



Newsletter of the Center for Sacred Sciences

2016 Spring Retreat — Opening to Certainty



- 3rd row:** Liba Staff, Jay McCandless, Susan Hopkins, Tom Hopkins, Marijke McCandless, Hal Dillon, Sandy Itzkowitz, Lorrain Boose, Betty Dahnke, Barbara Perrin, Earl Strumpell, Mary Huse, Rich Holloway, Bev Forster, Mike Glinsky, Laura Betty
- 2nd row:** Raymond Blalock, Richard Aherns, Elizabeth Midwinter, David Mason, Trish Devore, Ellie Parsons, Todd Corbett, Sharry Lachman, Clivonne Corbett, Nancy Miller, Dagmar Maston, Mark Hurwit
- Front row:** Britt Martin, Jim Zajac, Joyce Settlemeyer, Katherine Hamer, Linda Wiley

This past April, Todd led a large and enthusiastic group on a short-but-sweet journey into our deepest selves. A few sweet offerings from several participants follow, starting with an awesome account from Rich. Enjoy!



Dismantled— A Spring Retreat Offering

by Rich Holloway

I came to the retreat as a Distance Studies student for several years now, and had gone to the 2012 Fall Retreat at Cloud Mountain. As many do, I went from full-throttle in the world of a householder into the retreat, and given that I was in charge of a major project at work that had just finished, and had just separated from my wife of 29 years, and have a busy family life with 4 kids, this was very much like going from 90 miles-an-hour into a wall of.... Silence. Stillness. No fidgeting. Be here now, and stop planning and worrying and optimizing.

— concluded on page 2

—*Dismantled*, continued from page 1

The first day was excruciating. Then, after a while, I gave myself permission to fidget, to take my time and come into stillness, and by the evening session on Monday, I was feeling like I could sit in my own skin more easily. And then Todd skillfully guided us to a study of impermanence, and hanging out in the space between the out-breath and the next in-breath. And in that space I felt, saw, became The Void, and all of the busyness and constructs and worries of the last nine months came down like a house of cards. I ended the session sobbing quietly in my chair, hoping that others wouldn't be worried or disrupted from their practice and their solitude, and sure that this was what I had come for.

I have been working for years with a teacher here in North Carolina (who is also our marriage counselor), and his emphasis is celebrating manifestation in all its forms, releasing judgment, affirming our own divine ability to create our own experience, and take ownership of all that happens as our own creation at some level of being (the everyday, conscious stuff is created by the sense of 'I', and the other creations that look like they come from outside of 'me' are created by deeper layers of being... all the way down to the Unmanifested). This has been a wonderful teaching for me, and extremely helpful in dealing with the pain and guilt that can arise in relationships. By taking ownership of all that happens (at some level of being),

I have the opportunity to explore what I/Consciousness has been longing to experience in creating that. There are no victims/victimizers; it's all a learning and a divine exploration. But that said, I was also pursuing the Distance Studies course and trying to figure out how these two teachings intertwine.

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As the house of cards came down, I saw how the teachings intertwine in the Buddhist Heart Sutra: "Form is Void and Void is Form." I had been studying this divinity of form, which is a great truth, and its companion great truth is impermanence. It was as if Shiva the Destroyer was on the other side of my ecstatic creation, devouring everything as fast as it was created. All that I loved, all that I had labored over, melted into and was devoured by Shiva—which was nothing other than This, nothing other than Impermanence, the yang side of the coin. The circle was complete, the teachings were unified, and I was breaking down left and right with wonder, sadness, and release.

So I went to Todd. He is an amazing teacher, who guided me to "keep falling down the hole" and allowing the house of cards to fall. When attachments to the understanding arise, he said, "Let them... they just want to be seen. Appreciate the journey." And in this, I could find joy in the forms even as, and especially because, they change and disappear. (If they didn't, we wouldn't be able to see them.)

After this, I felt the experience and the seeing slip behind a veil again—I knew what I had felt was real, but it seemed distant. Todd's advice was, "Just hang out in that space and let it be; it isn't your will that creates this." And in this I was reminded of the Rumi line, "Whoever brought me here will have to take me home."

