



Center Community News

Newsletter of the Center for Sacred Sciences

Another Special Newsletter Edition

Note from the Editor... Our last edition was dedicated, in part, to the themes of death and impermanence. And yes, while this topic is dissolving —right in this very moment— it has not self-liberated quite yet. Until it does, I hope you will find this edition also offers you some depth, elucidation, inner fortitude during the those darker times, and helpful reminders (like this one, from Pema Chödrön's **The Places that Scare You**):

That nothing is static or fixed, that all is fleeting and impermanent, is the first mark of existence. It is the ordinary state of affairs. Everything is in process. Everything —every tree, every blade of grass, all the animals, insects, human beings, buildings, the animate and the inanimate— is always changing, moment to moment.

2015 Fall Retreat The Mysteries of Surrender



(not shown: Becky Lipton & Todd Corbett)

- 5th row:** Rich Marlatt, Bailey Cunningham, Fred Chambers, Laurina Peters, Jim Patterson, Raymond Blalock, Sandy Itzkowitz, Nancy Miller, Sophia Malkasian, Gene Gibbs
- 4th row:** Vip Short, Jim Zajac, Bob Cowart, Susan Esch, Jay McCandless, Liba Staff, Laura Betty, Betty Vail,
- 3rd row:** Michael Kilgroe, Dagmar Maston, Patricia Burbank, Marijke McCandless, Robin Bundy
- 2nd row:** Barbara Goldberg, Carla Crow, Robin Retherford, Beverly Forster, Anita Runyan, Kathleen Daniel, Donna Atkinson, Barbara Dewey, Judith Hasbrouck, Aileen McNamara, Mark Hurwit, Matt Sieradski
- Front row:** Sharry Lachman, Linda Wylie, Joel, Eleanor Parsons, Clivonne Corbett, Shirley Chase, Cathryn Cardellino

Once again, an amazing retreat! And (as you can see) quite a large group who, while generating some seriously-positive karma, kept Joel busy steering all toward the very end of the path where, finally, no one even cared about awakening. Having found total contentment, those in attendance just sat quietly, or pursued their muse... evidence of which is yours to enjoy throughout this newsletter. If you speak with any of these retreatants, listen close: words of wisdom will pour from their lips! — And if you happen to run into **SHIRLY CHASE**, be sure to gift her with a hardy **THANK YOU** for her noble and excellent service as Retreat Coordinator for these last two years. She steps down now to hand the reigns over to the capable **Laura Betty** (also seen above). Welcome, Laura! And, not that she'll need them, but words of gratitude and encouragement couldn't hurt, neither.

Creating a Metta Healing Circle

CSS Interview with Hiromi Sieradski

with Mark Hurwit



The following interview was conducted on October 5, 2015, and has been edited and condensed from a more complete (7-page) interview, which is available at: <http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org/index.php/Practice/hiromi-interview.html>

MH: One of the things I think is special about what you're doing is that death is something we just keep at the periphery, until it bypasses our boundaries. You're doing something more proactive by engaging it directly. Can you say a little bit about the ministry you're working with, and how you got into this idea of doing metta work? It's a very special thing.

Hiromi: Well, it was Andrea who originally introduced me to Upaya (the Zen center in Santa Fe, New Mexico, founded by Roshi Joan Halifax). I was hoping to do their one-week Being with Dying program. But later, on a hike with Andrea after a retreat, a notion came to my mind to apply for this Chaplaincy program. When doubts came up, Matt really supported me; but it was my friend Liz who thought I'd make a good Chaplain. "I think this is your path. Just drop your negative thoughts about not being sure it's not your thing. It came to your mind for a reason." She even helped me with the application. But then she became very ill and I had to simply help her with the whole process of dying. She was at the hospital in December, and quickly passed away in February. But with all that, I'd have to say this has been the greatest choice I've ever made... like marrying Matt, that kind of emphasis. I have no regrets. It's been wonderful; almost two years of my practice.

MH: I guess there are different kinds of religious orientation that a chaplain might have. What is the context of your chaplaincy? You learn and become steeped in certain teachings... but this isn't a Christian orientation, right?

Hiromi: No, this was specifically a Buddhist program, and Roshi Joan Halifax emphasized this is not chaplaincy mill. There's a real emphasis on personal work, and I've never had this much difficulty working with my own edges. All the paper-writing has been purging ego and trauma out. It gets us really ready to serve. I started out working in mental health before I was married. But this is deeper than therapeutic work.

MH: Is chaplaincy mostly about working with hospice, people who are dying, or is it...

Hiromi: You get to choose a field. There are prison ministries, end of life, education, women's work, and now there's environmental chaplaincy. I was interested in end-of-life care. And when time finally allowed me to get into it, I loved it. I felt like I was in my element, and everything felt really natural and came easy for me. And I have done enough vigils as well. That really changed the quality of...

MH: Your training?

Hiromi: Yes. It's been very difficult, but I've very much enjoyed all the work that I've done so far.

MH: It's an interesting word to use, because a lot of times we don't associate death and dying with enjoying work. But there's obviously something very fulfilling and deep about it.

