

## **WHITE SUPREMACY, WHITE PRIVILEGE AND THE DHARMA**

Thursdays 4:00-5:30pm Sept. 24, Oct. 8, Oct. 22, Nov. 5, Nov. 29, Dec. 3. (via zoom)

Offered by: Valley Streams Zen Sangha

Co-Led by: Paravrtti Doralee Grindler Katonah

Linda Dekker

This study group is offered by Valley Streams Zen Sangha for our white sangha members who want to learn about the history of racism and its continuation in the form of systemic racism and the ideology of white supremacy. We will engage with recommended readings and online resources to inform our experiential inquiry into our white privilege. This inquiry will include developing practices to engage in the inner work of becoming aware of our white privilege (which is supported by white supremacy) as it is embedded in our social and cultural conditioning. Our intention will be to learn to recognize how white privilege functions in our everyday lives to continue the oppression of Black people and awaken us to live the dharma in our current social and political situation. This group will be grounded in our bodhisattva vow to ‘save all beings’ and to ‘not turn away’ from difficult truths of our existence. We will work to create a safe container for this study and exploration through sustaining our practice of self-compassion, mindfulness, and right speech and to open our hands and hearts to deeper truths.

This study group will meet every other week on Thursday afternoons from 4:00pm-5:30pm for 6 sessions beginning Thursday Sept. 24. Many of the books below are on kindle or as used books.

### **First Session (Sept. 24) : Introduction and Creating a Safe Container**

1. Guided meditation on self- compassion.
2. Overview of course
3. Creating our container for experiential exploration – process guidelines and initial sharing.
4. Introduction to the history of racism in our country.

#### **Readings:**

**Diangelo** – *Why it is so hard to talk to white people about race.*

[https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism\\_b\\_7183710](https://www.huffpost.com/entry/why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism_b_7183710)

**James Baldwin** (Nov. 17, 1962). *Letter from a region in my mind.* [The New Yorker.](#)

[https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/11/17/letter-from-a-region-in-my-mind?source=search\\_google\\_dsa\\_paid&gclid=Cj0KCQjwhb36BRCfARIsAKcXh6EA4EpcpRAOtbswDelKvccheZfC7iDLT5BsnelqAYDmh0QVFuz0I3waAIWvEALw\\_wcb](https://www.newyorker.com/magazine/1962/11/17/letter-from-a-region-in-my-mind?source=search_google_dsa_paid&gclid=Cj0KCQjwhb36BRCfARIsAKcXh6EA4EpcpRAOtbswDelKvccheZfC7iDLT5BsnelqAYDmh0QVFuz0I3waAIWvEALw_wcb)

### **Second Session: White Supremacy and the history of systemic racism**

Participants will select one reading of interest to them and then share what they learned with the group.

1. Guided meditation – opening to discomfort
2. Each participant will come prepared to share a significant learning from the readings.
3. Experiential: skills in becoming aware of white privilege

#### **Readings:**

- McIntosh, P.** (1988). White privilege: Unpacking the invisible knapsack.  
**Anderson, Carol.** (2017). White rage – The unspoken truth of our racial divide.

1. Prologue: Kindling
2. Reconstructing Reconstruction
3. Burning Brown to the Ground
4. Rolling Back Civil Rights

**Wilkerson, Isabel** (7/16/20) America's Enduring Caste System – Our founding ideals promise Liberty and equality for all. Our reality is an enduring racial hierarchy that has persisted for Centuries. The New York Times Magazine.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/07/01/magazine/isabel-wilkerson-caste.html>

**Isabel Wilkerson on Fresh Air**

<https://www.npr.org/2020/08/04/898574852/its-more-than-racism-isabel-wilkerson-explains-america-s-caste-system>

*A brief history of Jim Crow* – google: Constitutional Rights Foundation.

*Tulsa Race Massacre 1921* –<https://www.history.com/Tulsa+Race+Massacre>

Confederate Monument Myths -

<https://www.facebook.com/NowThisPolitics/videos/290033115366971/?vh=e&extid=PHqldM7XUPHEdELV&d=n>

**Third Session: White Body and Black Body Trauma and Healing**

1. Guided Meditation – Body Scan
2. Discussion of readings
3. Experiential – pathways to mending our hearts and bodies through learning practices to recognize and experience white body trauma.

**Readings:**

Excerpts from **Menakem, Resmaa.** (2017) *My Grandmother's Hands – Racialized trauma and the pathway to mending our hearts and bodies.*

Excerpt from **Coates, Ta-Nehisi.** (2015) *Between the world and me.*

**Fourth Session: Igniting the Dharma**

1. Sitting Zazen –
2. Discussion of readings
3. Experiential – new insights, ancient vows.

**Readings:**

**Manuel, Zenju Earthlyn** (2015). *The way of tenderness – Awakening Through race, sexuality, and gender. Chaps: Multiplicity in oneness and Body as nature.*

**Williams, Angel Kyoto** (2016). *Radical dharma: Talking race, love, and liberation.*

**King, Ruth** (2018). *Mindful of race: Transforming racisms from the inside out.* Boulder, CO: SoundsTrue Press. ISBN: 97816836640820

### **Fifth Session: Skillful Means**

1. Guided Meditation – right speech
2. Talking to fellow white people
3. Cross racial communication

YouTube video: **Jay Smooth** – How I learned to stop worrying and love discussing race  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbdxeFcQtaU>

Rankine, Claudia. 2014. *Citizen – An American lyric.* Minneapolis, MN: Greywolf Press.  
ISBN 978-1-55597-690-3 Excerpts

King, Ruth. (2018). *Mindful of race – Transforming racism from the inside out.*  
Boulder, CO: Sounds True. ISBN: 97816836640820

### **Sixth Session: Reflections, sangha life and action**

Dharma talk – Crystal Johnson

<http://www.sfzc.org/.teachings/dharma-talks/inclusive-communities>

Buddhism and Whiteness

Critical Reflections

**Edited by George Yancy and Emily McRae** - Foreword by - Afterword by Charles Johnson - Contributions by Sharon Suh; Ann Gleig; Emily McRae; Leah Kalmanson; Rima L. Vesely-Flad; Laurie Cassidy; Carolyn M. Jones Medine; Jasmine Syedullah; Jessica Locke; Carol J. Moeller; Lama Justin von Bujdoss; Bryce Huebner; Rhonda V. Magee; Joy Brennan and Hsiao Lan Hu  
(selection to be announced) There will be a copy in the Valley Streams Office

Article:

**Ibram X Kendi**, *The End of Denial.* The Atlantic Monthly Aug. 5, 2020