



# JULY 2018 NEWSLETTER

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Applications now being accepted for Practice in Transformative Action, EBMC's award-winning yearlong program of secular mindfulness training for social justice activists and agents of change! Click [here](#) for more information. Application deadline is August 6, 2018.





## State of the Center Report

Did you know that EBMC is now going into the implementation phase of our first 10 Year Strategic Plan? What are the 5 Core Elements of the EBMC ecosystem? Read about this and more in our [July 2018 State of the Center report!](#)



## Dismantling Racial Capitalism, One Gift at a Time!

For a fun YouTube tutorial on Gift Economics 101, featuring EBMC Sangha members, [click below](#)



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## People of EBMC: Sue Bennett

**EBMC:** *Sue, you've been a part of the EBMC Sangha (community) for a long time. What brought you to EBMC, and can you please tell us a little more about yourself?*

**Sue:** Yes! EBMC is such an important resource. I was a founding member of the queer meditation group at the SFLGBTQ center. When I had moved to Oakland from San

Francisco in 2006 I wasn't sure where I'd find meditation groups on this side of the Bay. Then I remember attending the opening ceremony of the EBMC space on Broadway and 22nd back in 2007.

I value EBMC for its commitment to diversity and the dedication to all–dana (gift economics) programming. It's so radical to operate outside of a fee–for–service model. I will always support that in our center because I want an economy that works for and values all people.

I was introduced to Buddhism in the late 1990s by listening to a recording of Pema Chödrön's Urban Retreat in Berkeley. I moved to the Bay Area in 2001. I like to say I moved here for queers and Buddhists, and I even found queer Buddhists! I was able to sit with Pema and attended many non–residential retreats with her. My first residential retreat was the 5–day LGBTQ retreat at Spirit Rock with Arinna Weisman and Eric Kolvig. I am so grateful for that queer dharma door. I don't think I would have been able to enter into sangha in a non–queer space. I connected deeply with Vipassana and with Arinna and have considered her my teacher since then. My current practice mostly involves taking the refuge vows daily and practicing presence with my partner Elsee and almost–7–year–old Ellery! I've loved the Family Practice group at EBMC and occasionally manage to sit a residential retreat at a retreat center elsewhere.



Sue Bennett

**EBMC:** *As [Director of Operations and Miscellaneous Stuff](#) (a job title you chose yourself, we've heard!) at the Sustainable Economies Law Center (SELC) in Oakland, you spend a lot of time and energy supporting "[the legal roots of resilience](#)" for struggling communities. As gentrification continues, speedily, to displace lower–income folks and small businesses from Oakland, can you share a couple of nuggets of inspirational information that may help the EBMC Sangha?*

**Sue:** I'm really excited by a few things we are working on these days. Probably the most exciting in relation to gentrification and displacement is the [East Bay Permanent Real Estate Cooperative](#), a **new model of permanently affordable housing** first developed by Sustainable Economies Law Center and the [People of Color Sustainable Housing Network](#). By taking land off the speculative market -- watch this very cute, but truth–telling video made by my coworker Janelle Orsi, "[Part 1 of 3: The Pathologies of Homeownership](#)" on YouTube -- EBPREC is permanently preserving affordable housing and commercial space while sourcing capital directly from neighbors.

To see an impact story about the POC Sustainable Housing Network, click [here](#).

**EBMC:** *What's the connection between your everyday personal and professional life, and your practice of mindfulness meditation?*

**Sue:** The Law Center is a [worker self–directed nonprofit](#) (WSDN). I like to describe WSDNs as a cross between a nonprofit and a worker co–op. We have a consent–based decision–making process which enables all staff to have direct impact on our mission and workplace. So, none of us are anyone's





The Law Center staff, pointing in the direction of economic empowerment for ALL!

boss and none of us have a boss. We all take responsibility for the operation and programming of the organization. The attention to the present moment and mindfulness of body I have practiced in meditation gives me a chance to be a thoughtful participant in our process. Working outside of traditional hierarchies requires a commitment and patience I've learned through Buddhist practice.