Hiromi: I think listening really helps keep me present with each patient in the moment. Rarely do I get to talk about spirituality. Usually, I just go and listen to whatever they have to say.

MH: So you're not trying to offer some kind of concepts in a non-conceptual way? You're trying ease pain, or help people accept? Or is it really helping people just be?

— continued on page 4

Fall Retreat Offerings

Gifts from Marijke McCandless

Solo Day

“Go practice. Go find Buddhahood,” he said.

I went looking and couldn't find anywhere
Buddhahood wasn't... except within me.

That's odd, I thought. If I was me looking at me, I'd see
Buddhahood. So I went looking for “Buddhahood me.”

My body etched an outline — one knee crossed over the
the other. I could see the line of the color black against
the brown deck, but could not feel the edge.

My hand was resting on my journal but I could not
find where my hand ended and the journal began.

I registered a prickling in my face, but could not
see my face — was it even still there?

Breath rose and fell in my chest without my
control, often without my awareness.

Joel's words “Buddha hood breathing. Buddha
hood breathing” arose unbidden — a silent mantra.

I sat and waited, vigilant and still. Words tumbled
across the page. Sounds came and went, visual images
too. Thoughts flitted in and left of their own accord.

Buddhahood sitting, breathing, writing, Being.
Alas, me too.

Buddha in the Shower

We sat for a spell, Buddhahood and I . . .
Hey! I thought, can we be friends? I'll try.
I gave voice to the thought, but
heard no reply — only silence
and the sound of the Great River flowing by.

Huh, I thought. I guess Buddhahood doesn't talk.
So instead I got up, and we went for a walk.

My Heart is Light by Sandy Itzkowitz

After our last evening's meditation, I walked out onto the deck,
thinking about what a wonderful retreat it had been, and how my
heart was filled with light. That's when I looked up and saw the
moon shining through that heart-shape in a leaf. Ahhh...

Gifts from Fred Chambers

Groundless Ground

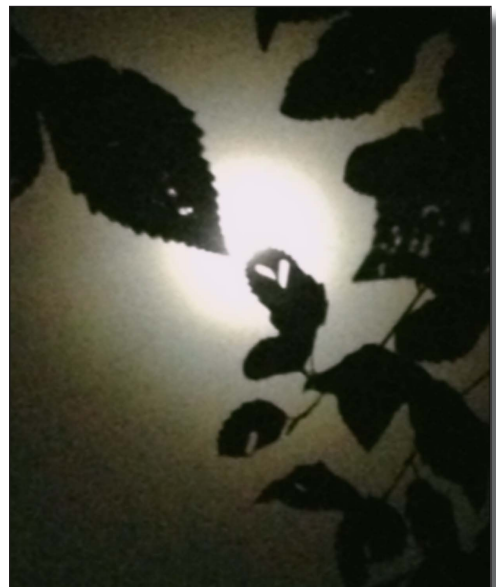
Beautiful moon,
On a starlit night,
The river flows,
With all its might,
I am stilled,
By the water's sound,
And rooted deep,
In the Groundless Ground.

Eternally Now

None of these thoughts are mine,
It's simply the play of Divine.
From Consciousness Itself they arise,
And I patiently await their demise.
Consciousness loves to play,
Thoughts scamper and dance all day,
It's Now they're arising in,
It's Now where the world begins,
It's Now where the world does end,
It's Eternally Now my friends.

Precious Jewel

Hurricane winds are howling strong,
Shutter the windows and board up the hall,
Shelter yourself in a one-room school,
Seek the Truth, it's a precious jewel.



Reflections of the One Light

by Matt Sieradski

Beyond the discriminating capacity of the mind is the pure light of Consciousness Itself, shining through and as the mind and world. Ignorance is an active process of splitting this one light, moment by moment, into the distinction of subject and object. In actuality, the entire field of objective experience is only a projection of awareness. There is, in truth, only the one light, shining through all apparent difference. As this light is what you are, there is no separation between you and all being; as this light is always present, there is no falling away from it. The only mistake that *can* be made is in reification of mental distinctions within this light, so the solution to the cosmic problem of delusion is simply to be what you are at all times.



In the one light of Consciousness Itself, time is seen as comprising a combination of memory of previous cognitive and perceptual modes with thoughts about the future, grounded in attachment to the idea of being the experiencer. Apart from the memory of previous events, there can be no past; memory itself arises only in the present. Apart from ideas about future events, there can be no future; these thoughts, too, are simply more fluctuations of the one timeless light. Time is constructed to give credence to the egoic sense of being the doer and enjoyer of action. Yet, this sense of being a separate individual is simply a shadow trick caused through the mind's habit of creating distinctions. Without a self, there can be no world as such; and without a world, the concept of time is meaningless. All sense of a continuum of events, of cause and effect, the temporal order, vanishes in the view of nonduality beyond all difference.

