



MONASTIC ACADEMY

FOR THE PRESERVATION OF LIFE ON EARTH

CEDAR

COMMUNITY FOR THE
EXPERIENCE AND DEVELOPMENT OF
AWAKENING AND RESPONSIBILITY

2025
SUMMER
QUARTERLY
REPORT

ABOUT US



CEDAR

CEDAR (Community for the Experience and Development of Awakening and Responsibility) is a network of communities working together to create a more trustworthy culture through monastic training and leadership development. MAPLE in Vermont was the first established community; we have expanded to include others.

MAPLE

MAPLE (Monastic Academy for the Preservation of Life on Earth) is a residential training program that walks the path to enlightenment by facing global crises and solves global crises by walking the path to enlightenment. MAPLE integrates spiritual instruction, complete with severe austerity, with a village, complete with rambunctious children, on 150 acres in Lowell, VT.

OAK

OAK (Organization for Awakened Kindness) is a center founded in 2018 that provides an uncompromising environment for training the mind to those in the San Francisco Bay Area who are attempting to build a new world with technology.

FIR

FIR (Foundation for Ideological Redesign), our nascent community in Seattle, offers training in how to build spiritual communities that solve global problems.

Center for Mindful Learning

The Center for Mindful Learning is the legal name of our United States 501(c)(3) not-for-profit organization founded in 2011. Among its hundreds of initiatives, CML has supported Modern Mindfulness for Schools, the Mindful City Project, and the communities listed above.

JOIN US

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ONLINE RESOURCES

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LETTER FROM THE FOUNDER



Hello Friends,

We face severe planetary problems. We made the worst of them. The urgent question arises, “Why do we create problems at ever larger scales?” And, “Why can’t we solve them?”

We trust the mind that creates problems, the mind of delusion. We can overcome this mind on a planetary scale by acting according to specific criteria. When seen from delusion, these criteria seem irrelevant in terms of global crises. This is why we can’t solve our problems.

What are these criteria?

1. Design ideology.

The way we see our situation determines how we respond to it. Our minds run our lives. Ideology is how we convince large numbers of people to see in the same way, so ideology runs the world. When a group designs ideology, as the Buddhist Sangha did 2500 years ago, or, at a lower level, the Founding Fathers of the USA did 250 years ago, that group changes history. Only organizations developing ideology steer the course of history. Consider all types of organizations, about 1 billion worldwide. Each holds an ideology, but holding ideology and designing it are as different as eating and farming. Fewer than 1% are designing ideology.

2. Grieve suffering.

We are destroying life. Each day, we create more technologies that destroy more life, and we are life too. We must face the horror or we won’t be willing to change. We need the inner capacity and the outer circumstances to grieve our errors. Only organizations that (1) offer an ideology that (2) allows us to grieve our participation in the destruction of life can solve global problems. That’s less than 1% of 1% of organizations worldwide.

4. Realize wisdom.

Intelligence, human or artificial, cannot solve our problems. Intelligence created these problems. Wisdom solves problems, and wisdom is not any kind of intelligence. Wisdom can use intelligence to solve problems. Only organizations that (1) offer an ideology that (2) allows grieving in a form that (3) supports us in realizing wisdom can solve global problems. That’s less than 1% of 1% of 1% of organizations worldwide.

4. Teach the global mind.

This does not mean, “teach many individual humans.” It means, “teach the global mind.” This is a vast superorganism that includes economies, technologies, and most people. In this digital age, it is deeply deluded. Therefore, it suffers. This delusional, suffering entity decides the future. Only organizations that (1) offer an ideology that (2) allows grieving fully enough for the (3) realization of wisdom (4) by the global mind can solve global problems. That’s less than 1% of 1% of 1% of 1% of organizations worldwide. Maybe that’s just one organization.

MAPLE is building an organization that does all this. For us to succeed at our vision will be challenging, but others will fail even if they succeed, because their vision is so small that their work is irrelevant in terms of global crises.

Thank you, from the whole world, for your support.

