

Sacramento Insight Meditation (SIM) Beginning Meditation is a 6-week course that provides the basic techniques for learning Insight Meditation (vipassana), both during sitting meditation and in daily life. This is mindfulness meditation that has been handed down from the time of the Buddha. This course is intended as an introduction to the practice of meditation as it is taught at the SIM group. As an introduction to meditation it is meant to support and encourage you to take up the practice of meditation and to see if meditation is a worthwhile activity in your life. The course is a hands-on, experiential program for beginners as well as those more experienced meditators who are interested in revisiting and working with their meditation skills. It is not meant as an exploration of comparative meditation techniques or a scholastic treatment of meditation theory. In the course of our work we discuss the theory of meditation but put these concepts aside to investigate our direct experience of what is happening. This is also not a course in Buddhism. We discuss Buddhist terms and concepts only to the degree that they are helpful in learning the process of meditation. Mindfulness meditation does not require a belief in Buddhism or adherence to any philosophy or religion.

Participation in the SIM meditation course will require approximately 1 hour of practice daily. This includes a 15-20 minute daily sitting meditation period, reviewing written and audio materials, practicing exercises throughout the day to develop meditative awareness, and recording your impressions. This is in addition to the 2 hours we meet on six consecutive Monday evenings and an all-day Saturday retreat. We have found over the years that people who don't fully commit to doing the course work have a significantly less meaningful experience. This is not a course that can be audited or observed from the sidelines. Developing the skill of meditation requires direct participation. It requires effort and commitment.

At the daylong retreat, we practice more in depth meditation practices which will include longer sitting sessions, walking meditation, movement meditation and eating meditation. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact the teachers at: sim-med-course@sactoinsight.org