— continued on page 5

—*Hiromi*, continued from page 2

Hiromi: I'm just being there with them for whatever they need. Sometimes they just want me to sit there. Sometimes, they like to talk about the fun times they had growing up. I just listen. I had a patient who was getting panic attacks. It was difficult for her... a mixture of anxiety about leaving her family, and also the dying process.

MH: I've heard that a lot of difficulties people have is around their unfinished business— that things haven't been taken care of, that the children won't be okay, etc. And that causes as much suffering as the pending death and the unknown... which is kind of beautiful in a way. So much life is there, so much connection, that it rises— death is right there, but the focus is still right here. There's something beautiful about that, actually.

Hiromi: Yes, it was that way with her. It's amazing how often people share something very difficult, and afterwards they feel more relaxed. They seem to take on the next journey pretty quickly after that. They feel good just being...

MH: ...heard?

Hiromi: Yeah.

MH: You said earlier that you've done a lot of vigils. So with that and your social work, and now you're doing this Metta group— have you had any insights about the process people go through... certain things that come up again and again, particular kinds of fears or ways that people release?

Hiromi: Usually the breathing pattern changes and... a surprising pattern I've seen often is— like, a very gentle person becomes a little difficult; their behavior gets a little aggressive. It doesn't seem to make any sense, but that happens with some people, right before they move on to the change.

MH: I know Elizabeth Kubler-Ross has identified these five discernible stages. I would imagine during the denial process, there's going to be a lot of pushing back...

Hiromi: I notice that, and then the "active dying" phase lasts about twenty-four hours. But it's always different. Some people don't want to leave, and their vigil can last many days... like having too much fun at hospice!

— continued on page 6

—*One Light, continued from page 4*

Without a self, there can be no world as such; and without a world, the concept of time is meaningless. All sense of a continuum of events, cause and effect, the temporal order, vanishes in the view of nonduality beyond all difference.

In the one light of Consciousness Itself, space is seen to be an expression of the endless vastness of pure being. As it is beyond distinction, it is also beyond limit; and being beyond limit, it can manifest as anything at all. Being anything, it appears to take on concrete limits; and with these apparent limits, it arises as objects in space. Yet these objects do not exist apart from the one light. They always arise completely in perceptive congruence within awareness, for without awareness there can be no perceptive capacity; and without perception, there can be no objects of thought. Without thought of objects, there are no objects; without objects, space has no meaning apart from its source as the vast brilliance of the one light. It is the property of this light to arise as objects — yet they have no inherent being beyond their true existence as this shining awareness itself.


In the one light of Consciousness Itself, being is seen to be none other than non-being, and the light itself beyond any such limiting categories. As all objects — selves and worlds — arise as illusory distinctions of this one light, there can be no being to speak of. Yet, given that anything at all arises, this non-being gives birth to all being, moment by moment. But since neither being nor non-being applies to that which is beyond all distinction, this one light is ever-present as the source beyond all notions of creation or destruction — absolute Being itself, the indestructible nature of all being, shining eternal.

In the one light of Consciousness Itself, self-limited mind is seen to be nothing at all — simply a habit of refraction and the reification of this process. In the present moment of consciousness without any thought, there has never been a mind. Only upon the arising of a thought does there

appear to be a mind. This confusion has no beginning; its appearance is just another permutation of the one light itself, and nothing else. Like a simple parlor trick, delusion is recognized as nothing but a passing fancy that never really existed... a trick of the light.

So, in the one light of Consciousness Itself, liberation from suffering is seen to be nothing at all. Who would have suffered, and for what duration, and in what world? Indeed, as there has never been such a thing as mind, there simply cannot be any individual; and as there has never been an individual, who could be deluded? With no experiencer ever in time, how could suffering pertain? With no world apart from the non-existent mind, what could be the environment of suffering? Recognizing that delusion has no basis at all, what is there to liberate, from what and for whom? For Consciousness Itself, there has never been a self or a world, delusion or liberation. The nondual light shines quite unconcernedly, above and beyond any such coarse distinctions, completely at peace, as the bliss of transcendent, eternal, conscious being.

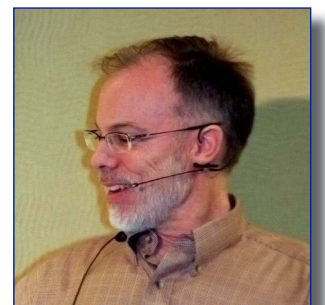
In the one light of Consciousness Itself — the seeker, the path, the teachings, the teacher, and attainment — all shine as an ephemeral display. The seeker is delusion that never existed. The path is over just as it begins, for nothing apart from the one light ever arises in the timeless silence of pure being. The teaching is the very radiance of the one light, that is all — the teacher is the same as the seeker and the sought, which is always just this very present radiance alone. And attainment is the light itself, the foundation of all from the very beginning. Never having swerved from it, how can it be returned to?

All is seen to be one without a second, and no distinction pertains. All categories transcended, all sense of doership and effort destroyed, and all sense of movement or relative stillness made meaningless... in the final peace, nothing can be said. Yet, in this great silence all is included, and perfect contentment is understood at last. 