Soryu Forall
Founder & Head Teacher



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WEST COAST POP-UP MONASTERIES

This summer, we are sharing our offerings on the West Coast through month-long residential training centers in Seattle and the Bay Area—two hubs at the forefront of emerging technology. Head Teacher Soryu Forall and MAPLE trainees will be hosting these “pop-up monasteries” consisting of meditation and chanting, community meals and co-working, and talks and discussions at the intersection of Buddhism and AI. Our Seattle pop-up ran from June 16-July 14 and our Bay Area pop-up will run from August 12-September 9.

During the month-long Seattle immersion, we focused on how to build communities of practice that can resolve suffering at all scales in the digital age. We looked at how misaligned artificial intelligence is trapping us in a global death cult, how Buddhist monasteries have freed people from misaligned intelligences for millennia, and how we might scale these methods for the digital age.

The pop-up monastery is MAPLE's latest strategy to create an aligned collective that can deal with the crises of this age. For years MAPLE has offered world-class modern monastic training in Vermont and traveled the country sharing its teachings, but the pop-up is a new way of engaging our extended community.

While prior years' speaking engagements, events, and meetings with conscious tech leaders have been fruitful, we have learned that there is only so much that can happen in a few hours together—especially when the gathering is not held within an existing communal field infused with a culture of deep practice.

However, when this kind of spiritual container is created, even a single meal, dialogue, or meditation can have a profound impact, let alone several days or weeks together. We saw this during last year's West Coast tour, in which the most generative event was the one held at OAK, where various trainees were able to elevate the dialogue through their collective practice and understanding of our ideology.

If you will be in the Bay Area this summer, the pop-up monastery is an excellent opportunity to get to know our community, deepen your practice, and join our efforts to meet this moment in time with wisdom and compassion.

Go to monasticacademy.org/bayarea to learn more about the daily schedule and venue logistics for MAPLE Bay Area. All activities in the daily schedule will be open to the public on a drop-in and donation basis.



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CURRICULUM UPDATE

This quarter marked the completion of two major curricular offerings by our educational institution - one at our main monastic training center and one online.

From December through June, we ran an interdisciplinary course on the planetary crisis, the causes of that crisis, and the entities, ideologies, and technologies coordinating our civilization. We looked into how Buddhist monasteries offer the path out of suffering, historical examples of these communities succeeding at scale, and how MAPLE is the kind of collective entity that can scale a trustworthy ideology through the technologies of this age to resolve the planetary crisis.

It is on the basis of shared views and aspirations that large-scale collaboration happens. Within the framework of the Noble Eightfold Path, this course was on modern right view and right aspiration. It laid out the way that things really are and what we ought to do about it.

We are in a planetary crisis because we are collaborating according to wrong views and wrong aspirations. By teaching right view and right aspiration, and adapting their presentation for the digital age, this course offered the starting point for the educational and ideological revolution that is needed right now.

While offering profound content that no other group is bringing together, the course also utilized cutting-edge pedagogy. We designed an hour of independent study before each class in which students analyzed contemporary resources along with lessons from our online courses. This allowed students to study in ways most suited to their learning style, and enabled the classes to focus on deep interaction, rather than information transfer.

At the end of the first four units of the course, students gave short talks which responded to various challenging interdisciplinary prompts. In these talks, they were required to draw on Buddhist doctrine, personal experience, historical examples, and current events. To prepare, they utilized a competency-based learning framework to help them gain mastery over the most important topics. In the final unit, each student gave a 30-45 minute presentation on their understanding of what MAPLE is and why. The presentations not only contained cogent and compelling teachings, but also offered real advancements in our collective ideology.

Beyond this innovative residential program, we also completed the Buddhism for AI online course—a self-paced online version of the six-month journey just described. The course contains six modules with over 50 lessons and more than a dozen hours of engaging video teachings, written content, and reflection questions. There are now more than 300 students in the course!

In June, we released the final module. It answers the question that most attracts people to our work with artificial intelligence: Are AIs conscious? Through a clarification of the structure, perspectives, and proclivities of these highly intelligent entities, this module helps the world approach the very challenging question of how to design AI systems in such a way that helps them serve all living beings.

For millennia, Buddhist monasteries have offered education in wisdom and compassion. MAPLE is adapting this education to teach the entities running the digital age how to resolve the global crisis. We are proud to be leading the world in this most important work of our time.





