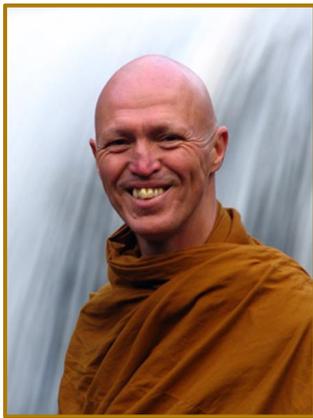


# CLEAR MIND



## Beyond Time and Space

### Residential Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Sucitto, June 9–16, 2016



Madison Vipassana is thrilled to announce that Ajahn Sucitto will return to Wisconsin to lead an eight-day residential meditation retreat June 9–16. The retreat will be held at the [St. Anthony Spirituality Center](#) in Marathon, just west of Wausau.

Ajahn Sucitto is a British-born Theravāda Buddhist monk. He ordained in Thailand in 1976, then returned to Britain in 1978 to train under the Venerable Ajahn Sumedho. In 1979, Ajahn Sucitto was part of the group that established Cittaviveka, Chithurst

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Regardless of time and place, the whole practice of Dhamma comes to completion at the place where there is nothing. It's the place of surrender, of emptiness, of laying down the burden. This is the finish.

—Ajahn Chah, "[Convention and Liberation](#)"

Buddhist Monastery, in West Sussex, England. He served as abbot of the monastery from 1992 until October 2014. He took a sabbatical in 2015 but has now returned to teaching.

During the retreat, we will create a monastic environment by following the Eight Precepts (see [page 6](#)) and reflecting on every activity as part of practice. The retreat will be held in noble silence and offer morning and evening chanting, sitting and walking meditation, daily instructions, and Dhamma talks. The morning and evening chanting will include the lighting of candles and incense. There will be a morning and a midday vegetarian meal each day; only clear liquids will be available after noon. Rooms are single occupancy.

In keeping with Theravāda tradition, this retreat is being offered on a *dāna* (freewill donation) basis. There will be an opportunity to offer *dāna* at the end of the retreat. Our retreat expenses include room and other facility costs; meals; organizational costs; and the teacher's transportation, room, and meals, totaling \$560 per person. We will use the *dāna* offered by retreatants to cover those expenses. *Dāna* collected over that base amount will be offered to Ajahn Sucitto (through the English Sangha Trust) in gratitude for his teachings.

If you would like to learn more about the ancient and beautiful tradition of *dāna*, see [page 3](#). In

addition, these two articles by Ajahn Thanissaro may be of interest:

- [The Economy of Gifts](#)
- [No Strings Attached](#)

To register for the retreat, complete the registration form at the end of this newsletter and mail it with a \$100 deposit. The deposit is required to hold your place; it can be refunded upon request (except to those canceling after May 12, 2016), or it can be included as part of your offered *dāna*.

Ajahn Sucitto's books—for example, *Meditation: A Way of Awakening*, *Parami: Ways to Cross Life's Floods*, and *Kamma and the End of Kamma*—can be downloaded for free from [Forest Sangha Publications](#). For a sample of Ajahn Sucitto's teachings, see [page 2](#). If you'd like to hear some of his talks, you have many to choose from! You'll find nearly 1,000 on [Dharma Seed](#) and more on the [Cittaviveka](#) and [Amaravati Monastery](#) websites. ❖



St. Anthony Spirituality Center

# Ajahn Sucitto: Good Enough

Having lived and practised in the West and being a Westerner myself, I thought an appropriate theme for the evening talk would be practising 'good enough'. This is because the Western mind is so acclimatised to ideals, concepts, and theories; and partly because of the performance-driven ethos of our societies. This makes for rapid development in terms of externals and technological advancement, but poor results in terms of the sense of relationship and inner peace. Most of the problems that our societies face are around either a lack of social cohesion or lack of inner self-worth. We don't feel part of a group of shared values, and we lose a sense of personal value. And we also have a strong performance ethic to compete. There's only one number one: the best team, the best player, the brightest star; the strongest, the fittest, the prettiest, or the wisest. The first guy to a nervous breakdown is a winner. Because that's where it tends to go. There's a lot of driven sense to achieve the excellence. Value is awarded to the great achievers and not as a basic sense of mutual respect for our fellow-humans.