The only mistake that can be made is in reification of mental distinctions within this light. ... the solution to the cosmic problem of delusion is simply to be what you are at all times.

Math in the SAND Box

In October 2015, scientists and nondual teachers gathered once again in San Jose, California, for the annual Science and Nonduality (SAND) Conference. Tom McFarlane, from CSS, presented a 40-minute talk entitled *The Mathematics of Manifestation*. After discussing the mathematical nature of theories and experiments in science, Tom showed that mathematics is based on distinction, and that distinction can be resolved with nonduality, allowing science to be seen as emerging from nonduality in a process of mathematical manifestation.



Melting Away Like Wax

by Aileen McNamara

Editor's Note — This is a charitable retreat offering ... but not from this year. However, this one-man review board is going to allow it because it's a good teaching story nonetheless, sincere and relevant.

I love our retreats. To be in silence, surrounded by the members of our sangha while in the midst of nature, is so sweet!

Though I was excited to be going to the first retreat that CSS held at St. Benedict's Lodge, I was concerned that I'd be overwhelmed by religious symbols. This proved to not be an issue. The property is wonderful, and the religious details subtle. The sight and sound of the McKenzie River so close to the lodge is comforting and contemplative.

From the beginning of the retreat, Matt's teachings were rich. The time was packed with concepts concerning the theme of Cultivating Emotional Wisdom.

One day Matt did a guided meditation on grief and yearning. He led us into choiceless awareness. As I recall, he said to focus on the naked sensation in the body that the emotion created. I focused on feeling my grief. It felt heavy, thick, dense. It remained as I tried to liberate it into spaciousness. Though I felt a bit of movement, I was not able to let it all dissipate by the end of the session.

The teaching stayed with me. I focused on the feeling during a later, unguided meditation. Again the feeling of the heaviness was there. It felt like a wide greyness in my midsection... a band that circled me like the misplaced

belt of a sumi wrestler that oddly stuck onto me. As I concentrated on liberating this feeling, I suddenly felt movement, in the knot that had been in the muscle under my shoulder blade. It felt like the dripping of a blob of wax one might see in a lava lamp. It dropped down and vanished. I was amazed. — That knot had bothered me for over ten years.

When my 35-year old son took his life, I spent many hours pulling weeds compulsively, as if doing penance for my guilt. Through overuse, I developed severe hand, arm and shoulder pain, for which I saw doctors, physical therapists and massage therapists. Only one massage person ever noticed the knot and commented, after working on that area for quite a while, that he did not know what was going on there.

When packing for the retreat, I brought a racketball to massage this spot and feel relief. I used this as soon as I got to the retreat and periodically during it. After the knot dropped I did not need to use it anymore.

Though I hoped to work on grief during the retreat, I never connected the knot to that emotion, and never imagined emotional release could be connected to anything specific in my body. But a year and a half later, though I still have other shoulder problems, that knot is still gone. ♦

—*Hiromi, continued from page 4*

One main thing I notice, though, is that they all long for physical contact; most really appreciate it when I hold their hand or give them a hug before I leave. And because hearing is the last sense to go, they can hear even though they can't talk. So I also encourage them... that everything is fine, that they're ready to move to a next phase peacefully. We remind them that they don't have to worry.

MH: Did you see that recent documentary, *Alive Inside*? (Nancy's husband, Neil Miller, made it!) It's about these people who are very old or dying, where nothing is going on... they'd give them an iPod playing music from when they were young, and all of a sudden they'd start dancing, they'd start crying. It was very clear that they were still there, they just needed something to awaken their life!

But let's move on to talking about the Metta group. It sounds like you have a lot of experience and education to bring to gatherings like these. What was your vision for the group? And how is it for you to be instrumental in maintaining this kind of container?

Hiromi: At his Celebration of Life, Jan Staff's courage and embracing love really inspired me to start this group. It would not have happened without that, and so I dedicate this group to him, as well as to my friend, Liz. They have both inspired my vision of creating a safe place to... save all sentient beings. All our sharing is done in a council format, and I can't tell you how powerful that is! I don't know if you've ever taken part in any Quaker circles...

— *continued on page 7*

—*Hiromi, continued from page 6*

MH: I used to live near the Quaker church on Onyx, and went on 6 or 8 Sundays, sitting in silence with them. I thought it was great, and felt a lot of power in the silence, and in people’s willingness to wait to speak until something was really there for them.

Hiromi: The interesting thing is that you really can just sit there, bearing witness, as our teacher, Bernie Glassman says. We embody three tenets: bearing witness to the joy and suffering of the world; accepting the unknown (so you won’t have fixated ideas about anything); and that loving action arises. I practice creating a space in myself so that the format can really offer this. The full intention of council is to both speak and listen from heart, which is a very different way of being present. And we strive to “speak lean”... just going to the essence, without blabbing on. And being spontaneous, not preparing what you’re going to say while somebody else is speaking. Those are the four intentions. — We take turns and, because nobody’s giving any feedback, people having the opportunity to purely make a statement feel very heard. And everything is, of course, strictly confidential. I don’t necessarily like the word “satisfaction,” but it really feels just right.

