

About The Author

Mitchell Ginsberg has worked in the fields of philosophy, psychology, and psycholinguistics since the 1960s, and has been a kalyāṇa-mitta (meditation teacher) in the Theravāda Buddhist tradition since 1975, leading residential meditation retreats in Great Britain, France, Norway, and the USA. He has been a writer, university professor, and psychotherapist. Among his publications are two books, *Mind and Belief: Psychological Ascription and the Concept of Belief* (1972: London and New York) and *The Far Shore: Vipassanā, The Practice of Insight* (1980: London, and 1996, 2001: Delhi), and articles published in various scholarly journals in four countries, with several texts now in preparation.

He has taught at the University of Michigan (from which he received a Ph.D. in Philosophy in 1967), Yale University, The American Institute of Buddhist Studies, Antioch University San Francisco, and elsewhere, in Departments of Philosophy, Buddhist Studies, Far East Studies, and of Clinical, Counseling, and Transpersonal Psychology. He has held post-doctoral/visiting professor research positions in linguistics at MIT (Massachusetts Institute of Technology), in Buddhist Studies at the University of Texas, in Indic Studies at Yale University, and in Judaic and in Middle East Studies at UCSD (University of California at San Diego). A life member of the American Oriental Society, of the Association for Humanistic Psychology, and of the Association for Transpersonal Psychology, he has maintained a private practice in transpersonal psychotherapy in California since 1982, working with individuals, couples, and families, following earlier work (i) at the Connecticut Mental Health Center (New Haven), (ii) in the Connecticut Valley Hospital (Middletown, Connecticut) Laffal Schizophrenic Family Communication Research Project, (iii) in the NIMH/Mental Research Institute (Palo Alto) Mosher Soteria Project on alternatives to traditional psychiatric hospitalization for schizophrenic adolescents and young adults, (iv) in short-term psychodynamic psychotherapy research for post-traumatic stress at the Langley Porter Institute of UCSF (University of California at San Francisco), (v) in advanced clinical family therapy training at the Istituto di Terapia Familiare (Rome, Italy), and in other contexts. More recently, he has worked with an organization devoted to survivors of politically-motivated torture from various countries around the world in their search for political asylum and physical, emotional, psychological, and spiritual well-being.

He has been Moderator since 1996 for an on-line (internet) discussion group, with subscribers to date from over 70 countries, Insight Practice (vipassanā meditation), where he is known by some as Jinavamsa, the teacher's name given to him in 1975 by his meditation master, V.R. Dhiravamsa (earlier, Chao Khun Sobhana Dhammasudhi, the Chao Khun, or Abbot, of the Thai Buddhist Mission to Great Britain), whose own meditation master, Phra Dhammadhiraraj Mahamuni (ordination name, Ñanasiddhi Mahathera; also known as Phra Thepsiddhimuni), Tripitakacarya, and Principal Vipassana Master of Thailand, had

been a disciple of Mahāsi Sayādaw and had served as deputy abbot to Phra Phimoldham (ordination name, Asabha Mahathera; also known as Chao Khun Vimaladhamma), Abbot of Bangkok's Mahathat Monastery and early pioneering advocate of the practice of vipassanā meditation in Thailand both for monks and lay people, who was ultimately promoted to the high rank and position of Somdej with the honorable title and name of Somdej Phra Buddhacarya.

Since Summer 2000, Mitchell has also been a Co-moderator of an on-line discussion group, Chishtiyya, oriented to the Chishtiyya Sufi Way, a ṭarīqa or Sufi path founded in the tenth century C.E. by Khwaja Abū Ishāq Shāmī Chishtī, and moved in the thirteenth century to India by Khwaja Muʿnuddīn Chishtī, known as Gharīb Nawāz. This group is open to both Muslims and non-Muslims, following the orientation of this ṭarīqa, where foreign visitors have always been admitted. And, since mid-September 2001, he has been Moderator of Creative Solutions for Peace, an on-line discussion group formed after the events of September 11, 2001, to provide a context for interested individuals to discuss concerns and consider the development of creative and realistically applicable visions for world peace, in both short-term and long-range contexts.

Further, he and his wife Françoise have co-led workshops in France and the USA since 1994 on the Yoga of Love. Finding primary application in the intimacy of couples, this path (elsewhere called Tantra or Sacred Sexuality) is based on the intense union of expanded awareness and loving respectfulness that is nourished by the energy of passion. It is derived in part from Hindu, Indic and Tibetan Buddhist, and Taoist tantric sources.

The couple have two children, Tania and Anatole, who have moved from childhood and adolescence into adulthood during the writing of this work.

For those interested, some photographs of the author may be found at www.geocities.com/jinavamsa/books/TheInnerPalace/TIP_portraits.pdf.

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Kalyāṇa mitta (inspiring, encouraging friend) is the most usual name for a meditation teacher in the Theravāda tradition; also used are the names kammatṭhānadāyaka, kammatṭhānadesaka, and kammatṭhānācāriya: giver, indicator, and teacher of kammatṭhāna, kammatṭhāna being literally the place for work, of areas, that is, for observing with meditative mindfulness. For more, see discussions in PTSPALI, p. 193b; VSM.III.28,57; Mahāsi Sayadaw, *The Progress of Insight*, p. 55; and BUDDHICT, pp. 73,212.

Some texts use variant spellings in relating the above Thai history:

Wat Mahāthāt: Wat Mahathad, Wat Mahādhātu.

Ñānasiddhi: Nānasiddhi, Nyanasiddhi, Nyānasiddhi, etc.

Thepsiddhimuni: Tepsiddhimuni.

Phimoldham: Phimontham, Phimolatham, Pimolatham, etc.

Somdej Phra Buddhacarya: Somdej (or Somdet) Phra Buddhacarn, Somdej Phra Phuttajan (or Phuttajan or Buddhajarn).

Buddhacarya: Phuttajarn, Phutdhacharn, etc.