Even on the spiritual plane, we get driven to prove that we're good enough, that we have to achieve some special state in order to be free of the nagging sense of 'not good enough, something wrong with me.' Sure, it's easy to do: the sky's the limit in terms of the ideals of absolute purity, absolute wisdom, refined concentration, Enlightenment and Buddhahood. Compared with those ideals, it's easy to feel that one isn't good

enough. Not really pure enough, not committed enough, not concentrated enough, definitely not mindful enough. Not enough *samadhi*. Not enough kindness. Not enough of anything really. Apart from doubt. Plenty of that.

## Why Nothing Is Ever Good Enough

However, there's no way you can grow if your mind is hampered by doubt and negativity. So the point is—without claiming that I'm flawless and don't need to learn or make an effort—how do I get the feeling of inner worth that will support my practice?

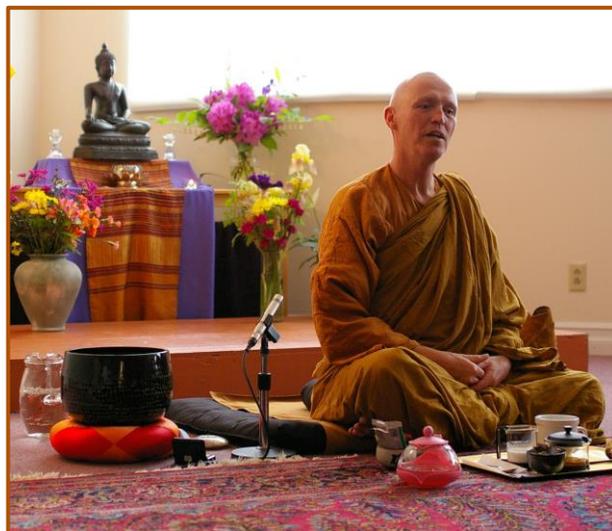
First of all, it's helpful to review what the aim of Dhamma practice is.

When the Buddha says make an effort to realise the unrealised—we may assume that this is another performance drive. It depends on how you see that, but the aim of the practice is to release the mind from the suffering and stress. The goal sounds wonderful, and one can get dewy-eyed and inspired by that; but the path, how to get there, is the nitty-gritty. And as it's accompanied

by wisdom, by deep knowing, it must entail being able to be present with whatever arises in consciousness. What else is there to know? OK, we have, or seem to be, a bodily experience, a thinking experience and a heart or feeling experience. That's all you have, that's what you're walking around with. At least for some of the time—because a lot of the time, the head's somewhere, the body's stumbling after it and the heart's mumbling 'I don't feel so good. There's something wrong, so there must be something wrong with me.' But not feeling so good as a state of being is because of this state of being pulled apart: maybe resolving that has to be at least a part of the solution.

Becoming whole and staying connected is a matter of relating to our head, body and heart in a balanced and peaceful way. 'Things are like this now.' Even when we feel sick or bad or confused, if we relate to that experience for what it is, as a condition and not as something that we are—isn't that a way to be at peace; a way that has clarity and freedom? On the other hand, even when things aren't that bad, notice that the tendency is to identify with what's happening and want it to be another way—either to last longer or to change into something else. So rather than relating to experience as it is, we tend to react to it in these get it/get rid of it ways. And because of that, there's a sense of me having the disagreeable, or being separated from the agreeable; and consequently there are feelings of loss and inadequacy.

Generally, the way it happens is that there's a



resistance to feeling uncomfortable through physical pain, embarrassment, grief, fear or uncertainty. So I go out of the heart and into my head. And with that, the agitation of the uncomfortable feeling and the avoidance of it gets translated into 'I've got to do something, I've got to be something.' I have to do something so that other people will give me the message that I'm OK. But I don't know what I have to do, and I can't ask them what I have to do—because that would prove that I'm not OK—so I have to keep busy. And meanwhile the body is struggling along underneath; and awareness of the whole process is shut down or impaired by the agitation. Because of this we're not really aware of where we are, so we have to rush around to get somewhere. A lot of the time that's what people are doing—rushing to get somewhere else and then rushing to get back again. In this rush there's no time to be feeling anything, or enquiring into our actions, because we're too busy. This is pretty normal, isn't it? This is business, this is high performance, this is sport. This is the programming that we are in at this particular time.

Also, we are attracted to fantasies, movies and video games that aren't happening to real bodies in real time. We don't want to have to be with things as they are; we want action, a buzz, or the sense of getting away from it all—the fantasy glow. What would it be like to be a fairy princess, or a superhero? But then you realise—can your body ever live up to the standard in the fashion magazine? Actually no-one can—the photos are adjusted. You can doll it up for a while but then the discomfort and the sagging and the grubbiness of the body start letting you down. It's just not good enough.