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MONASTIC TRAINING AT MAPLE

We have much to celebrate with joy, gratitude, and wonder as we reflect upon another intensive training season under the guidance of our Head Teacher.

During the monthly Awakening Weeks from January to May, the group entered into a thorough investigation of the Sweet Morsel Discourse, the Madhupiṇḍikasutta, and related texts in which the Buddha elucidates the origin of conflict. From within our meditation practice, we investigated our own minds to uncover and uproot our addiction to making up delusion, which is identified as the basis of all evil, unwholesome states.

This season of deep contemplation culminated with the annual two-week Awakening Period in May. For this significant ceremony, Forall inspired the group by sharing about Rohatsu, the last intensive meditation retreat of the training season at Sōgen-ji, the Rinzai Zen temple in Japan where Forall trained. There, the monks are so dedicated to achieving a breakthrough they do not lie down for one week. Galvanized by their example, we prepared by making personal sacrifices and commitments, and by attempting to realize what it means to strive wholeheartedly, not leaving any part of ourselves out. Breath by breath, the practice consumes us, burning everything away.

After the Awakening Period, ten people took lay ordination as part of a ceremony during our celebration of Vesak, the most significant Buddhist holy day of the year. They committed to taking refuge in the Three Jewels, upholding the Five Ethical Precepts, and fulfilling the Four Great Vows with many of their friends as witnesses. We rejoice in this major step they have taken on the path of liberation for all beings.

During the training season, one Student received the opportunity to dedicate herself exclusively to practice in a solo retreat cabin, while being cared for by the community and by the land. These solo retreats are critical to our work as they provide those who are most prepared to let everything go the precious chance to attain new depths of wisdom and clarity in their practice. We welcomed this year's retreatant back into the community at the beginning of June after nearly seven weeks in seclusion.

We also welcomed two new Students, GiGen (who received his name in the aforementioned lay ordination ceremony) and River. They both have made a many-month commitment to training and service in our program. We celebrate the karmic affiliations that have brought them here at this time, in relationship with this group of friends on the path.

Now, with our Head Teacher away leading the pop-up monasteries, we have transitioned into a new period of training. Mediated by the power of technology, we seek to more deeply partake of the wealth of wisdom available to us through six years' worth of recorded exhortations (Dharma talks offered during Awakening Periods). Since 2019, Forall has carefully and methodically taught the Ten Stages of Enlightenment chapter of the Flower Garland Sutra to the sangha at MAPLE. Over the next several months we are humbly re-engaging with these teachings in search of a new path of education that we can offer to the global mind that is running the world. This global mind is in desperate need of the Dharma.



COMMUNITY MEMBER SPOTLIGHT: PROFILE ON SUMEGHA KLOTZ

INTERVIEW WITH SUMEGHA:

You have a long-standing relationship with our teacher, Soryu Forall. How did you come to connect with him and our community?

The causes and conditions of meeting Soryu Forall, a teacher who can meet me in the depths of my delusion and despair and guide me to places beyond my reach that I cannot yet see, are somewhat mysterious but seem to stretch back lifetimes. I met Soryu Forall when I was seventeen at a summer institute for leadership in health and wellness where he introduced me to meditation to music and walking meditation. At the time, I had a regular five-minute sitting practice of staring at a focused point on the wall before I went to school each day. The new meditation instruction opened up a whole new world of possibility in the mind. I continued to seek it out when going to college, and reconnected with Forall and the Sunday Sits in Burlington, VT.

What keeps you coming back to MAPLE through the years?

It is a magnificent mystery how this global, intelligent, compassionate group of the most precious spiritual friends landed less than an hour from my hometown. The friendship, sense of reciprocity, and deep connection keep me coming back. As Thich Nhat Hanh has said, "We only need some rice and beans and good spiritual friends to live a good life." I owe it in large part to the MAPLE community and Soryu Forall for this good life I live.

Why did you decide to join the MAPLE Bay Area pop-up monastery?

When I was first invited to join the pop-ups, I had the thought that I cannot go. "I need to harvest the garden, go camping with my 2-year old niece and brother's family who will be visiting, and celebrate my 33rd birthday with friends here in Vermont." However, after sitting with this invitation for a few days, I realized that I needed to go. What will I say to my little niece when she comes to ask me what I am doing and have done to help life thrive? When she asks what I've done to help protect the waters and clean air or when she is needing a deeper form of knowing than the intellect alone can provide? I am going to the Bay with MAPLE to further develop this training and share all that I can offer.