The next morning, having coffee in silence, I had a conversation with this inner voice of wisdom that has been appearing in me for the last seven years or so, about waiting for Grace. The answer came that God and Grace and I are not separate—the only thing keeping 'me' from Union is whatever I am creating that's holding me back. And when I asked what that was, the answer was 'fairness'—that it didn't seem fair for me to be united with God when so many others have sought for so long and aren't. And the answer that came in response to that thought was that they're not separate, either; they are each exactly where they deeply want to be and have stories and being way beyond what I can see from here. My job is to be 'me' and do my journey. And with this insight I don't feel like I have anything holding me back; whatever keeps me from seeing is something I'm choosing, and all is well. — And it's true even when I don't see it.

That sense of being dismantled lasted for days after I returned home, even through family activities, work, and catching an unpleasant stomach bug. This journey goes on, and while I feel that 'post-retreat buzz' much less now, the lessons from the retreat have taken root in my day-to-day experience, and I am very much at home with the feeling that this journey is my creation, and everything is unfolding as it should. ♦

Lotus in a Hefty Bag

Hiromi shares her “Street Retreat”

(Community talk on Sunday, May 22, 2016)

Editors Note: Dressed for the talk as she was on the street—in rough, “men’s” clothing, her hair braided into pigtails—Hiromi Sieradski talked about her experience, her practice, in an honest, heart-felt way. Many of us felt a deep appreciation for not only the way she shared about the experience itself, but what she learned from it.

What’s printed here has been greatly shortened and edited from the original transcript. If you feel moved by the testimony and would like to read the longer, lightly-edited but much more complete version, click [here](#).

Thank you so much for being here this morning. I am so grateful for all the personal and financial support that you provided. To me, it’s a perfect example of interconnectedness, and I wouldn’t be here otherwise to talk about these experiences.

So what is a Street Retreat? They call it a “plunge,” because we were out on the street where things are unpredictable and it’s intense. But this is a *bearing witness* retreat founded over 20 years ago by Roshi Bernie Glassman, who is a student of Zen Master Taizan Maezumi. They’ve done these in many countries around the world. My teacher, Roshi Joan Halifax is a student of Bernie Glassman, and founded the Upayua Zen Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I graduated from their Buddhist chaplaincy program last March, and Joshin, the director of the chaplaincy program, was recently authorized to run the Street Retreat. When I excitedly told Matt, he was, like, “What? You’re going to be on the street? I don’t think so.” Convincing Matt was the hardest part of the retreat. Finally he agreed, because he realized I was not going to give up.

I fell in love with Bernie’s work ten years ago, but it was Andrea who introduced me to the Uppaya Zen Center. Since I was doing hospice already, I decided to enroll in their Being with the Dying program. Later, my decision to apply to their Chaplaincy program began my relationship with Uppaya, Bernie and Roshi Joan, and my study under Joshin. I feel grateful for everything that led me to this path.

Eight of us (five men, and three women) went to Albuquerque for this retreat. Everyone goes on the street with no money, no jewelry, not even a wedding ring. I realized how interesting it is, not to have a ring... how attached I am to this particular identity. That, and no wallet, no stainless steel water bottle... just myself and

what I could wear. I went in Matt’s wool shirt that I shrunk. (It felt like I was guarded by Matt and he’d be with me since he was so concerned about safety.) And my Hefty bag. I love Hefty bags! And duct tape... I used it for everything.



That’s all we were allowed to take with us. I put a dollar in this little pouch, but you can’t even buy coffee with a dollar, so it was kind of useless and didn’t give me the peace that I wanted. But I kept that precious dollar that I borrowed from my daughter, Nina, and all those encouraging messages that so many of you wrote for me. I carried all these with me the whole time. I spent four days on the street like this, sleeping outside. The unpredictability of the street was our teacher. We did not go to the shelter to use their beds, because they had a lack of beds already. We relied completely on the generosity of the street to take care of us. It was a time of raw intimacy, as we looked at a side of life that we hardly ever pay attention to.