So not feeling good enough is a true experience. Something's wrong. But you don't get good enough through following the idea or the ideal or those performance-driven drives that cause you to fragment. Good enough begins with being whole, with the heart, head and body senses all in the same place. So you enquire: Is my body with me now? Is my heart unwilling? Resisting? Or settling into being here? How do I free myself from self-criticism and feeling inadequate? And to look at the topic in another light—where would that self-respect come from? That has to be a relational sense; which is a heart sense, not my thinking mind.

The problem is that we mostly orient through the thinking faculty. And for this faculty absolutes and ideals are easy. You can think of infinity, although it's something that you'll never see, hear, smell, taste or touch. You can think in terms of absolute right and wrong. You can conceive of the perfect person and the perfect society. What you can't conceive of in any clear and definite way is what is good enough. The thinking mind can't grasp that one. And that's why it's important. It's only realizable through the heart faculty. Where there's no guilt, doubt, craving to be something and conceit, that's good enough. And when that sense is unbroken, that's the undefinable purity that we call Enlightenment. The heart is liberated from that shadow and nagging inner doubt. ❖

*Excerpted from Ajahn Sucitto, "Good Enough." You can listen to the entire talk on Dharma Seed.*



## Cittaviveka Monastery on Dana Practice

Offering support to a monastery benefits the one who offers as well as the recipient: generosity and the inclination to help others open the heart. It's also obviously the case that the monastery benefits—it becomes capable of maintaining itself and therefore remains as a resource for people to visit and draw inspiration from. It is because of this mutual support that the assembly of lay and monastic disciples have kept the Buddha's Way alive in the world for centuries. For many people, to sense that one is part of that transmission is a most valuable reflection.

# Scott Knickelbine: What Is Dhamma?

The word *dhamma* (or the more familiar Sanskrit *dharma*) is one we may think we know. We know the Dhamma as the teaching of the Buddha; we go to Dhamma talks and we take refuge in the Dhamma, along with the Buddha and the Sangha.

But *dhamma* has an almost bewildering range of meanings in Pali, the language of the Theravāda Buddhist scriptures. The Pali Text Society's Pali-English dictionary gives no fewer than 50 different definitions! The word and its variants, such as *dhammo* ("that dhamma") or *dhamme* (the plural of *dhamma*), appear thousands of times in the Pali Canon, but you'd never get a sense of that by reading English translations. And that's a shame, because I think that the broad way that the Buddha used the word *dhamma* is itself a profound Dhamma teaching—perhaps the most profound.

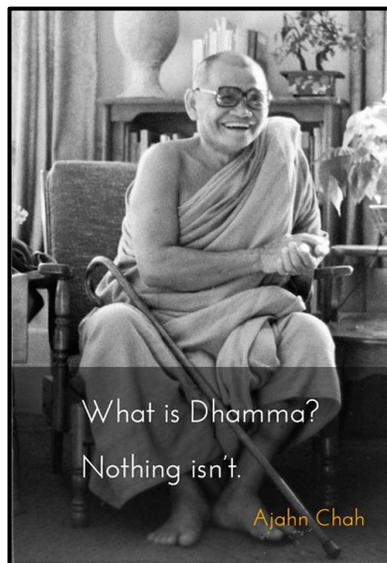
Our immediate tendency, on hearing the word *dhamma*, is to think of the teachings of the Buddha. We might name a number of these—the Noble Eightfold Path, the Five Precepts, the Three Characteristics of Existence (suffering, impermanence, and not-self), and all the other lists the Buddha was known for. Most of all, of course, we think of the Four Noble Truths, the starting point of any understanding of the Dhamma.

But as we encounter the word in the Buddhist texts, it quickly becomes clear that the meaning of *dhamma* is not limited to a set of truths to be grasped intellectually. The morning chants recited daily in Theravada monasteries describe the Dhamma this way:

The Dhamma is well-expounded by  
the Blessed One,  
Apparent here and now,

Timeless,  
Encouraging investigation,  
Leading inward,  
To be experienced individually by the  
wise.

It's a remarkable claim: we are not to be content at merely hearing or reading the Dhamma; we should be able to see it for ourselves, right in this world. Indeed, that same Dhamma insists that we examine our inward experience, to see the truth of things for ourselves.



