

# Awakening Our Hearts:

## *Exploring Authentic Relationships Across Differences*

a non-residential, weekend retreat with

**Arinna Weisman and Kitsy Schoen**  
**September 24-25, 2011**

**Saturday 9-4 and Sunday 10-4**  
Albuquerque Vipassana Sangha



to be held at the  
**Norbertine Center**  
5825 Coors Boulevard, SE SW

This retreat is an introduction to cultivating the conditions for a multicultural Sangha. Arinna and Kitsy have found it helpful for the members of Sangha who are white to first come together to investigate the way we build identity of whiteness that covers our hearts and separates us from people of color.

Buddhism has as its refuge and vision a heart that is unrestricted, luminous and free. As we practice the eight fold path, we find ourselves called to explore our unconscious beliefs and behaviors that cause harm and suffering to ourselves and to others. The exploration we are proposing arises from the premise that this work awakens our capacity for freedom, unconditional love and wisdom. The exploration grows as a shared journey of community.

*Arinna and Kitsy explain the process in this manner:*

By being accountable to the privilege we experience as white people, we are able to transform ourselves and develop our ability to be in authentic multicultural communities. Through this process we gain the skills and practices to create structures and cultural norms that honor everyone in our Sangha.

Interspersed between sitting, walking and Metta practices, we will present a shared framework for discussing the historical, cultural, and psychological legacies of structural racism in the United States. We will explore the impact of these legacies on us as individuals in our relationships and in our communities.

We will emphasize the importance of being allies not only to people of color, but to ourselves and each other as white people in addressing racism and white privilege in all contexts. Many people find that the retreat's framework and guidelines include very practical skills that can be easily put to use.

We always are deserving of love. Self-judgment is a barrier to openheartedness and new learning. Because we understand that this uncovering may touch places of shame and blame, our gathering will be conducted using practices of awareness, loving kindness, patience, truthfulness and the invitation to skill development. As we increase our understanding and deepen our exploration, we may find ourselves experiencing a new freedom of expression unobstructed by constructions of identities around whiteness.

**RSVP Appreciated/fee collected at door/please go to our web page for directions to the center and for further information.**

Fee: **\$20** for Saturday or **\$35** for both days. (Attending **only** on Sunday is not an option.)  
*No one will be turned away for lack of funds.*

Contact: Christine Hall (505-268-3895) [c.tessa4@comcast.net](mailto:c.tessa4@comcast.net) or  
Rhonda Arkana (505-349-8680) [arkana@me.com](mailto:arkana@me.com)

*\*\*\***Dana** is the Pali word for generosity. As has been done in over two thousand years of Buddhist tradition, we ask you to remember to bring Dana to benefit the teachers who freely offer the Buddha's teachings. A basket for the teachers' Dana will be available. Buddha advised that generosity brings happiness, so please feel free to experience this tradition of joy!*

*\*\*\*Arinna Weisman has practiced Vipassana meditation since 1979, and she has taught meditation for the last 22 years. Arinna is the founding teacher of Insight Meditation Center of the Pioneer Valley in California. Arinna is co-author of the book *A Beginner's Guide to Insight Meditation* and a contributor to *Women Practicing Buddhism: American Experiences*. Arinna's passion is building multicultural Sanghas.*

*\*\*\*Kitsy Schoen has been practicing Vipassana meditation for over 30 years. Kitsy is a graduate of the Community Dharma Leader Program at Spirit Rock and she is a Board member of East Bay Meditation Center, Oakland, California. Kitsy is a licensed clinical social worker that has facilitated groups, classes and workshops since 1982. Kitsy's focus is exploring the intersection of mindfulness and multiculturalism.*