

East Bay Meditation Center

JULY 2019 NEWSLETTER

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Applications due Aug. 5! PiTA7, yearlong training program in secular mindfulness for justice activists



Sept. 8, 2019 – July 19, 2020

Practice in Transformative Action

An award-winning yearlong program of
East Bay Meditation Center

eastbaymeditation.org

Application deadline: August 5, 2019

Practice in Transformative Action (PiTA) is now accepting applications for its seventh cohort! Providing training in secular mindfulness for social justice activists and agents of change, this award-winning yearlong program at EBMC is open to all who wish to apply, with a special invitation to People of Color. The program runs from September 2019 through July 2020.

Please note that this is a secular mindfulness, not a Buddhist program. PiTA7 is aimed at supporting individuals to foster transformative inner and outer change by bringing mindfulness awareness practices into their work with progressive social change organizations, coalitions and social movements. Beginning and seasoned social justice activists, as well as people who may not think of themselves as activists, but who are agents of change nevertheless, are invited to apply.

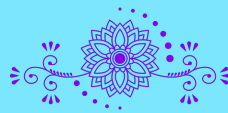
For an online application form, email PiTA@eastbaymeditation.org and to learn more about the program, its teaching team, meeting dates, and more, please click [here](#).

From Ruby Olisemeka, nature educator,
graduate of Practice in Transformative Action 6:

The Practice in Transformative Action program (sixth cohort, 2018–2019), gave me the knowledge, skills and language to have mindfulness moments with my junior ranchers (4 – 5 years old) and longer meditation sessions with my nature explorers group (5 – 11 years old) as well as my middle school science classes (12 – 15 years old). At least 60 children every week got to connect to mindful awareness of breath.

The effects on my students were incredible. The most memorable effect was with a group that was really difficult to bring into a state of calm during our all groups' morning circle. My co-instructors agreed to change our morning routine by letting me lead all 30 children in a mindfulness/breath awareness exercise. In a few weeks,

the children no longer had to be wrangled into sitting and calming their verbal exuberance, so we could begin and have a successful morning circle. As soon as we said "to the stump circle" all our students gathered peacefully and were sitting in circle calmly waiting for me to start the day by saying "Meditation is a survival skill, the more you practice the better you are at it, let's take a deep breath in and begin."



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"State of the Center"

Board, Fundraising, Program, Finance News

LSangha members Melissa Green and Jenn Biehn have completed their service with LSangha. The LSangha has deep gratitude to express to members who have completed their service earlier this year. They have contributed deeply to our strategic planning process, fundraising and so much more! Melissa Green and Jenn Biehn have both served their three year terms with deep integrity and rigorous devotion. (For the rest of the EBMC "State of the Center Report," click [HERE](#).)



♥ Become a Friend
of EBMC >

How Do I Practice with Climate Change / Climate Emergency?



Click [HERE](#) to read two Dharma-based articles written especially for the EBMC Sangha on climate emergency. We hope they help to open Sangha-wide constructive conversations on this scary topic. One article, an interview with Kritee Kanko, climate scientist and Buddhist priest, tells us what we can do to meet this crisis. The second article, by EBMC Sangha leader and longtime Sangha member René Rivera, asks, "If the Buddha were to walk the streets today, or encounter our life now, what would he see? Certainly he would see sickness, old age, and death. ...He might also see signs of the way our planet is changing with extreme weather events, fires and more becoming commonplace."



Both articles contain lots of resources, including **One Earth Sangha**, a global gathering place for climate emergency resources, which expresses "a Buddhist response to climate change and other threats to our home." Click [here](#) to access this vital information.



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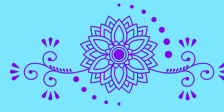
"I Create Sacred Space": Our New Volunteer Altar Keeper

[Note from the editor: We recently created a new volunteer position at EBMC, the Altar Keeper. In Buddhist traditions, keeping temple spaces tidy and beautiful is powerful devotional practice. We're fortunate that our longtime volunteer and Sangha member, Sapho Flor, who is also an acupuncturist and community healer, is serving in this role. Read more about Sapho's experience [here](#).]



The first time I cleaned the black Shakyamuni figure on the main altar, I cried. I didn't know exactly why, yet I didn't question the tears. I knew I was dusting off 13 years of witnessing our community since this Buddha figure was first given to EBMC from Spirit Rock. I have been a temple keeper (volunteer cleaner at EBMC) since I first arrived in Oakland in 2013. I had volunteered at Vipassana centers and wanted to continue service. I also cleaned professionally and felt inclined to clearing spaces as a healing modality. Cleaning has always been a mindfulness practice for me, to anchor my being and reflect on purification of self. Since the altar keeper is a new role at EBMC, I am open to creating rituals, keeping in mind traditional ways statues are cleaned in Buddhist temples. I create sacred space by using what is available. After dusting off the figures, I dust off the singing bowls (since they are part of the altar too) and sound them so they resonate through the main hall. This helps me spread my awareness to the space and center my heart and intentions for the hour of cleaning. I connect with each figure, the pictures, and words on the altars as I clean, taking my time to honor what they represent. My mindfulness expands the deeper I clean into the crevices of the figures, cultivating patience and concentration. With that mindfulness, comes reverence. It helps me recognize the beauty of these figures as sacred art and I've become more grateful for the roles the altars have in community.

Are you interested in deepening your spiritual practice by volunteering for EBMC? There are so many different ways to volunteer, and volunteers are at the heart of EBMC! Email us at admin@eastbaymeditation.org for more info, and thank you!



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What's Radical Inclusivity at EBMC?

**welcome
to ebmc**



ARE YOU INTERESTED IN A WORLD
IN WHICH EVERYONE FEELS SEEN,
HEARD, VALUED AND RESPECTED?

**EBMC was founded to provide a welcoming
environment for people of color, members of the
LGBTQIA2+ community, people with disabilities, and
other underrepresented communities. We invite
everyone into the process of creating a community that
provides an alternative to dominant culture values,
and behaviors of domination and inequity.**

**Our mission is to foster liberation, personal and
interpersonal healing, social action, and inclusive
community building.**

We practice Radical Inclusivity, working to create a space
where everyone feels seen, heard, valued and respected.
To support our shared space, we ask that you:

Practice the Agreements for Multicultural Interactions They are up on the wall!	Come to the center Fragrance Free More information is on our website under "Resources."
Understand that there are tensions between competing access needs; we are doing our best to balance needs and are open to your feedback and suggestions	Try to listen deeply if feedback is offered to you; you may not be aware that you are doing something that makes others feel excluded

We welcome you to our
learning community!
We're all part of the journey.

Read more at:
eastbaymeditation.org
Have feedback? Reach us at
radical.inclusivity@eastbaymeditation.org



If you've seen these wonderful Radical Inclusivity posters pop up in every room at EBMC, you're on your way to knowing more about how radical inclusivity is defined and why it's so important to our organizational culture, past, present, and future. To learn more, go to the Radical Inclusivity section on page 15 of our 10-year Strategic Plan! You can access this important document (and learn more about the other four elements of the EBMC ecosystem, Buddhism and Mindfulness Teaching Programs; Shared Leadership; Social Justice and Healing; and Gift Economics) by clicking [HERE](#).

And a big thank you to our talented graphic designer, Candi Martinez Carthen, EBMC's Event Director, for creating this poster with input from the entire EBMC community and finalized text from the EBMC Radical Inclusivity Committee (LSangha/board member Crystal Johnson and staff member Mushim Ikeda).

See what's happening on our social sites:



Upgrade your monthly giving > 



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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