## Dhamma as Experience

The process of examining things as they are is laid out in detail in the Satipaṭṭhāna Sutta. Here, the Buddha prescribes four realms or foundations of mindfulness—the body (*kāya*), feeling tone (*vedanā*), the heart/mind (*citta*), and, lastly, *dharmas*. Indeed, we are to contemplate dhammas *in* dhammas, or dhammas *as* dhammas (*dhammesu dhammānupassī*). English translations often render the word *dhamma* in this context as “mental objects,” but, as the scholar-monk Bhikkhu Anālayo points out, it must have a much broader meaning than that:

What this *satipaṭṭhāna* is actually concerned with are specific mental

qualities (such as the five hindrances and the seven awakening factors), and analyses of experience into specific categories (such as the five aggregates, the six sense-spheres, and the four noble truths). These mental factors and categories constitute central aspects of the Buddha's way of teaching, the *Dhamma*. . . . Thus the *dharmas* mentioned in this *satipaṭṭhāna* are not “mental objects”, but are applied to whatever becomes an object of the mind or of any other sense door during contemplation. —*Satipaṭṭhāna: The Direct Path to Realization* (Windhorse Publications, 2003), p.183

In addition to the aggregates, sense-spheres, and Noble Truths, the dhammas to be contemplated in this way include the Five Hindrances and the Seven Factors of Awakening. Here, we have come quite a way from our original idea of Dhamma as doctrine. Indeed, the very first dhammas on the list—the hindrances of sense desire, ill-will, sloth and torpor, restlessness and worry, and doubt—seem far from edifying! And yet we are to work through them all, examining each carefully for what it is, seeing for ourselves their emptiness and impermanence, their inability to sustain a self.

At the end of this process of investigating dhammas, we see the truth of the Four Noble Truths, not by assenting to a Buddhist doctrine, but by directly perceiving them in the nature of all phenomena. Thus, what has started as a “doctrine” truly does become “apparent here and now,” “experienced individually by the wise.”

Finally, we come to the lowliest of the meanings of the word *dhamma*, where the word merely designates “things.” For all our reverence for the term, its most frequent use in the Pali Canon is simply as a generic designation of objects, or stuff. Here's an example, from the

Buddha's well-known teaching on the Eight Worldly Things:

Bhikkhus, there are eight worldly things (*lokadhamme*) that make the world go 'round, eight worldly things that keep people on the move. What are the eight? Gain and loss, fame and disgrace, insult and praise, ease and difficulty . . .

Gain/Loss and Fame/Disgrace,  
Insult/Praise and Ease/Difficulty:  
These impermanent human things  
(*aniccā manujesu dhammā*),  
Inconstant, changing things  
(*vipariṇāmadhammē*).

When the wise one carefully knows  
And considers these changing things  
Pleasing things (*ittihassa dhammā*)  
won't disturb the heart and mind  
Displeasure won't cause resentment.  
Cooperation nor obstruction,  
Scattering nor gathering bring peace.  
Having found this place, free from  
defilement, free from sorrow  
The one having seen all this has gone  
beyond this world.

—*Pañhamalokadhamma Sutta, AN 8.5*

We may be surprised to find these “worldly things,” treated here with such dispassion, honored with the word *dhamma*. Yet as the sutta tells us, it is precisely by carefully knowing these dhammas that we are liberated from attachment and sorrow.

Many Buddhist teachers have pointed out the Dhamma in our mundane experience. “All objects are dhamma nature, dhamma phenomena,” says Sayadaw U Tejaniya in *Dhamma Everywhere*. “You can't hold onto any object with *lobha* [aversion.] Don't perceive any objects or experiences as good or bad as no object or experience is better than any other experience or object. Objects are just objects. They are to be known. That is all.” (p. 95)

Ajahn Chah makes the point even more pungently. In arguing that old people make better meditators than young ones, he says:

So really, meditation is easy for old folks. . . . For the old ones, when

they chew on something hard they're soon in pain. Right there the *devadatta* (divine messengers) are talking to them; they're teaching them every day. When they open their eyes their sight is fuzzy. In the morning their backs ache. In the evening their legs hurt. That's it! This is really an excellent subject to study. . . .

This is seeing the body in the body and sensation in sensation. Are you seeing these or are you running away? . . . The question is, are things clear to you? . . . You have to see it within yourself. When you sit, it's true; when you stand up, it's true; when you walk, it's true. Everything is a hassle, everything is presenting obstacles—and everything is teaching you.