While out there, we practiced three of the tenets from Bernie’s organization ZEN PEACEMAKERS. One is *Accepting the Unknown*, by not having a fixed idea about things or people; second is *Bearing Witness to joy and suffering in the universe*; third is *Compassionate Action*, which arises from the first two. But during this retreat we modified compassionate action to “healing myself first, then humanity, then all creation.” This was our practice. We also each assembled a mala; putting together these beads, and doing begging practice, was part of the preparation for the retreat. Each bead represented a person who sponsored me, and the whole string of beads represents this sangha; so I carried you with me at all times.

During the actual retreat, we started each morning with sitting meditation, followed by reciting a daily reflection (part of a package we carried with us). Then we did the chanting and precepts (which were typed up for us to carry). So we began each day this way, to recall our intentions of why we were there. — *continued on page 5*

More Retreat Gifts

Ellie Parsons loving Thich Nath Hanh

I experience the breathing,
I experience the sitting.
I invite the Buddha to the breathing,
I invite the Buddha to the sitting.
I don't have to breathe.
The Buddha is doing the breathing.
I don't have to sit.
The Buddha is doing the sitting.
I enjoy the breathing; I enjoy the sitting.
The Buddha is the breathing.
The Buddha is the sitting.
I am the breathing; I am the sitting.
There is only the breathing.
There is only the sitting.
There is no breather.
There is no sitter.
Peace is there during breathing.
Happiness is there during sitting.
Peace is the breathing.
Happiness is breathing itself.



They're Already Here

by Katherine Hamer

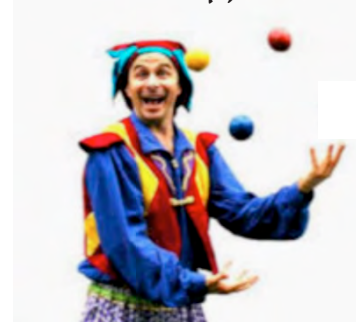


From the porch I spot a man
Walking down the road.

Juggling!

One yellow ball up,
Followed by a blue,
Then a red.

yellowblueredstepyellowbluered
stepyellowblueredstepyellowbluered



Seamless stillness in motion
Flowing into one another,
Only heels and toes are
dropped.

As he walks on in perfect
Serene Silence,
And disappears.

We did not take the bus. We walked everywhere, whether it was raining or not. Bernie calls this *aimless meandering*, and it was amazing. I got to really look at things I never usually do. We also had a Zen Center liturgy called the *Gate of Sweet Nectar*, a ceremony for feeding the hungry ghosts.

“This liturgy invites all suffering spirits into the mandala of our practice. It is about serving all beings, not separating ourselves from suffering, our own or others. And then feeding the hungry spirits of suffering, both inner and outer, in order to bring them to peace. We invited the five great Buddhas to be present as we open our lives to the truth of suffering. Coming to terms, now, with the reality of suffering arising from greed, hatred and delusion, we are enabled to fulfill our fundamental vows, serving all beings who are suffering.”

At the end of the day, we recited the *Transfer of Merit*, and renewed our vows before falling asleep. This was not in a cushy bed, but, in my case, it was beloved some cardboard saved my back. And the Hefty garbage bag! Having even just this amount of insulation around me was life-saving; it kept me toasty all night and, sleeping three nights under the entrance to the appliance store, I was so grateful!

Here are the main five things I learned from the Street Retreat. The first is about *bearing witness*. One man who did a Street Retreat at Auschwitz said something that really resonated with me:

“You can see what you’ve seen and never be a witness. You can see the whole world, and never have witnessed anything. Only when what you see becomes significant to someone (or yourself) do you become a witness.”

I witnessed the concerns of my family and friends arising— like, are we going to be safe? I was fine until everyone started asking me about my safety. I knew I wasn’t going to be a quitter, but still had to watch myself. And what I learned was to drop my expectations and my thoughts. Simply just go and do what I’m meant to, starting now: bear witness!