MH: I had a teacher once who —prompted by a therapist talking about healing and the role of counselors— said that, for all the training people get and all their skills, really what we mostly need is just to be heard. It seems weird that it’s such a rare thing.

Hiromi: Recently we had participant who started crying... it just caught her by surprise. It was almost a kind of joy, like, “Oh my gosh, these people are really hearing what I’m saying!” Sometimes I cry. It can be great to finally let things out, to not have to keep guarding. We’re so used to not feeling our body, and avoiding pain. So this is a time where people can just feel, and feel safe. We’re all just witnessing, and it’s an intimate group.

MH: Is it the same people every time... the kind of space where, if a new person came it might be uncomfortable? And is it like in the Practitioner Groups, where we make a commitment so that people aren’t always coming and going?


Hiromi: It’s not like that, but there’s definitely a consistency that builds with the group of people who come. I like to give new people the chance to get used to it, because it’s so beneficial. Everyone in the group is practicing patience and loving kindness. It can take a little time to learn to settle into the space, but I haven’t had a problem with anybody who just started talking without using the talking object or anything. Though it can sometimes be intense, people keep coming... for which I’m always grateful.

Editor’s Note: Unfortunately (and unbeknownst to me at the time), my recorder ran out of power at this moment, and part of my closing moments with Hiromi were not transcribed. But I remember asking if there was anything else she wanted to share, that might best capture the feel and intention of the group. She paused for a moment, and then —in a beautiful moment of innocence so authentic I felt I was reading her mind (or heart)— said, “It’s like, everything is...”

“A miracle?” I asked.

“Yes, exactly! *Everything is miraculous!* When we allow ourselves to rest into our hearts, especially together, that all becomes so clear!”

I left Hiromi’s home that day feeling that, though I hadn’t been to one of her gatherings at the Center, I had nonetheless just experienced one. It was a very relaxed sense of being both very light and very grounded... the way I often feel after meditating. — And, as of this writing, I have attended one of these Metta circles (Tuesdays, from 10-11:30 am), and highly recommend them. There is a palpable feeling of deepening, and an emotional warmth that comes from the silence, the listening, and the knowledge that you’ve been deeply acknowledged... whatever the content or difficulty being expressed. Hiromi is a wonderful facilitator, and I hope CSS members will take the time to come sit “in council” and practice this deep form of being present. The benefits may be difficult to describe, but they are wonderful.

Thank you, Hiromi, for taking the time for this interview, and for dedicating your life to this chaplaincy work. It is indeed a gift to the world.  (And special thanks to Sheila Craven, who dedicated her time to transcribe this interview.)

More Fall Retreat Offerings

Bury My Bones by Fred Chambers

Bury my bones at the break of day,
Bury'm deep, so there they'll stay.
Bury my bones for the worms to eat,
Bury'm fresh, it'll be a good treat.

Bury my bones so all can see,
Plant some flowers and let the dogs pee.
Bury my bones, let the people cry,
When the clouds part, there'll be a clear eye.

Bury my bones in the neighborhood,
Towers will shake, as well they should.
Bury my bones when the moon is gone,
Do a little dance and sing this song.

Reflection and Regret by Laura Betty

My sister died unexpectedly last December. She and our dad were close, and he passed away six months earlier.

Linda lived alone, with her dog and two horses.
It was the mailman who noticed that her mail was not being picked up. Linda was the wild one in our family. She never seemed satisfied with her life, and was angry at most of us, most of the time.

Looking back now, I wished that I hadn't seen myself as a "doer," trying to re-edit her views, but had listened with compassion to what she was saying. I wish that I'd had empathy to hear what was being said behind the anger. I miss her.

**Renunciation is not *giving up* the things of this world,
but accepting that they go away.**

Zen Master Shunryu Suzuki

Sweet Surrender by Bev Forster

Golden leaves swirling
Roaring river flowing
Starry, Starry Night
Tiny bird a-flight
Sun emitting ever changing light
All Catch Attention
and mesmerize with delight.

Rumi, Lalli, Ramana, Rimpoche and Joel
All say Detach, Renunciate
Go within and seek the Soul.

Recognize Impermanence
Investigate emptiness,
See that God is everywhere Present.

OH Sweet Surrender,
Have Your way with me,
Release me to the Mystery!
Set me free. I am available for Thee,
And ready to go... HOME.

In Gratitude... Thank You God and Joel

Ode to L.W and Dharma Duty by Bev Forster

NOW...
Whenever I'm preparing vegetables,
Can't help but think of you...

Especially leeks and little Buddha heads
Remind me of the miraculous things you do.

Kale, carrots, onions, celery, and red peppers too
There's L.W. telling me what to do.

Chop, slice and dice, diagonals too,
But I know the ultimate creation is up to you.

Placing all together in soup, salads or stews,
An amazing display.... with perfect hues.
Presented lovingly in a caring, beautiful milieu.

Thank you Linda Wiley...
for your gentle guidance,
heart felt sharing,
and acceptance of what we do.

We love you! and Thank You for the Beautiful YOU!