—*Everything Is Teaching Us, p. 4*

### My Experiment: “Sadhu, Sadhu, Sadhu!”

As I pondered the notion that all things are Dhamma, I wondered, do I truly regard my own experiences in that way? Do I see the things that arise in my life as teachers, as Ajahn Chah's “divine messengers?” Or do I see them merely as annoyances to be avoided or banalities to be ignored? I decided to put the notion to the test.

In Theravadin countries, after the laity receives a teaching from a bhikkhu or bhikkhuni, it is customary for them to show their appreciation by chanting “Sadhu! Sadhu! Sadhu!” meaning “Well done!” or “That's good!” I decided to see what it was like to greet my experiences with the same chant—inwardly, of course, although sometimes just under my breath.

I would usually remember to do this when the experience in question was something that bugged me: the aches and pains that beset me in the morning, my dog's less lovable antics, the clearly insane driver in front of me on my homeward commute, and so on. Sometimes I would remember to chant my

appreciation for the pleasant things that arose as well.

In addition to just chanting, I tried to see what it was that the experience was actually teaching me. It would be a little too pat to just pass things off with Buddhist truisms, to think “this is suffering” or “this will pass” and let it go at that. Instead, I tried to look closely and clearly see the experience for what it was—what was really happening, and how the feelings that arose manifested in my body.

This practice of honoring my experience as Dhamma taught me a number of things. I found that when I looked at things that way, it was more difficult to maintain the idea that “bad” things had happened to me. Certainly, there were experiences that brought me face-to-face with the way I cling to the notion of what “ought” to be. I saw my habituated patterns of desire, aversion, and ignorance in uncomfortable detail. But the more jarring this awareness was, the easier it was to see how much I had to learn, and how my “bad” experiences gave me an opportunity to learn it.

Even the resistance that arose to this exercise had something to teach me. Often my initial reaction was that I did not *want* to honor this experience—I just wanted it to go away! I sometimes resented having to learn from an event when I would much rather feel victimized by it. Looking a little closer, I saw that part of my suffering came from having to give up this self-view, this idea of an “I” who was essentially a victim of life. I saw that I had clung to that image of myself for a long, long time. Encountering this deeply rooted resistance was a test of *saddha*, a spiritual faculty often translated as “faith.” Did I have the confidence and courage to push on?

The thing that surprised me most about my attempt to see all things as Dhamma was that I began to

develop a genuine sense of *upekkhā*, or equanimity—a state I rarely spend much time in! I had always imagined equanimity as a cool, uncaring sort of feeling, in which one is utterly unaffected by life's sorrows and joys. But the feeling that arose as I greeted each experience as a teaching was far more positive than I was expecting. I didn't enjoy disappointment and

frustration any more than I had before, but I did begin to see them as opportunities, as chances to learn and progress, and sometimes even be startled and delighted. I discovered an underlying current of gratitude for everything I encountered—faltering, to be sure, but growing stronger the more I practiced.

If we can recognize that all our experiences are Dhamma—that all things are, indeed, teaching us—then our everyday lives become full of invitations to grow and to deepen our practice. We can feel enriched and supported in our lives, even when they present us with tragedy, grief, and disillusionment. As we deepen our understanding of the meaning of Dhamma, life itself becomes a lesson. ❖

### The Eight Precepts

(to be practiced during the retreat with Ajahn Sucitto)

1. **Non-harming:** Not intentionally killing or harming any living creature.
2. **Non-stealing:** Not taking that which is not freely given.
3. **Refraining from false speech:** Speaking only what is true and useful, speaking wisely, responsibly, and appropriately. In the retreat context, this involves keeping noble silence.
4. **Refraining from sexual activity:** Refraining from all sexual activity.
5. **Refraining from the use of intoxicants and drugs that lead to carelessness:** Abstaining from the use of alcohol or other *nonprescription* drugs.
6. **Refraining from eating at the wrong times.** Not eating from noon until dawn the next day.
7. **Refraining from entertainment, beautification, and adornment.** Not indulging in entertainment, or adorning the body with jewelry, makeup, or other things that draw the attention of others or distract from turning inward.
8. **Refraining from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place.** Not overly indulging in sleep or using sleep as a means of distraction.