I found cardboard, a garbage bag, a water bottle. Simple things. Just being able to be inside seemed like a palace. You have everything— a bathroom, drinks. Just being inside means so much to me now... I’ve never felt this much delight in everything I did. Everything I needed to find was right there. It was just profound. Just being plain, basically nothing. I didn’t even use my dollar. I found everything. I was everything. It was very humbling.

Here’s one that may seem silly but... we were not allowed to wash our hair for five days before the retreat. I knew when I got to Uppaya, I’d see a lot of people and would hug them with greasy hair! I really wasn’t looking forward to that, but then realized, “This is an adventure. I get to be on the street!” Then those other kinds of thoughts started falling away. That was an important shift, and my fear started diminishing.

The second part of what I learned was *innate compassion*. I cannot emphasize enough how everybody I met was kind. They kind of looked a little grouchy and rough, and I was a little scared. So I’d say, “Good morning,” and they’d look a little nervous. But then they’d totally smile and say, “Good morning. How are you?” I was shocked. It didn’t matter who they were, they’d be so kind... telling me where to go next, where to go to get a toothbrush and toothpaste. (We weren’t allowed to take that either!) Everything. Being on the street, I was amazed to see —when we dropped our judgments, prejudices and ideas, and were just ourselves— that the street continued to give. And we just received. It was all a very heart-opening practice.

The third thing I learned was *oneness, interconnectedness*. I’d already started to feel that, because your interest and support helped make it possible for me to go. It seemed like the story of Indra’s Net— this immense net extending through all space and time, with shiny poles reflecting every person and event, but each of these also contains the whole net! Well, I see it that way... I am also part of Indra’s net, just being part of this beautiful circle! So what we do, large or small, really counts... it really makes a difference in this universe.

Part of doing the Street Retreat was learning to make use of everything. Nothing was trash. I found myself delighting in everything. I started out knowing we weren’t supposed to take a stainless steel water bottle, but then what? Water bottles were everywhere; just go check the trash. I got to experience dumpster diving. I found cardboard, a garbage bag, a water

COMMUNITY NOTES

(Notices in this section are not official CSS events, but are included here as a service to our community.)

- **Ch-ch-ch-changes:** Heather Howard has recently retired from the Event Coordinator position. We thank her for her presence and doing a great job! Hiromi Sieradski will be taking over, no doubt with equal devotion. Please don't hesitate to let them know how much you appreciate their service to the community.
- **Note about a New Book by Mariah McKenzie (aka Marijke)**
More~ Journey to Mystical Union Through the Sacred and the Profane, a spiritual memoir about Jay and Marijke's journey (culminating with their first CSS retreat at the Great Space Center) was [released recently](#). (Fair Warning: It covers some tough territory and is not rated PG.) She's also posted a new blog called [Spiritual Memoirs: The Truth is Out there!](#), including a long list of her favorite spiritual memoirs and autobiographies. Marijke can be reached [here](#), and Mariah has "her own" [FaceBook writer's page](#), too.
- **Make Bibs, Not Bombs!!!** — All who are interested are invited to create something needed (in this case, clothing protectors) for folks in need (i.e. memory care residents). Supplies include fabric, patterns, a sewing machine and iron... just bring your presence and creativity! *No prior sewing experience needed* (but a machine, fabric or ideas are welcome)! For more info, write Megan Greiner at <megan@efn.org>.

—*Street Retreat, continued from page 5*

bottle. Simple things. Just being able to be inside seemed like a palace. You have everything... a bathroom, drinks. Just being inside means so much to me now, because it was cold. There were windstorms, we got rained on. But I got to use it, and just put everything in my Hefty bag, so it all stayed dry. How great is that!

I've never felt this much delight in everything I did. Everything I needed to find was right there. It was just profound. Just being plain, basically nothing. I didn't even use my dollar. I found everything. I *was* everything. It was very humbling, and I felt I was just part of Indra's Net with all the homeless, and all these lovely people who gave us a free sandwiches from Subway. It was just wonderful.

