

OMEGA

Rhinebeck, New York

Greetings!

I'd like to extend a warm welcome to you for the upcoming Mindful Communication retreat at Omega! I'm particularly excited to be offering this program on the East Coast for the first time, and am so glad you'll be there to join me.

I have been teaching an integrated approach to mindfulness, loving-kindness, and communication for many years, and consistently see participants experience extraordinary growth, insight, and transformation through the powerful combination of these practices. Furthermore, taking time out of our lives to focus on these areas provides a rare and valuable occasion for learning, healing, and well-being.

In order to support you in getting the greatest benefit from our time together, I wanted to share some information and recommendations to help you prepare for the course.

If you are new to mindfulness, I recommend that you take some time before the retreat to learn about and, hopefully, practice mindfulness. One way to do this is find a local meditation group focused on mindfulness, or an introductory class on mindfulness practice. (You can look for groups in your area at the following site: <http://www.buddhistinsightnetwork.org/sanghas>.) Another way is to read a book or listen to an audio recording to learn some of the basics. Some helpful introductory books include:

- Sylvia Boorstein, *Don't Just Do Something, Sit There: A Mindfulness Retreat*
- Joseph Goldstein and Jack Kornfield, *Seeking the Heart of Wisdom: The Path of Insight Meditation*
- Joseph Goldstein, *The Experience of Insight: A Gradual Unfolding*
- Jack Kornfield, *A Path with Heart* or *The Wise Heart*

You can receive a good (and free) audio introduction to mindfulness practice by listening to the first four introductory talks from Gil Fronsdal's introduction to meditation class at the URL below. <http://www.audiodharma.org/series/1/talk/1762/>. You might then develop a daily practice of mindfulness (aim for at least 20 minutes a day) in the time before the retreat. Again, though not required, this will significantly deepen the learning on the retreat.

Similarly, if you are unfamiliar with Nonviolent Communication, I strongly encourage you to obtain and read a copy of Marshall Rosenberg's book, *Nonviolent Communication: A Language of Life*. I have found that having some familiarity with the basic concepts and forms of this approach will help you to focus more fully on practicing the skills during our time together.

Please complete and send the pre-retreat questionnaire as soon as you can. This will help give me a better idea of who is at the retreat and how I can best meet your needs.

Finally, I wanted to encourage you to feel free to invite a friend, colleague, romantic partner or significant other to join you at the retreat. Learning these practices with others in our lives – personally or professionally – can have profound and far-reaching impacts on our relationships.

I look forward to meeting you and to our time together at Omega.

Warm regards,

Oren J. Sofer

Awakening the Best in the Human Spirit

Mindful Communication: The Path of Wise Speech
With Oren J. Sofer
Course #4005-786, August 17-22, 2014
Pre-Retreat Questionnaire

This questionnaire is designed to help me tailor the retreat to the needs of the participants and enhance the focus and benefits of your personal experience during the retreat. Please return your completed questionnaire either by:

Mail to:
Omega Institute
Attention: Registration Department
150 Lake Drive
Rhinebeck, NY 12572

Or scan and email to:
ClassApplications@eOmega.org

Today's Date _____

Name _____
Birth Date _____
Home Address _____

Email Address _____
Home Phone _____
Cell Phone _____
___ Single ___ Married ___ Divorced ___ Other
Children? _____ Occupation: _____

Previous meditation experience, if any, and current daily practice:

Previous retreat experience in Buddhist meditation (specify length and kind of retreat):

Other previous retreat experience (other traditions or practices):

Previous experience or training in Nonviolent Communication if any (reading, workshops, audio, etc...)?

Are there any medical, physical, or psychological concerns that might affect your retreat? If so, please mention briefly.

What are your hopes and intentions for this retreat?

Any other comments you'd like me to know about or be aware of?