## Introduction to Meditation

Madison Insight Meditation Group offers an introduction to meditation the second Sunday of each month from 6:00 to 8:00 p.m. Those who come for the introduction have time together with a leader, in a room of their own, to introduce themselves and learn some of the fundamentals of sitting and walking meditation.

These monthly introductory sessions are open to everyone. If you have not meditated before, we invite you to attend one of them. If you have meditated previously and feel at ease meditating for a 45-minute period, you are welcome to come to any of our three sitting groups (see [page 7](#)). We hope you will join us soon! ❖

## Half-Day Sit

Madison Insight Meditation Group will hold a half-day sit on Saturday, April 23, at the First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, in Madison.

Our half-day sits begin at 9:00 a.m. (try to arrive a little early), and the formal practice ends at about noon. Three 45-minute sitting periods alternate with two 20-minute walking periods. If you can't attend for the entire morning, feel free to come for a portion of it. Plan to arrive just a little before the hour so you can join the last few minutes of walking and stay for the next sitting.

The morning's practice is followed by a potluck lunch in the same location. Bring something to share if you can, but come anyway if you can't. Questions can be directed to Dave or Lori at (608) 238-1234. There is no fee or registration required. Everyone is invited. ❖

## MIMG Sitting Groups

Madison Insight Meditation Group offers three weekly meditation opportunities, one in central Madison, one on the west side, and one on the east side. Bring your own meditation cushion or bench if you have one. Chairs and some extra cushions are available. Details are below.



### Central: Sundays 6:00–8:00 p.m.

**First Unitarian Society, 900 University Bay Drive, Madison**

**1<sup>st</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> Sundays:** 45-minute sitting followed by talk and discussion

**2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Sundays:** 45-minute sitting, 20-minute walking meditation, 45-minute sitting (breakout group on 2<sup>nd</sup> Sundays offers [introduction to insight meditation](#))

This sitting group is peer-led.

### West: Tuesdays 6:30–8:15 p.m.

**9638 Shadow Ridge Trail, Middleton (directions on [website](#))**

45-minute sitting followed by Dhamma discussion

This sitting group is led by Janice Cittasubha Sheppard, who was trained at Abhayagiri Buddhist Monastery as a Buddhist Lay Minister, and at Spirit Rock Meditation Center as a Community Dharma Leader.

### East: Fridays 7:30–9:00 p.m.

**Main Street Yoga, 1882 E. Main Street, Madison**

30-minute sitting followed by 10-minute movement meditation and Dhamma discussion or talk

This sitting group is led by Devon Hase, Craig Hase, and Jack Arpin. Devon completed the Community Dharma Leader training at Spirit Rock Meditation Center. Craig has been studying in the American vipassana tradition for a number of years. Jack ordained and lived in a Thai Forest monastery.

## Kalyana Mitta Groups

A *Kalyana Mitta* (*spiritual friend* in Pāli) is a group of 8–12 individuals who gather periodically to study and discuss the teachings of the Buddha and his path of practice. Each group determines how frequently to meet, what to read, and how to structure the sessions. Madison Insight Meditation Group gathers the names of those interested, and when there are enough people for a new group, they are notified and assisted in getting the group started. Once established, each Kalyana Mitta manages on its own. Individuals interested in joining a Kalyana Mitta should send an email to Jan Sheppard at [uppekha@yahoo.com](mailto:uppekha@yahoo.com). ❖

## Upcoming Retreats

### Sharon Salzberg, August 12–14, 2016

Lussier Family Heritage Center, Madison, WI (nonresidential)

### James Baraz, October 27–30, 2016

Pine Lake Retreat Center, Westfield, WI (residential)

### Mark Nunberg, March 17–19, 2017

Holy Wisdom Monastery, Madison, WI (residential/nonresidential)

### Ayyā Medhānandī, May 21–25, 2017

Pine Lake Retreat Center, Westfield, WI (residential)

### DaRa Williams, October 5–8, 2017

Pine Lake Retreat Center, Westfield, WI (residential)

## Join Us on Facebook!



Check out the [Madison Insight Meditation Group \(MIMG\) Facebook page](#)! Be sure to click “Like” to have us show up in your newsfeed. We are using the page to post announcements about upcoming MIMG events such as retreats, classes, and special guest speakers. If you attend one of our [weekly meditation groups](#), this is a good way to learn what else is happening at the other groups and in the broader MIMG community. We may also occasionally post inspiring Dhamma quotations. If you have a photograph or reflections about our retreats or other events, please consider sending them by messaging the page directly—we'd love to post them!