The fourth thing I learned was *gratitude for meditation*. The street can be very tense. We got harassed a bit, and this practice really saved me. I felt so grateful to be able to come to the park and sit together and ground ourselves. We'd sit first, then do the counsel format (a Quaker tradition), forming a circle and sharing what was alive in us. And we'd do this throughout the day. It was really helpful for us to come back to our body, and I really want to emphasize how much it helped me to see what is... just being there, in that moment. This meditation practice really helped us gather our attention, recall our intentions, and think about what will serve for what we are doing. Only then would we move on to engaging action.

Lastly, I learned about the *capacity to feel*. Going through this week really made me realize how we all feel isolated and lonely. Even though we might have the perfect house, perfect family... everything is just right there, but we just don't feel that! I just never realized, for the homeless, how important simple hugs are, or just saying hello or how are you... do you want my muffin? I felt so much healing in such simple interactions with each person that I met. I will never look at homeless people the same way, because I now have a taste of what it's like.

And this experience of healing wasn't just my experience, it was a healing of our society as a whole. It's really important work, which helped me realize that everything we do influences the universe. I experienced that what I would call "they" or "others" are ME... those homeless people became me. Even though I was only there for four days, it was so easy to disregard—even disrespect—myself, and not take care of myself. Bringing this practice into the world really made a difference!

In a nutshell, I feel like I got a taste of what Buddhists use in their teaching, the Three Gates of Liberation: No Self, No Harm, No Goal. I didn't have any specific goal, I wanted to just bear witness. Even just those four days were so liberating. I had such a scarcity mind... that I'm not going to have enough money, or make it as a chaplain or, you know, whatever. But I felt good. I was so grateful. Being zero is so liberating. I still can't believe it! ❖

The Artwork of Michael T. Williams



For the last many months, we have all been gifted with a stunning photography exhibit of selections by artist and CSS-member Michael Williams. With a skilled eye that captures a landscape and renders it divine, Michael's work illustrates his deep connection to nature. If you haven't "taken a moment" to enjoy his offerings, you are missing something special. (Here are pictures from Hosmer Lake, in Oregon.)

Michael has been a photographer almost since day one (1944). For his 8th birthday, he asked for a camera. Glada Cobb, Michael's maternal grandmother and an early photographic influence, presented Michael with an Ansco-Matic 620 roll film box camera. Michael credits the eye-level finder feature with influencing his creative eye. He also sites the iconic Edward Weston as a primary photocreative influence.

Michael is a communicator, skilled in photography, teaching and speaking. (He is also an avid fisherman, and ties his own expert lures.) Find out more at his website— <http://www.mtwilliamsflyfish.com>



Simplify!

by Henry David Thoreau (from "Walden")

“...We live meanly, like ants; though the fable tells us that we were long ago changed into men; like pygmies we fight with cranes; it is error upon error, and clout upon clout, and our best virtue has for its occasions a superfluous and evitable wretchedness. Our life is frittered away by detail. An honest man has hardly need to count more than his ten fingers, or in extreme cases he may add his ten toes, and lump the rest. Simplicity, simplicity, simplicity! I say, let your affairs be as two or three, and not a hundred or a thousand; instead of a million, count half a dozen, and keep your accounts on your thumbnail. In the midst of this chopping sea of civilized life, such are the clouds and storms and quicksands and thousand-and-one items to be allowed for, that a man has to live, if he would not founder and go to the bottom and not make his port at all, by dead reckoning; and he must be a great calculator indeed who succeeds. Simplify, simplify.”

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A contemplative view
Great Ox and the Wise Man
by Wesley Lachman

Before the townspeople had risen for the day, Fox and Rabbit were sitting off to one side of the town circle. They were watching the king's wise man approach Great Ox. Many came to the ox with their questions or problems. The great one would always be sitting somewhere in the circle, except when he went off for a few days. No one ever saw where he went, and no one saw him return.

In a way it was strange that so many came to him for advice, for he never spoke a word to anyone. Yet there were many who testified that after being with Ox, they were helped to find their way.