Sacred Chanting at CSS, with Bev Forster

Why chant? Robert Gass, in his book *Chanting*, writes:

We chant to join our voices to the countless seekers, worshipers, mystics, and lovers of life, in every time and in every place, who have shared in sacred song. We chant our prayers to God, so that our lives may be graced by more intimate Presence of the One known by so many Names.

Join us every second Thursday from 7-8:30, as seekers and Lovers of Life come together to join voices and spirits in devotional chanting, with the intention to create a sacred space for healing, inspiration, and the experience of connection with each other and the Mystery. ***Om Shanti!***

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Joel Morwood
John Yousey
Judith Hasbrouck
Karen Svenson
Karen Wesson
Katherine Hamer
Kathleen Daniel
Ken Paul
Kenny Perrine
Kris Lewis
Kristy Murray
Laura Betty
Laurie Caracraft
Laurie Iaccino
Laurina Peters
Lesley McCandles
Liba Stafl
Linda Hunt
Lisa Sanchez-Navarro
Lon Hatfield
Lori Cunningham
Lori Nero
Lorraine Boose
Lucy Johnson
Luke Weiss
Madeline Jonas
Maggie Free
Mark & Oriana Hurwit
Matthew Greenblatt
Matthew Sieradski
Meg Jefferson
Meg Stewart-Smith
Meg Whiteford
Megan Greiner
Melissa Kaspar
Michael Augden
Michael Eldridge
Michael Glinsky
Michael Rolph
Michael Strasburger
Michael Williams
Mike Barkhuff
Mike Hussey
Mo Moscovitz
Mona Bronson
Monica Look
Mora Fields
Nancy Miller
Nicolai Cranch
Nicole Elsner
Parantap Lahiri
Pat Munden
Peggy Prentice
Raymond Blalock
Rebecca Lipton
Rich Holloway
Rich Marlatt
Richard Ahrens
Richard Pomper
Robert Hoitt
Robert Ruck
Robin Bundy
Robin Retherford
Sally Snyder
Sandy Itzkowitz
Shan Ambika
Sharry Lachman
Shirley Chase
Sophia Malkasian
Steve Cummings
Steve Jonas
Steven Pologe
Sue Esch
Susan Stumpf
Suzanne Kelley
Tamara Cohn
Therese Engelmann
Tom McFarlane
Tom Rundle
Trish DeVore
Vip Short
Wareen Kasow
Wesley Lachman

Statements of the Center's financial summaries are available on the CSS website:

<http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org/index.php/about/finances.html>

LIBRARY CORNER

Please note the **NEW Library hours!**
2nd & 4th Sundays: 1-3:30 pm
Tuesdays: 6-8 pm

More samples from our great offerings!

**Master of the Three Ways:
Reflections of a Chinese Sage on Living a Satisfying Life**
by Hung Ying-ming (Zicheng Hong)

Our ears forever hear things distasteful to them. Our mind is forever filled with events contrary to our desires. But such situations are exactly the whetstones for advancing our virtue, for putting our discipline into practice. If we always heard words pleasing to our ears, living this life would be just like being buried alive in poison. (p. 11)

One Arrow, One Life: Zen, Archery, and Daily Life
by Kenneth Kushner

Kushner provides some of the most clear, lucid prose I (Wesley) have ever read. The book is simplicity itself to read. Here is a favorite passage: "Time cannot be recaptured. Once a moment is gone, it cannot be repeated." He urges that we "pay full attention to each instant, to every activity no matter how trivial it might seem." He advises us to do each action as if it were the only action we will do on earth.

**The Diamond in Your Pocket:
Discovering Your True Radiance**
by Gangaji

This is a highly-recommend book about the practice of self-inquiry. In very simple language and short chapters, (each of which could be used as a practice), Gangaji delivers the truth of who you are and all the obstacles that we create to obscure that truth. With crystal clarity and deep insight the seeker is led to find for him/herself the truth of their own being. Of the many spiritual books that I have read over the last 25 years, I found this one especially speaking to the part of me that has been aware of something beyond my conscious understanding and yet the source of all.

Library Blog

Up-to-date and archived reviews of CSS library books
<http://centerforsacredscienceslibrary.blogspot.com>

Friendly Review-writing Instructions
and link to the form

<http://centerforsacredsciences.org/index.php/Library/library-review.html>

COMMUNITY NOTES

➤ Within the larger CSS community of practitioners lies another community of artists, poets and musicians. We celebrated this creative spirit with an exhibit by these member artists. The *First Group Show* was comprised of 18 works by 12 artist members:

*Barbara Goldberg, Barbara Perrin, Carla Crow,
Jane Harrison, Ken Paul, Laura Betty, Megan Greiner,
Michael T. Williams, Nancy Miller, Niraja Lorenz,
Peggy Prentice, and Robin Bundy*

Last November–December, the walls of the Center were graced with an impressive array of paintings, drawings, digital media, photography, glass mosaic, inspirational quiltwork, assemblage and prints.

Everyone really enjoyed the art, and we all look forward to this first show being followed by an endless expression our flowing of Divine Consciousness.