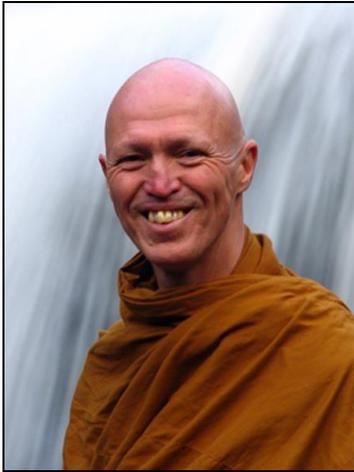
### CLEAR MIND

The Newsletter of Madison Vipassana, Inc.  
Madison, WI

This newsletter is published periodically as a service to our meditation community.  
It is available on our website at: [madisonmeditation.org](http://madisonmeditation.org)

Cathy Loeb: Editor  
Janice Sheppard: Contributing writer

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# Beyond Time and Space

## A Residential Meditation Retreat with

### Ajahn Sucitto

June 9–16, 2016

St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI  
Sponsored by [Madison Vipassana, Inc.](#)

Ajahn Sucitto is a British-born Theravāda Buddhist monk. He ordained in Thailand in 1976, then returned to Britain in 1978 to train under Venerable Ajahn Sumedho. In 1979, Ajahn Sucitto was part of the group that established Cittaviveka, Chithurst Buddhist Monastery, in West Sussex, England. He served as abbot of the monastery from 1992 until October 2014. He took a sabbatical in 2015 but has now returned to teaching in the U.S. and internationally.

This residential retreat will be suitable for both beginning and experienced meditators. During the retreat, we will create a monastic environment by following the Eight Precepts (see below) and reflecting on every activity as part of practice. The retreat will be held in noble silence and offer morning and evening puja (chanting), sitting and walking meditation, daily instructions, and Dhamma talks. *Please note:* The morning and evening puja will include incense and the lighting of candles. There will be two vegetarian meals each day (no meal after the main meal at noon). Rooms are single occupancy.

## Dana

In keeping with Theravāda tradition, this retreat is being offered on a *dāna* (freewill donation) basis. There will be an opportunity to offer *dāna* at the end of the retreat. Our retreat expenses include room and other facility costs; meals; organizational costs; and the teacher's transportation, room, and meals, totaling \$560 per person. We will use the *dāna* offered by retreatants to cover those expenses. *Dāna* collected over that base amount will be offered to Ajahn Sucitto (through the English Sangha Trust) in gratitude for his teachings. If you would like to learn more about the ancient and beautiful tradition of *dāna*, two articles by Ajahn Thanissaro may be of interest:

- [The Economy of Gifts](#)
- [No Strings Attached](#)

## The Eight Precepts (to be practiced during the retreat)

1. **Non-harming:** Not intentionally killing or harming any living creature.
2. **Non-stealing:** Not taking that which is not freely given, respecting the property of all beings.
3. **Refraining from false speech:** Speaking only what is true and useful, speaking wisely, responsibly, and appropriately. In the context of this retreat, this involves keeping noble silence.
4. **Refraining from sexual activity:** Refraining from all sexual activity.
5. **Refraining from the use of intoxicants and drugs that lead to carelessness:** Abstaining from the use of alcohol or other *nonprescription* drugs. This does not apply to medically required drugs. Please *do* continue to take any prescription medications you normally use.
6. **Refraining from eating at the wrong times.** Not eating from noon until dawn the next day. There will be a light morning meal and a main meal that is completed by noon. Around 5:00 p.m., tea and clear fruit juices will be available. Those with medical conditions that make it impossible to abide by this precept should discuss their situation with the registrar.
7. **Refraining from entertainment, beautification, and adornment.** Not indulging in entertainment, or adorning the body with jewelry, makeup, or other things that draw the attention of others or distract from turning inward.
8. **Refraining from lying on a high or luxurious sleeping place.** Not overly indulging in sleep or using sleep as a means of distraction.

## Schedule (subject to change)

### Thursday, June 9

Registration: 5:00–6:15  
Orientation: 6:15–6:50  
Retreat begins: 7:00

### June 10–15

Wake up: 4:30  
Puja (chanting), sitting: 5:00–6:15  
Qi gong: 6:15–7:00  
Breakfast: 7:00  
Main meal: 11:30  
Tea: 5:00

### Thursday, June 16

Wake up: 4:30  
Puja (chanting), sitting: 5:00–6:15  
Qi gong: 6:15–7:00  
Breakfast: 7:00  
Retreat ends after 11:30 meal/cleanup

## Special needs

To inquire about special situations, contact Ann Varda, registrar, at 608-843-7531 or [annvarda@gmail.com](mailto:annvarda@gmail.com). Please note that we are unable to accommodate special dietary needs.