Fox thought back to when he himself had gone to Great Ox. His father had been shot by a hunter, and Fox was suddenly responsible for a family of nine. He had no sense of what he could do. So he came to Ox and just sat with him, knowing that the great one would not speak directly. First Fox confided his worries to Ox and waited. Nothing happened for a long while, his questions just hung in the air. But very slowly Fox's questions began to be drowned by the silence. They faded more and more and finally disappeared altogether into the vast, deep silence of Ox.

Then Fox began to tremble. For he had begun to see that Great Ox himself was silence. It seemed to radiate from him in an enveloping cloud. That was scary enough. But now, as his thoughts almost disappeared, Fox could see that he too was basically silence. Can silence ever be afraid of anything, Fox wondered? Can anything overcome silence? Could anything be more alert to what might be done for his family, than silence?



Illustration from **The Whisper**, by Pamela Zagarenski [www.sacredbee.com]

The king's wise man was always full of thoughts. Rabbit and Fox could almost see them buzzing out of his turban. Rabbit had never had a question as big as his fear of Great Ox. So he would not approach Ox, but he had heard Fox's story and believed his friend. He was a good-natured little fellow, and so he prayed quietly that the man would begin to listen instead of think and talk.

Apparently it was a very important question, for the man continued through the heat of the day, getting red in the face, occasionally shouting, gesturing wildly before the impassive head of the great one. Finally, worn out from his thoughts, words and worries, the wise man prostrated himself in the shade of Great Ox, and the thoughts pouring out of his turban began to taper off.

He remained thus far into the night. Rabbit curled up and slept next to Fox, who was used to sitting and watching at night. Now Fox could hear a soft weeping sound from the man. He could also sense the deep silence of Great Ox. Finally, before dawn began to show itself, the wise man slowly arose, made a bow to Great Ox, and tried—unsuccessfully—to hug him. Then he walked slowly across the town circle, toward the castle. With a knowing smile, Fox looked down at his sleeping friend. ◆

LIBRARY CORNER

Please note the Library hours:

2nd & 4th Sundays: 1-3:30 pm / Tuesdays: 6-8 pm

Library Reviews of some of our great offerings!

Find up-to-date and archived book reviews at <http://centerforsacredscienceslibrary.blogspot.com>

Buddha

by Karen Armstrong

Religious scholar Karen Armstrong has created a compelling account of the life, spiritual inquiry, and teachings of the Buddha. Reaching back into the oldest Pali texts, fleshed out by later Sanskrit writings, she places his life in historical, political, cultural, and geographic context.

This lively and engaging book should appeal to anyone interested in the spiritual path or in learning more about the origins of Buddhism.

Here's what Armstrong has to say in her introduction:

“The story of Gotama has particular relevance for our own period. We too are living in a period of transition and change... as was North India during the sixth and fifth centuries B.C.E. Like the people of North India, we are finding that the traditional ways of experiencing the sacred... is either difficult or impossible. As a result, a void has been an essential part of the modern experience. ...Those who have become weary of the intolerance of some forms of institutional religiosity will also welcome the Buddha's emphasis on compassion and loving-kindness.”

— Review (excerpt) by Camilla Bayliss

Invitation to Awaken: Embracing Our Natural State of Presence

by Tony Parsons

This book offers spiritual teachings from the perspective of absolute nondualism. The author is a contemporary Western teacher from the UK, and the content is based on recordings of his talks and Q&A sessions with retreat attendees on four different occasions. His description of the Absolute Nature of Reality permeates his teachings, and his descriptions of such are clear, consistent and occasionally interlaced with humor.

Tony Parsons' teachings are considered radical in some circles, as he doesn't strongly promote traditional practices like meditation or prayer. However, his is a timeless, simple message... that we already are what we seek.