**EBMC:** *Anything else you'd like to share with our readers?*

**Sue:** Just thanks for the opportunity to reflect on and share about these questions. I truly do take refuge in this Sangha.

**EBMC:** *Thank you, Sue.*



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# Goodbyes



Hello goodbye from  
EBMC core teacher Spring Washam:

*[Note from the editor: Spring is one of the founding teachers of East Bay Meditation Center. She served on its Leadership Sangha / board of directors, and she is also the founder of EBMC's People of Color Sangha. For more information about her teaching, go to <http://www.springwasham.com> ]*

Hello Beloved Community,

It is with much excitement and a heavy heart that I write to you today. In August, I will be moving to LA to help build the meditation communities for folks of color and join Insight LA. I will be visiting Oakland to teach at East Bay Meditation Center when I can but I will be stepping down from all of my formal responsibilities there for some time.

Saying goodbye is never easy, however impermanence is the truth of life. It's always hello then goodbye to every moment. I will cherish all of the beautiful memories and appreciate all we have created together. Being a part of EBMC has been the biggest blessing of my life thus far and I will carry each of you in my heart.

Oakland and EBMC have been my refuge for so long and I will deeply miss our community and all the precious individuals who make it up. There are many ways for you to keep in touch -- social media (Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and Twitter), email, Skype/Zoom personal sessions (starting back up in August), or email ([spring.washam.events@gmail.com](mailto:spring.washam.events@gmail.com)).

My last formal teaching event will be a half-day retreat on July 29, 2018, followed by a goodbye potluck, 1:00 – 4:00 pm at EBMC. I hope to see you all there! You can register for the "see you later potluck" here:

<https://www.facebook.com/events/2011415789120739/>

Until we meet again, beautiful community.

With joined palms,  
Spring

## **Moving to Los Angeles: A Message from POC Sangha Dharma Teacher and Longtime EBMC Volunteer Thomas Davis**

Hello EBMC,

I want to tell you that you are some of the Best People in the World! I have been honored to have the opportunity to practice, study and serve in our community with all of you. Almost 7 years ago I crossed EBMC's threshold when it was located on 22nd and Broadway, not having any clue of the impact that our Meditation Community would have upon my life!



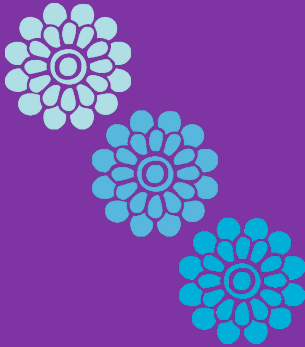
I am moving to Los Angeles to train and work with Insight LA. I am deeply indebted to all of you who have supported my Dharma Path through the years and have essentially qualified me to be in this position. EBMC is my Home Sangha, I will miss you all and intend to stay connected.

With Much Metta,  
Thomas Davis  
July 2018

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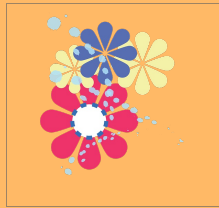
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"When I'm feeling a bit hopeless I know there are two things I can do -- go to work and be kind and help people find what they need, and go to EBMC and clean the bathrooms. Seriously, it's what gets me through my week sometimes!"

-- *EBMC Temple Keeper volunteer*

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## Have feedback to give to EBMC? Here's how!

If you have a question, comment, or suggestion for the coordinators of any of EBMC's practice groups, for our Program Committee, or general feedback you wish to reach the board or staff, please take a peek at [this helpful document](#).

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Upgrade your  monthly giving >

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**EAST BAY  
MEDITATION  
CENTER**

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### EBMC's Mission Statement

Founded to provide a welcoming environment for people of color, members of the LGBTQI community, people with disabilities, and other underrepresented communities, the East Bay Meditation Center welcomes everyone seeking to end suffering and cultivate happiness. Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive community building. We offer mindfulness practices and teachings on wisdom and



compassion from Buddhist and other spiritual traditions. Rooted in our commitment to diversity, we operate with transparent democratic governance, generosity-based economics, and environmental sustainability.

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See what's happening on our social sites:

