

CONTEMPLATIVE EXERCISE IMMERSION

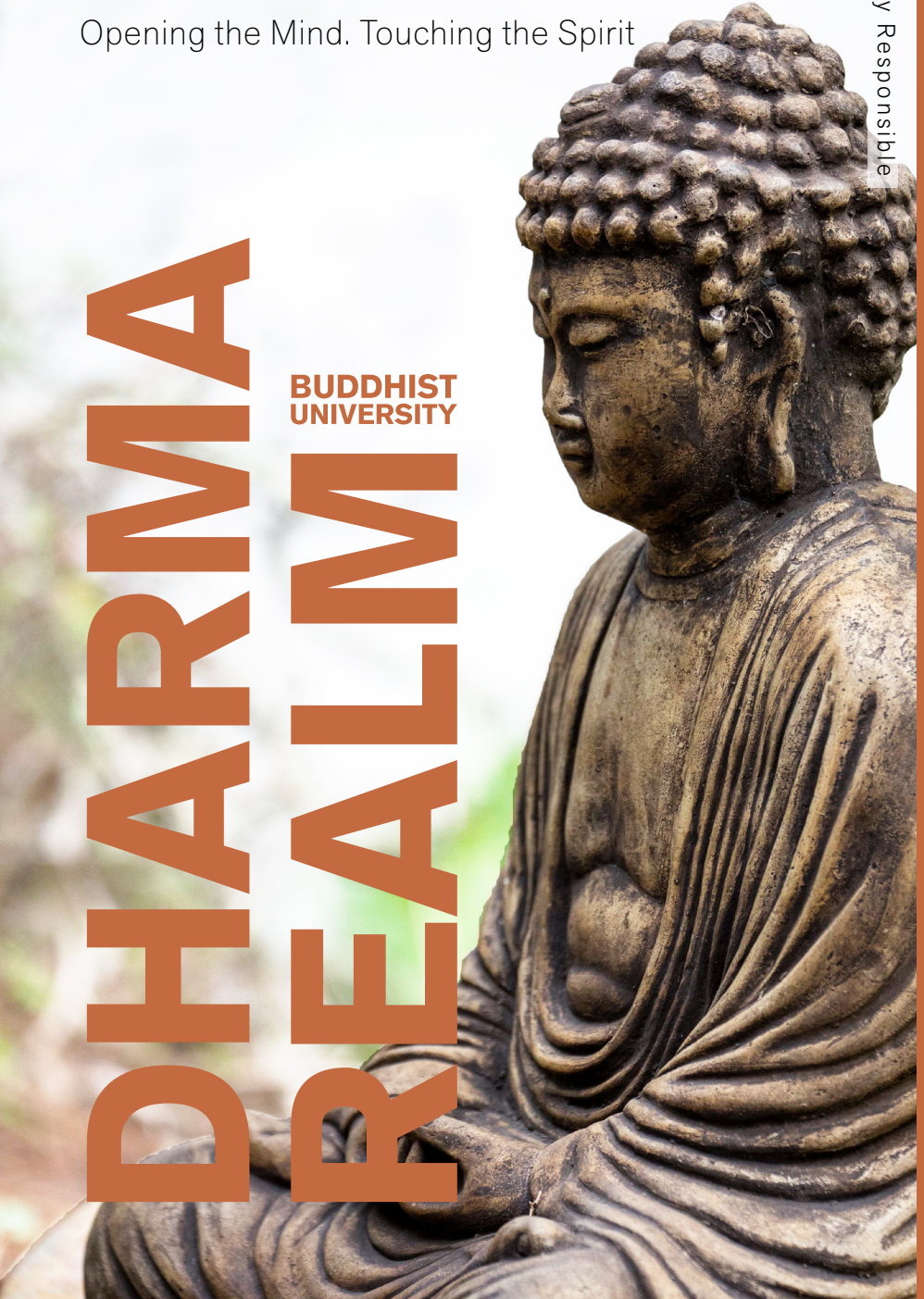
Opening the Mind. Touching the Spirit

Radically Free

Radically Responsible

DHARMA REALM

BUDDHIST
UNIVERSITY



WHAT IS CEI (CONTEMPLATIVE EXERCISE IMMERSION)?



