

Reflections on Sangha
IMCC
October 9, 2018

A panel of IMCC Board members shared their reflections on sangha and asked those present to write down what the IMCC sangha means to them. The cards were collected, redistributed and people read from each other's cards. This is a collection of what sangha means to those at IMCC:

Connection

IMCC has taught me the value of compassion.

A key value to me is to practice coming back to my true self.

Comfort. There is still some compassion and sanity.

4 months ago I moved to Charlottesville and IMCC was recommended to help me find faith.

It is nourishing to me to be together with others who are on this path. The challenges are easier when I am not feeling so alone with them.

It's not always clear – this being, moving, opening the heart – in this distracting, clamoring world. Coming here I got hints or glimpses of clarity that didn't necessarily come in churches, though sometimes. I was always moved to come back and back and now I can't not. Thankful.

IMCC is helping me take apart the structure of my taught belief system and allow me to once again be a learner.

The sangha treasure of deep, caring relationships – supporting curiosity, awareness, awakening, compassion and kindness.

A pause before acting...it has been lifesaving.

The dharma talks and the shared sense of spiritual searching. I've known one of the teachers here for 30 years and her wisdom and kindness have been particularly wonderful.

This was a difficult thing to put into words. I'm new to this sangha, but I was aware of meditation's joyful energy.

Belonging.

Knowing I am not alone in seeking to stop unnecessary suffering, and finding peace and equanimity.

A sense of home – deep sense of belonging. Ground beneath my feet.

It is comforting to come to a place of calm, where I know I will see familiar faces and learn something useful, like how not to shoot myself with the second arrow.

A place where people take spiritual issues seriously.

Interconnectedness of all people and things.

It is such a blessing to know that there is always a group of kind people I can be with. The teachings are leading me on a wonderful path and it's the sangha that helps inspire and motivate me.

Dharma talks and our great teachers.

Sanctuary.

First came to IMCC as a last ditch effort to find relief for chronic migraines – thought meditation would help. It did. I no longer have migraines.

I had been searching for a place I would feel spiritually comfortable – a place that values questioning as much as “pat” answers. I feel very at home here. Feels like my “tribe.”

Inner peace. Gratitude.

Honesty, warmth, kindness.

Collective wisdom. Connection with my true nature. My beloved spiritual friends.

A sense of peace that comes from silently meditating among friends in meditation.

A desire to practice more.

Touching base with our common humanity – what exists under the surface characteristics we present to the world.

A community that values and accepts me as an imperfect and evolving being!

A sacred place and time each week to hear the teachings of the Buddha, no judgement, no striving, no cost.

So much benefit! Healing. Being held in concrete ways through challenging times. Opportunities for leadership. So many friends. The feeling of being seen and cherished. Insight and encouragement to practice and begin again.

Connection with other people who practice this path.

Being present. Peace of mind. Equanimity and tools for bringing these about. Support for my practice. Compassion for myself and others.

Structure and consistency in my practice.