



Sunday Meditations – An Extension of SIMS Community

Sooz Appel, for the Sunday Leadership Team

In 2017, Tuere and three of the Local Dharma Leaders (Lauren Wilson, Lyndal Johnson, and myself) decided to start a Sunday morning meditation that would be open to families with children five years and older. We weren't sure how it would go. There were growing pains figuring out how to gently and authentically include the kids as well as make the mornings meaningful for the adults. We wanted the Sunday sits to be more interactive and less formal than Monday nights, but our intention is consistent with SIMS' mission statement: to offer Buddha's teachings on insight and awareness to all who seek them and to support a spiritual community.

Eighteen months of meeting every Sunday except for SIMS' non-residential weekends taught us a lot. We shared the teachings and guided the meditations. We used children's picture books and Jataka tales to start every dharma talk. The LDLs became more proficient at sharing the dharma. We included mindful movement and offered snacks and fellowship at the end of each session.

With the closure of SIMS' SODO location, the Sunday sits took a break while we hunted for a new home. We are happy to announce we have found one and *our Sunday Sits resumed on October 20, 10 a.m. to 11:30 am* at our new Sunday home:

**Be Luminous Yoga Studio,
900 Lenora, Suite 128.**
(above Whole Foods at Denny and Westlake,
with validated parking, off 9th Avenue.)

Here is a selection of comments from four adults and two children who have been regular participants at Sunday Sits. They give an idea of how much Sundays are valued for both dharma practice and community.

I appreciate the dharma talks by the LDLs. It feels like collaborative learning; I watch them learn along with us.

Children's stories bring a delightful lightness to the subject; they help move us from conceptual to more concrete experience.

I come for spiritual learning and enrichment

Having my child with me, I've become a more compassionate and tolerant parent.

It's as if one leg of the three-legged stool of Buddha, Dharma and Sangha was missing. Now I have the 3rd leg of sangha.

Seeing an African American teacher helps me feel less like an outsider.

I learned that even if he's playing in the toy area during a talk and doesn't participate in discussion, he has listened and is processing.

Families are part of the draw on Sundays; part of the joy. The ambient noise coming from the play area makes the hall feel like a real life place.

Seeing meditation as a regular activity, it normalizes it for him (the child); it says, "you can do this too."

Bringing my son into my practice on Sundays has opened my practice in really profound ways.

When I go on retreat, he has a better understanding of what I was doing, and is more accepting and less anxious about me being gone

I like meditating -- I like that it's quiet because it feels kind of calming, and I like the snacks at the end. Even being bored is okay.

Its very existence has been a good thing for us; we can all (father, mother, child) attend together.

On Sunday mornings, I ask him whether he wants to go; the decision is mostly yes.

Sunday mornings serve as an anchor for a lot of our talks (parent and child) as we often recall back to a topic from SIMS when it comes up in our lives.

I like the snacks at the end.

And (from Sooz): I agree with this comment, especially the morning a father and son brought in fresh donuts from Georgetown!

Thanks to

Aravind Moorthy and his son, Elan

Michelle Landwehr and her son, Ben
Gitana Garofalo
Rebecca Goff

And a big WELCOME BACK to all!