“You never had a life. You are life.” (p. 34)

— Review (excerpt) by Mona Bronson

Gratefulness and the Heart of Prayer

by Brother David Steindl-Rast

In his friendly, conversational style, Brother David Steindl-Rast takes everyday experiences such as surprise, restlessness, and leisure, and makes them transparent to a spiritual path. True to his title, he demonstrates that gratefulness is the heart not only of prayer, but indeed of the entire path: “To bless whatever there is, and for no other reason but simply because it is — that is our *raison d'être*, that is what we are made for as human beings.” (p.81) “Gratefulness says it all . . . Can the spiritual life be that simple? Yes. . . .” (p. 83)

Simply, but profoundly, Steindl-Rast uses the remaining majority of the book to uncover the gratefulness implicit in three of the central concepts of Christianity: faith, hope, and love. Here is an illustration from the Chapter on love: “Contemplation in action, a way of coming to know God's love from within by acting it out.” (p. 179) Those who are drawn to find the deeper meanings of words that we use, perhaps too easily and unknowingly, will find this a rich book indeed.

— Review (excerpt) by Wesley Lachman

Mindful Teaching and Teaching Mindfulness: A Guide for Anyone Who Teaches Anything

by Deborah Schoeberlein David with Suki Sheth

“Master teachers are mindful teachers, aware of themselves and attuned to their students. Mindful teaching nurtures a learning community in which students flourish academically, emotionally, and socially— and teachers thrive professionally and personally. Teaching mindfulness directly to students augments the effects of the teacher's presence by coaching youth to exercise simple, practical, and universal attention skills themselves...”

Mindfulness is a conscious, purposeful way of tuning in to what's happening in and around us. This... paying attention and honing awareness improves mental focus and academic performance. It also strengthens skills that contribute to emotional balance. The best of our human qualities, including the capacity for kindness, empathy, compassion and support, are supported by mindfulness.” (p. 1-2)

— Submitted by Jennifer Knight



Editor's recollection of a magical day

On May 16, we head out into the world... boldly, yet carefully. Megan's birthday parties are well-known for their mysteries and surprises, and no one wanted to upset the locals or give CSS a bad name. Okay, sure, it got loud and a little wild out there, until someone suggested that we "dress the part, and try to fit in." So we adorned the perfect ensembles for Eugene's Rose Garden. So surreptitious, I don't think anyone even noticed we were there!

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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: September 2016 – January 2017s

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 (Todd) 3-4:30 pm Practitioners Group (Fred) 7-8:30 pm * <i>subject to change</i> * Library open 6:00-8:00 pm (except 5th Tuesdays)	Foundation Studies (Matt) 7-8:30 pm Community Nights Sept. 28 & January 25	Book Club 1 st Thursdays 2:30-3:30 pm		Full-day Meditation 10:00 am – 12:30 pm 1:30 pm – 4:00 pm October 1 (Fred) November 5 (Annie) December 3 (Todd) January 7 (Tom) Light of Love Celebration December 17

Schedule Notes

- There are no regular practitioner group classes on the weeks of Community nights: September 28 and January 25.
- All CSS activities will be suspended October 9-18 for the Fall retreat, November 21-27 for the Thanksgiving holidays, and December 19-31 for the year end holidays.
- All classes and meetings to be held at the Saratoga address unless otherwise specified.

Sunday Videos planned for this calendar period:

OCTOBER 2 — *Mahatma Gandhi: Pilgrim of Peace*

Using actual historical footage, this video biography tells the inspiring story of the world's most famous peace activist, Mahatma Gandhi. [dvd-0087, 50 min]

NOVEMBER 6 — *Annemarie Schimmel: Mystical Poetry in Islam*

In this videographed interview, renowned Sufi scholar, Annemarie Schimmel, discusses the role of mysticism and poetry in the Islamic tradition. [dvd-0993, 55 min]

DECEMBER 4 — *Franklin Merrell-Wolff & the Owens Valley*

A video biography of the 20th century American mystic and philosopher, Franklin Merrell-Wolff, with whom our own teacher, Joel Morwood, spent two years (1983-1985) in the high desert country of the Owens Valley on the eastern side of the Sierra Nevada. [[YouTube](#), 47 min]

JANUARY 1 — *Sacred Sleep (Vol 1 of "The Power of Dreams")*

This video explores how dreams are viewed in three different religious traditions, and includes a fascinating conversation with Tibetan Rinpoche, Tenzin Wyangal, on Bon/Buddhist dream yoga. [dvd-0978, 60 min]