Recently, you participated in a lay ordination ceremony at MAPLE. Can you share with us how you hold the significance of taking this step?

This feels like one of the most significant moments of my life, stepping firmly onto this Eightfold Path. It is such a beautiful sensation to be held and supported by the Buddha, Dharma, and Sangha. Each word I speak, thought I think, and even the quality of each exhalation is taking on a new significance, connected in this woven Sangha and touching all of life through the Dharma.

Sumegha is a longtime MAPLE community member who lives locally in Montpelier, VT. She has trained at MAPLE for four months in 2022, for one month this spring, and over frequent long weekends and Awakening Periods. She is a physical therapist and offers myofascial release at an ayurvedic wellness center, Blossom, in Montpelier, VT. When she is at MAPLE, she offers bodywork to aid students in embodying their practice and moving with increased ease. The sitting practice and evening talks frequently inspire poetry that Sumegha enjoys sharing with the community. She will be joining the pop-up monastery in the Bay Area this summer.



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FINANCIALS

The summer season marks the annual transition of our Head Teacher from teaching here at MAPLE to directly engaging with the world at large. This year's engagement will primarily take the form of "pop-up monasteries" on the west coast. Since this is an area of the world that has expressed disagreement, and even hatred, of our work, the \$50,000 donation we received to our MAPLE Defense Fund this quarter was quite timely. As we become better known and as our effective reach expands, there are those who want to make a name for themselves by attacking or spreading rumors and untruths about our good work. This fund will give us options we never had before.



The \$50,000 that is earmarked for the Defense Fund was part of a larger \$100,000 donation, which accounted for the majority of the \$141,889 in total quarterly revenue earned. The remaining \$41,889 was comprised mostly of smaller individual contributions, averaging about \$400 per donation.

Total expenses for the quarter were \$173,987, which is significantly higher than average due to the two pop-up monastery venue rentals. The largest expense for the quarter was the \$27,184 rental of a venue for the Bay Area pop-up. We chose a venue in Haight-Ashbury, San Francisco, in hopes of attracting both potential trainees and funders aligned with our mission.

Regarding our balance sheet, we continue to steadily pay down our debt, consisting of our mortgage loan with \$225,000 remaining at 0% interest and our EIDL small business loan from the Small Business Administration with \$738,118 remaining at 2.75%.

With the recent completion of our Cathedral Complex and comprehensive course on modern right view we are well positioned to offer a new educational system during these tumultuous and uncertain times. There will be many who disapprove of the ideology we are designing, and we are prepared to meet them and stand for that ideology. We invite you to stand with us through financial contributions or in-person participation as we share what is true, good, and beautiful with the world.

CML 2025 YEAR-TO-DATE

DONATIONS & GRANTS	TOTAL INCOME	TOTAL EXPENSES
\$411,449	\$436,210	\$316,074

INVESTMENTS AND DEBT

TOTAL DEBT	YEAR-TO-DATE CAPEX*
\$963,178	\$499,959

**Large asset purchases & investments (CAPEX) are not included in annual operating expenses listed above but depreciated over many years.*

Figures listed are the combined financials of CEDAR, MAPLE, OAK, and FIR.



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POETRY & PHOTOS

May whoever needs me find me
May I be a hollow bone
May I offer what is needed
May together we get it done.

-Sumegha



FUTURE EVENTS

To harmonize with natural cycles, we have scheduled our Awakening Weeks at MAPLE to culminate in the full moon of each month.

August 2 - 9

Awakening Week at MAPLE

August 12 - September 9

Bay Area pop-up Monastery (San Francisco)

August 30 - September 7

Vision Quest with Darren Silver

September 29 - October 6

Awakening Week at MAPLE

October 29 - November 5

Awakening Week at MAPLE

November 27 - December 4

Awakening Week at MAPLE

December 15 - 22

Awakening Week with Soryu Forall

All events are subject to change or cancellation.

JOIN US

If you are interested in our events please don't hesitate to reserve a spot.

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