitators are recognized and approved by the ID Teachers Council in collaboration with the Insight Dialogue Teaching Community (IDTC). They abide by the ethical guidelines of the Insight Dialogue Community. *An ID teacher cannot identify as an IMP teacher unless they have met the prerequisites for IMP teacher training and have completed the IMP Teacher Training and Development Pathway.*

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Insight Dialogue—whether taught in short practice sessions or on retreat—is offered freely based on donation: dana, giving, is a guiding principle for teachers and practitioners.

Background of Insight Dialogue and the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program

After multiple senior MBSR teachers engaged in Insight Dialogue retreats taught by Gregory Kramer, in 2003 Gregory proposed developing a program that would incorporate Insight Dialogue’s methods and principles into a multi-week course like MBSR. Metta Foundation subsequently invited six MBSR teachers to a private retreat, funded by the Foundation and taught by Gregory, so they could experience firsthand the benefits of Insight Dialogue. Subsequently, the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program and curriculum was conceived, funded, developed, and was originally copyrighted in 2013 by Metta Programs (now the

Insight Dialogue Community). Phyllis Hicks and Florence Meleo-Meyer (trained MBSR teachers) along with others, have continued to refine and develop the materials and IMP teacher training retreat for MBSR/MBP teachers. An advisory group of dually trained IMP and ID Teachers called the “Gardeners,” including Phyllis and Florence, currently shepherd the IMP Program and IMP Teacher Development Pathway.

Interpersonal Mindfulness: A Graduate Course for MBSR/MBCT/MBP Participants

The Interpersonal Mindfulness Program (IMP) is designed as a course to support the on-going meditation practice of students who have completed a mindfulness-based program (MBP) such as MBSR/MBCT, or students who have prior meditation experience and the permission of the instructor to enroll. Both the Interpersonal Mindfulness Program (IMP) and the broader framework of Insight Dialogue (ID) utilize the same meditation guidelines and the relational meditation form.

The 8-week Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction Program (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy Program (MBCT) offer participants a systematic method to learn, grow and heal by learning to pay wise attention in their own lives. The philosophical and scientific roots of MBSR, founded in 1979 by Jon Kabat-Zinn, point in the direction of an awakened mind and the relief of suffering. It is a force for good in public health and a way for people to participate in their own health and wellness. There is no specific emphasis on any religious or faith tradition. The focus is on meeting shared human conditions with wisdom and kindness and learning practices that alleviate stress and cultivate resilience. Many Mindfulness-Based Programs are offered around the world in hospitals, universities, and community settings.

Building on a foundation of mindfulness-based programs, the IMP is an eight-week protocol including a daylong practice and an orientation (10 classes in all) based upon the Insight Dialogue guidelines and an MBSR framework. It is embedded within the field of mind-body medicine, and has been offered in universities, integrative medicine programs, adult learning programs, and private psychotherapy practices. It is provided on a fee for service basis.

The IMP is taught by professionally trained mindfulness-based teachers with committed personal practice and training in teaching meditation, participant led inquiry/learning, trauma sensitivity and the psychology of group process. IMP Teachers have completed the Interpersonal Mindfulness Teacher Training and Development Pathway and abide by the ethics of their professional training. *Completion of The Training and teaching the IMP does not qualify an MBSR/MBCT/MBP teacher to identify as an Insight Dialogue teacher.* In the same way, an ID teacher cannot identify as an IMP teacher unless they have met the prerequisites for IMP teacher training and have completed the IMP Teacher Training and Development Pathway. In our sangha, there are teachers who are recognized both as ID Teachers and IMP Teachers.

The IMP course is designed to help participants cultivate and establish mindfulness in moments of sensory and relational contact. It provides a format and container for exploring the shared human experience. Its foundation is the Insight Dialogue guidelines and the practice of relational mindfulness. It supports participants in developing an understanding of interpersonal stress and suffering. The course offers the opportunity to observe and release habitual ways of relating and to experience greater ease and clarity. It incorporates understandings of stress from wisdom traditions, as well as from neurological, psychological and biological models.