

2025 JANUARY - NOVEMBER

CONVERSATIONS IN SCARY TIMES:

for resilience, courage, & compassion grounded in the inner-journey

**DATES 2025 – 2ND & 4TH THURSDAYS OF EACH MONTH
(BEGINNING JANUARY 9TH)**

TIME 7:00-8:15 PM CENTRAL TIME (USA)

ONLINE VIA ZOOM

Climate disruptions and disasters, massive wealth inequalities, political divisiveness, threatening authoritarianism, money-corrupted healthcare system, and worsening mental health are leading causes of stress and anxiety in America today. Many of us fear the coming four years will make matters worse. For those of us who seek guidance in how we might respond to these threats and challenges, Sanghas that address such circumstances honestly and support each other in responding mindfully, compassionately, and wisely are a vital need. If you feel such fears, challenges, and needs, you might benefit from this group.

The purpose of this series is more practical than theoretical or ideological, that is, to cultivate courage and resilience in ourselves and our communities. We will explore distinctions such as between worry and concern, opinions and seeking to understand, and disengaged thought-loops and engaged responsibility. In the practical spirit of this group, we encourage participants in these conversations to consider opportunities to volunteer in community-based initiatives for healing within our wounded worlds. Some of us will already be engaged; others of us will be inspired to find their own places of service. Examples of such initiatives are domestic violence shelters, ecological restorations, accompanying seniors to appointments, mentoring at risk youth, and food pantries. All of these involve working with and serving others in our communities. Such service is an important form of dāna (giving, generosity).

Each meeting will open with a reflection based in original Buddha-Dhamma. Santikaro will select a verse or passage from the early discourses and provide background, context, and explanations of terms. Everyone is then invited to bring constructive perspectives, emotional observations, and spiritually grounded reflections to the conversation. This may be leavened by what we have learned from later Buddhist developments, psychology, sociology, critical

gender & race studies, and history learned since the original discourses were recorded. Let us share our wisdom and compassion skillfully.

Politics will not be ignored, while partisan politics and finger-pointing will not be encouraged. Rather than doom & gloom, sober, realistic hope will be encouraged. We don't know how bad things will get, so let's not jump to conclusions. Nor should we be overly influenced by the divisive fear-mongering of our corrupt two-party system, the biases of for-profit media, and the mendaciousness of well-paid operatives. Yet, many things could get pretty bad — while they are already quite bad for many citizens and under-attack immigrants — so let's be spiritually fortified and able to serve the greater good.

Registration: Fill out [this on-line form](#) and send [\\$100 registration fee following the information here](#). This fee is to encourage commitment to full participation. Nobody will be refused because of inability to pay this fee. Please email us [if you cannot afford the fee](#) so that we can make other arrangements.

Once you have registered, you'll receive an email giving access to the **course's Home Page** (a Google Doc), which will be the on-line hub for information concerning this course, including the Zoom link, schedule, and links to recordings.

Recordings: If you must miss a meeting, please listen to the recordings that will be posted on the course's Home Page.

Resources: Santikaro will share articles, links, and recordings through the course's Home Page.

Reciprocal support: The Buddha's teachings, sanghas of training and practice, places of practice, and practice resources involve the hard work of many people, technical skills, financial generosity, and an overall spirit of reciprocal service. As a participant in this course, in addition to the registration payment, we ask you to support our work in ways suitable to your means and abilities. The kindness of others has made this course possible; your help insures that such activities continue. Please [visit our dāna page on a regular basis](#).

Occasional retreats: If a retreat coincides with one of our meetings, Santikaro will reschedule an alternative date for that meeting.

Any questions? Please [email Santikaro](#).