Ghost Riders

Following the Path of the Mystics Before Us
watercolor by Megan Greiner

➤ Remember our **Soup Dinner Fundraiser** at the Center on Sunday, Jan. 31, from 6-9 pm **Bottomless bowl of soup and accoutrements!** Buy tickets at Sunday talks and study groups. All proceeds go to the CSS Building Fund.



Centerpiece (from Light of Truth Party)
by Jane Harrison

➤ Don't forget this easy way to support the Center: **Do all your Amazon shopping here!**
<http://www.amazon.com/exec/obidos/redirect-home/centerforsacr-20>

We must make good use of this life for the time that we have left,
This brief flash of light... like the sun appearing through the clouds.

– Kalu Rinpoche

“How can one wish to hold for long the setting sun?”

from the I Ching’s Commentary on Hexagram 31:

Li – The Clinging (Nine in the Third Place)

Quote from Advice from a Yogi:

Listen, all you fortunate yogis here in Dingri...

Just as tattered clothes cannot be made like new,
a fatal illness can’t be healed by drugs or doctors.

All people on this earth must surely leave.

Just as rivers all run to the ocean,

living beings are bound for the same place.

Like a bird that flies off from a treetop,

I cannot stay long, I must move on.

If you waste this life and leave it empty-handed,

You won’t easily find a human birth again.

Strive with body, speech, and mind at Dharma.

It’s by far the best thing you can do, people of Dingri.

Death Awareness Precept

To honestly and fearlessly recognize
the transitory nature of this human body,
and allow the certainty of my own death
to permeate my heart and mind.

— the Barbara Dewey version

Come on sweetheart,
let’s adore one another
before there is no more
of you and me.

— Rumi

CONTACT THE CENTER

Phone #: (541) 345-0102

Website: www.CenterForSacredSciences.org

Mailing Address: 1430 Willamette St., #164
Eugene, OR 97401-4049

Meeting Address: 5440 Saratoga St.
Eugene, OR 97405

MISSIONS AND PROGRAMS

The CENTER FOR SACRED SCIENCES is dedicated to the study, practice, and dissemination of the spiritual teachings of the mystics, saints, and sages of the major religious traditions. The Center endeavors to present these teachings in forms appropriate to our contemporary scientific culture. The Center also works to create and disseminate a sacred worldview which expresses the compatibility between universal mystical truths and the evidence of modern science.

Among the Center’s ongoing events are Sunday public services, with meditations and talks given by the Center’s spiritual teachers; monthly Sunday video presentations; and —for committed spiritual seekers— weekly practitioners groups, and monthly and semi-annual meditation retreats.

The Center also maintains an extensive lending library of

books, audios, videos, and periodicals covering spiritual, psychological, philosophical, and scientific subjects. In addition, the Center provides a website containing a great deal of information and resources related to the teachings of the world’s mystics, the universality of mystical truth, and the relationship between science and mysticism. The Center publishes this newsletter providing community news, upcoming programs, book reviews, and other contributions and resources related to the Center’s mission.

The CENTER FOR SACRED SCIENCES is a non-profit, tax-exempt church based in Eugene, Oregon, USA. We rely chiefly on volunteer labor to support our programs, and on public donations and membership pledges to meet our operating expenses. Our spiritual teachers give their teachings freely as a labor of love, and receive no financial compensation from the Center.

CENTER COMMUNITY NEWS is published three times a year. Submissions, comments, and inquiries should be sent to: newsletter@centerforsacredsciences.org, or mailed to CENTER FOR SACRED SCIENCES, Attn: Newsletter Editor, 1430 Willamette St., #164, Eugene, OR 97401-4049. To update or change your subscription preferences, please visit our website and select the subscription form under the Publications Menu.

CSS Calendar: January 2016 – May 2016

Please check the website for the most updated schedule information:
<http://centerforsacredsciences.org/calendar.htm>

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Public Talk 11 am-1 pm Video on 1 st Sundays Library open 1-3:30 pm 2 nd & 4 th Sundays	Practitioners Group (Matt) 7-8:30 pm	Metta Circle 10-11:30 Practitioners Group (Todd) 3-4:30 pm Practitioners Group (Fred) 7-8:30 pm Library open 6:00-8:00 pm	Foundation Studies (Todd) 7-8:30 pm Community Nights Jan 27 & March 30	Book Club 1 st Thursdays 2:30-3:30 pm Sacred Chanting 7-8:30 pm (every 2 nd Thursday of the month)		Full-day Meditation 10:00 am – 2:30 pm 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm January 2 (Tom) February 6 (Fred) March 5 (Annie) April 2 (Rich) May 7 (Fred)

Schedule Notes

- There are no regular practitioner group classes on the weeks of Community nights: January 27 and March 30 .
- All CSS activities will be suspended from March 21-27 for the Spring break, and from April 1-15 for the Spring retreat.
- All classes and meetings to be held at the Saratoga address unless otherwise specified.