Every semester at DRBU, students, faculty, and staff take a break from regular classroom activities in order to come together as a community and participate in a week-long immersive contemplative practice.

During this time members of the DRBU community unplug from their ordinary routines in order to participate in centering practices that allow for greater self-reflection and more intuitive modes of knowing, all aimed at increasing a subtler awareness within and without: of oneself and one's place in the larger world.



Classes and non-essential work are suspended so that students can get the most from this important “laboratory” experience. The different aspects of the CEI program—quiet reflection, training in meditation, mind-body integration, and retreat-

like immersion—come together to allow students to delve more deeply into what it means to “know one’s self”

With guidance from classical texts and contemporary practitioners, these contemplative sessions offer DRBU students the space to look within—to attend to their own hearts and minds, and access that profound freedom that allows one to pursue the highest goals of human existence.

This hands-on experiential learning opens up fresh insights into what it means to be human, and inspires new ways of imagining and engaging the interconnected world of ourselves, others, and the natural environment.



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A Sample CEI Schedule

8:00	-	8:10 am	Stretching/Movement Exercises
8:10	-	8:50 am	Instruction
8:50	-	9:20 am	Contemplative Exercise
9:20	-	9:30 am	Break
9:30	-	9:40 am	Stretching/Movement Exercises
9:40	-	10:10 am	Q & A
10:10	-	10:40 am	Contemplative Exercise
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1:00	-	1:30 pm	Cohort Activity
1:30	-	2:00 pm	Contemplative Exercise
2:00	-	2:10 pm	Break
2:10	-	3:00 pm	Group Activity & Discussion
3:00	-	4:00 pm	Guest Speaker



Examples of Past CEIs



HUSSERLIAN PHENOMENOLOGY APPLIED TO GUANYIN RECITATION

This CEI combined the traditional Buddhist practice of Guanyin Recitation (recitation of the name of Guanyin, or Avalokiteśvara, the bodhisattva of compassion) with a Husserlian phenomenological approach in order to emphasize the visceral, emotional, and psychological experience around our conception of the external world, and our intersubjectivity.

MINDFUL AND SKILLFUL COMMUNICATION

Students explored diverse exercises meant to develop particular skills related to speech and communication. Some of these practices were internally oriented, reflective, and based on observing the mind. Others were externally oriented, providing opportunities to train us to use affective language, listen deeply, and apply restorative practices.



ESTABLISHMENTS OF MINDFULNESS

Satipaṭṭhāna sometimes translated as "Establishments of Mindfulness" is a key teaching that the Buddha gave on how to purify our minds, become free suffering, and realize complete freedom. The *Satipaṭṭhāna* Sutta that describes this practice is read by both BA and MA students.

YOGA

Students put into practice Patañjali's eight limbs, which tie in to the curriculum of Indian Classics. The eight limbs are: moral principles (*yama*), observances (*niyama*), posture (*āsana*), breath control (*prāṇāyāma*), withdrawal of the senses (*pratyāhāra*), concentration (*dhāraṇā*), meditation (*dhyāna*), and pure contemplation (*samādhi*).



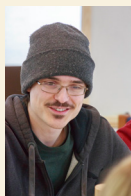
Student Reflections

“The week of CEI was a great opportunity to step away from studying theory and into applying practice. The spirit of the retreat was to see things not just cognitively, but to really see it and experience it for ourselves.” - JAMES MA’22

“CEI week really shook me up in the best of ways. I feel like this is one of the most transformative retreats I’ve had the good fortune to be a part of. Something about that combination of deep, direct teaching and the experiential lessons learned through the paired meditations, really knitted together theory and practice in a fundamental way.” - RACHEL MA’22

“The CEI this year was refreshing and multifaceted in terms of the texts we read, the teacher we had, the well-thought-out theme, and the guided practices and activities. As the outside world seems to be contracting in greed and anger, it feels wholesome to do the inner expanding work with a focus on loving-kindness, compassion, sympathetic joy, and equanimity.” - XIAO TC’21

“Each day of CEI returned us to this warm-hearted place and unlocked new areas of our internal map... What is it like to shape your being this way, to study the inner landscape of boundless hearts? It is like visiting a temple, a sacred space in your body, requiring only breadcrumb, visceral memory to return to a place of worship.” - SJON BA’24



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