

NALANDA INSTITUTE *for Contemplative Science*

Four Year Program in Sustainable Happiness, Class of 2014
at Tibet House US, 22 West 15th Street
Instructor: Dr. Joe Loizzo
Spring 2012, 8 Mondays, 7:00-9:00 PM

Final Retreat Instructors: Joe Loizzo & Mary Reilly Nichols
Saturday May 19th, 10AM-5PM

Clearing the Mind:
The Gradual Path of Self-Transformation

Course Overview:

Like current brain science and psychotherapy, the Nalanda tradition sees our ability to cope with our complex social lives as the main variable affecting our health and happiness. Our struggle with alienation and social stress comes from a self-protective reflex in which our reactive self locks onto childhood trauma and blocks the social-emotional skills we need to live well in our world.

This fourth class in the Four Year Program teaches the contemplative art and science of social-healing and self-transformation based on the practice of clearing the mind (*lo-jong*), refined at Nalanda and distilled in Chekawa's *Seven Point Mind Training*. Integrating all three vehicles of Buddhist thought in one format tailored to lay life in a stress-driven world, mind-clearing teaches an industrial strength version of loving-kindness Dr. Loizzo calls social-emotional *Kung-fu*. As for practice, the class combines deep mindfulness and insight meditation with the transformational arts of giving-and-taking and role-modeling imagery.

In terms of practice, the seven points cover: using deep mindfulness to clear the mind of traumatic stress habits; using analytic insight meditation to build a proactive new self, and using the arts of giving and taking and transforming adversity to embody the spirit of enlightened altruism in all our interactions.

The final retreat surveys the daily practice of clearing the mind, exploring the way the contemplative arts of the *Seven Point Mind Training* can be woven into a practice of deep mindfulness, restorative yoga and the role-modeling imagery of the *Healing Mother*, White Tara. The retreat will focus on how this heart-opening practice can help us break the grip of childhood trauma, build an engaged social self and grow to embody the spirit of altruism, through mastering the arts of compassionate openness, giving-and-taking on the breath and transforming adversity into a path.

Prerequisites: some exposure to mindfulness, loving-kindness, *hatha* yoga or the gradual path.

Syllabus:

March 26: Clearing the Mind: From Trauma to Open Engagement

Buddhism with an Attitude (BA), 7-63; *Mind-Clearing (MC)*, 1-15

April 2: Engaging with Empathy: The Right Bio-Tool for Life in the World

BA, 196-206, 83-94, 154-190; *MC*, 15-19

April 9: Radical Openness: Clearing the Space for Social Engagement

BA, 65-83, 94-112, 154-163; *MC*, 19-27

April 16: Becoming Compassion: Spacious Openness & Dreamlike Empathy

BA, 112-153; *MC*, 28-35

April 23: Transforming Agency: From Wild Child to Foster Parent

BA, 191-216; *MC*, 36-43

April 30: Integration and Progress: Learning to Live with Happiness

BA, 217-235; *MC*, 43-53

May 7: Progress as Perfection: Avoiding Missteps

BA, 237-252; *MC*, 54-60

May 14: Progress as Perfection: Making Every Step Count

BA, 253-278, *MC*, 60-86

May 19: Final Retreat: Clearing the Mind for Social Engagement

Required Readings:

Wallace, Alan B, *Buddhism with an Attitude (BA)*. Ithaca: Snow Lion, 2005.

Loizzo, Joe, *Mind-Clearing Manual*. New York: Nalanda, 2012.

Recommended Readings:

Jinpa, Thubten, editor, *Mind-Training: The Great Collection*. Boston: Wisdom, 2006.