Sunday Videos planned for this calendar period:

JANUARY 3 — Merton: A Film Biography

A comprehensive documentary about Thomas Merton, the famous 20th century Christian mystic and monk who reached out to bridge the gap between Christianity and other faiths. [dvd-0180, 57 min]

FEBRUARY 7 — Old Plum Mountain: The Berkeley Zen Center

This video tells the story of the Zen Center, “Old Plum Mountain,” founded by the late Suzuki Roshi, through the eyes of its members whose lives were dramatically changed by the practice of Zazen. [dvd-0738, 65 min]

MARCH 6 — Nisargadatta Maharaj: Awaken to the Eternal

Filmed in Bombay, India, this documentary contains rare footage of the great

Hindu sage who talks about the obstacles keeping us from Realizing our true Self. [dvd-0262, 59 min]

APRIL 3 — The Taoist and the Activist

In this video, Bokara Legendre hosts a rollicking discussion over lunch with famed environmental activist, Julia Butterfly Hill, and Taoist teacher, Dr. Benjamin Tong. [dvd-0084, 39 min]

MAY 1 — Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan

This video gives us a series of intimate glimpses into the life of Nusrat Fatah Ali Khan, the Pakistani Sufi singer whose remarkable spiritual music has moved Eastern and Western audiences alike. [dvd-0119, 1 hr]

Final Retreat Images

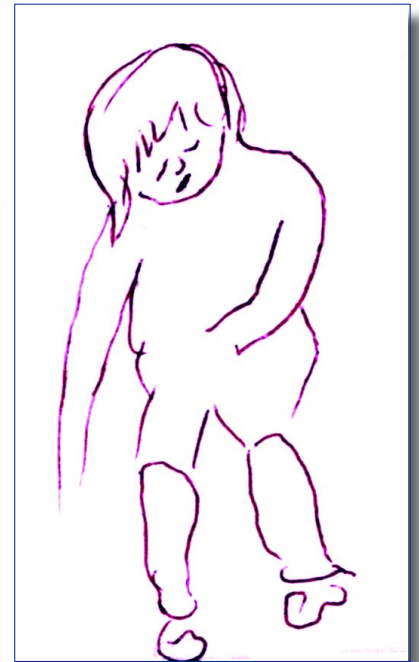
Betty Vail's Cartoon Truths



Retreat: Day 1



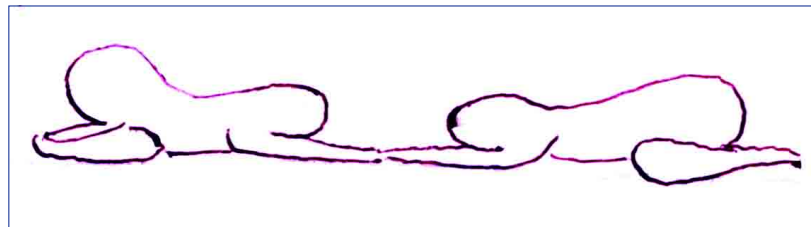
Archer



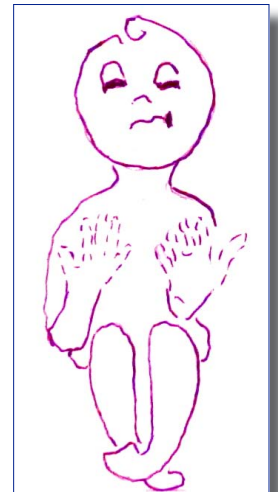
Retreat: Day 2



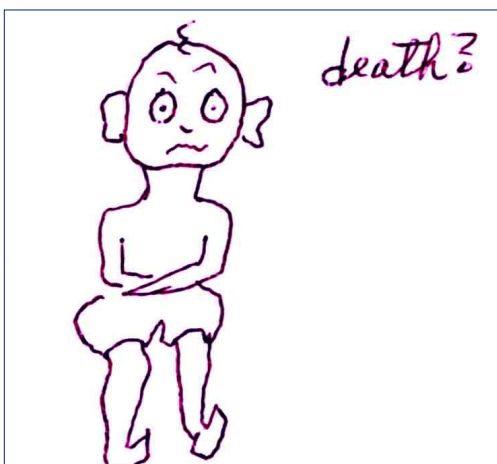
Emotions



Surrender to the Divine



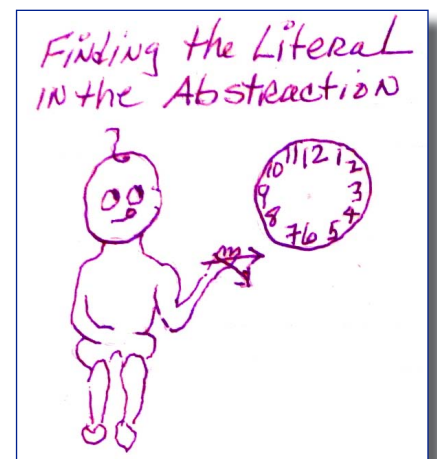
There is no Hand



Death



In Search of Self



In Search of Time

Final Retreat Images

Mark Hurwit's *Walk through Impermanence*