## Registration

Out of respect for others, please register only if you can make a clear and wholehearted commitment to attend. Early registrations are encouraged. Registration is on a space-available basis and must include the registration form below and a \$100 deposit. The deposit is required to hold your spot; it can be refunded upon request (except for cancellations after May 12, 2016, as explained below), or it can be offered as dāna. Your additional dāna donations can be made at the end of the retreat.

Registrations will be handled on a first-received, space-available basis. If the number of registrations received during the first two weeks exceeds the number of available spots, reservation priority will be given to those registrants who have attended one of our previous retreats or who live in Wisconsin. If the number of registrants during the first two weeks does not exceed the capacity of the retreat, all registrations received up until then will be accommodated, and subsequent spaces will be reserved based on the date the registration is received.

Confirmation will be provided by email along with information on the facility, driving directions, and recommendations on what to bring. Registrants who do not get a spot will be notified they have been placed on a waiting list. Deposit checks from individuals who do not get a spot in the retreat or who cancel by May 12, 2016, can be refunded upon request. The deposit cannot be refunded to those who cancel after May 12. For questions about registration, contact Ann Varda, registrar, at 608-843-7531 or [annvarda@gmail.com](mailto:annvarda@gmail.com).

## Directions

The St. Anthony Spirituality Center is just 10 miles west of Wausau, Wisconsin, located at the eastern edge of the Village of Marathon, off County Trunk NN. Directions from Madison, Milwaukee, Green Bay, Minneapolis, and Chicago are [posted on St. Anthony's website](#).

## Ride sharing

To request or to offer a ride to the retreat, contact Chris Keenan at [Cbkeenan44@gmail.com](mailto:Cbkeenan44@gmail.com) or 716-997-9361.

## To register

Send a check for \$100 payable to **Madison Vipassana, Inc.**, with the registration form below to:

**Madison Vipassana, Inc.**  
c/o Ann Varda  
1724 Hoyt St.  
Madison, WI 53726

**Madison Vipassana, Inc.**  
**Residential Meditation Retreat with Ajahn Sucitto**  
**June 9–16, 2016**  
**St. Anthony Spirituality Center, Marathon, WI**  
**— Registration Form ❖ Please Print Clearly —**

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Alternate Phone \_\_\_\_\_  
Email \_\_\_\_\_

**Rooms . . .**

Retreatants will be lodged in single rooms.

**Special circumstances or requests . . .**

I would like to use to an assistive listening device. (If you have questions about our assistive listening devices, please contact Mike Kehl at [mike.fiddlehead@gmail.com](mailto:mike.fiddlehead@gmail.com) or 608-334-0611.)

If you have any other special needs, requests, or information to share with us, please explain below or contact the registrar, Ann Varda, at [annvarda@gmail.com](mailto:annvarda@gmail.com) or 608- 843-7531. \_\_\_\_\_

**Sitting preferences . . .**

To help us set up the Dhamma hall, please indicate whether you prefer to sit primarily on the floor or in a chair. We will have extra chairs, but not enough to reserve both a chair and a place on the floor.

Chair  Floor

We will have just a few extra meditation cushions available to borrow during the retreat, so please bring your own cushion or bench if you have one.

**A few last details and a request for help with setup and cleanup . . .**

This is my first vipassana retreat.

I can help set up before the retreat.  I can help clean up after the retreat.

I need a ride from \_\_\_\_\_.  I can give a ride to \_\_\_\_ passengers from \_\_\_\_\_.

I enclose an additional \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to be used for scholarships for future retreats.

**Send your completed registration form with a check for the \$100 deposit to:**

Madison Vipassana, Inc., c/o Ann Varda  
1724 Hoyt St.  
Madison, WI 53726

**Checks payable to Madison Vipassana, Inc.**

*Financial assistance is available through our retreat scholarship program. If payment of the \$100 deposit is a barrier to your registration, please contact the registrar, Ann Varda, at [annvarda@gmail.com](mailto:annvarda@gmail.com) or 608- 843-7531 to discuss how we can help.*