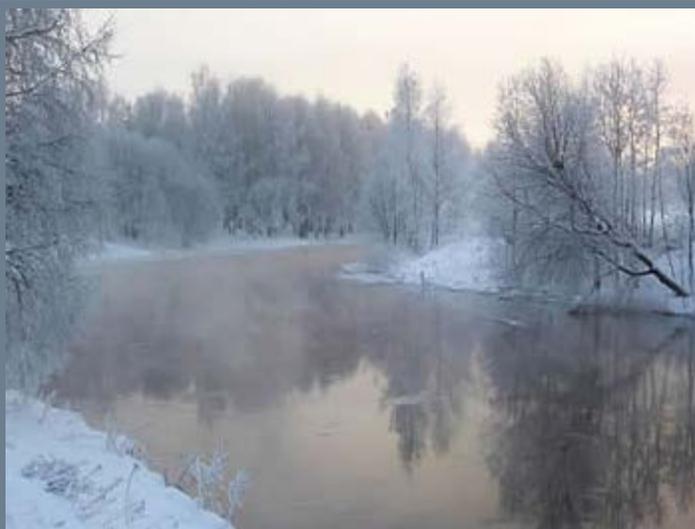


In the depths of winter
I finally learned
there was in me
an invincible summer.

~ Albert Camus



Greetings!

In this present political moment, words are being used both to inspire and to manipulate. What is a contemplative to do? Well, for an organization committed to the power of silence, we find ourselves most of the time talking, writing, speaking out. And discussing contemplative speech-what it is, what it isn't.

I learned my first contemplative practices in a monastery in Bodhi Gaya, India, a dusty village of temples and chai stands. I sat in meditation for two months in silence, watching my breath rise and fall. Thoughts arose also, and since no one else was talking to me, I found them fascinating. How smart! How creative! But little by little, as I looked more closely, I began to see that they were simply thoughts, not necessarily true. They were full of preconceptions, colored by emotions, and dependent on words, which were rarely precise. It was sad to accept; I liked my thoughts. They were, after all, *mine*. But breath by breath, I began to appreciate that the truth is even more satisfying than our thoughts and opinions about it. I had just come from studying poetry in graduate school, and now I began to see what William Carlos Williams was getting at with "The Red Wheelbarrow": so much depends/upon/a red wheel/barrow/glazed with rain/water/beside the white chickens. Simply say what is there, what is true.

As I was leaving the monastery and getting ready to talk again, I asked my friend Ram Dass for guidance. How could I speak with integrity if my thoughts were so untrustworthy? Simple," he said. "Say what you know; don't say what you don't know." *He* thought it was simple; *I* thought I might never speak again!

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Executive Director Search Update

We are searching for the Center's next Executive Director! An updated job description will be posted soon [on our website](#).

Buddhist teachings include the concept of Right Speech: It is spoken at the right time. It is spoken in truth. It is spoken affectionately. It is spoken beneficially. It is spoken with a mind of good-will. That could be a good test for the words of our presidential candidates. Bring as clear a mind as you can to them, un-pin the campaign buttons from your thoughts, and really listen. In the words of a prayer by Tibetan lama Jigme Lingpa, "At all times, and in all circumstances, may the wish to conform to conventional expectations not arise for even an instant!"

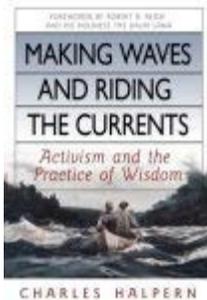
Thanks for all your generosity during the year-end fundraising appeal. That's how all the good work happens.

Peace,



Mirabai Bush
Executive Director

Recommended Reading



Making Waves and Riding the Currents: Activism and the Practice of Wisdom

by Charles Halpern

Forewords by Robert B. Reich and His Holiness the Dalai Lama

Charles Halpern, Chair of our Board of Directors, one of America's most distinguished social innovators and the founder of its first public interest law firm, has been a catalyst for launching an array of enduring institutions dedicated toward enriching human lives and our world. In *Making Waves and Riding the Currents: Activism and the Practice of Wisdom*, Halpern reflects on his distinguished career—a remarkable journey that led him from career-mindedness to a life devoted to social justice and activism. Throughout these endeavors, he sought ways to develop inner resources that complemented his cognitive and advocacy skills. This exploration led him to the conviction that what he calls "the practice of wisdom" is essential both to his own success and to our collective capacity to effectively address the challenges of the twenty-first century. *Making Waves and Riding the Currents* vividly demonstrates the life-enhancing benefits of integrating a commitment to social justice with the cultivation of wisdom.

In early 2008, Charlie will be visiting the Bay Area, New York, Boston, and Washington, DC in support of his book. Learn more at his website: CharlieHalpern.com.

The Activist's Ally

by The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

120 pages plus audio CD

\$20.00 plus shipping

The Center's newest publication, *The Activist's Ally: Contemplative*



Tools for Social Change, is a resource manual for social justice activists seeking to bring contemplative practice into their lives, communities and workplaces. Social justice workers will find this a valuable resource for personal transformation. It provides tools and techniques for both individual and group practice. Copies are available for purchase in our online store.



Contemplation in Action: A Report on the Academic Fellows' Meeting

by Piper Murray
[available as a free .pdf file](#)

In October 2007 a group of Contemplative Practice Fellowship recipients, along with staff from the Center and the Fetzer Institute, came together for three days of reflection and discussion on contemplative education. This report is an overview of some of the main themes of the weekend, with specific examples of how the participants are working to address challenges in their own classrooms and curricula.

Upcoming Events



[Mindfulness as a Foundation for Teaching and Learning](#)

February 9, 2008
Sidwell Friends School, Washington, DC

Mindfulness-based Education (MBE), a powerful tool to decrease stress, deepen learning, enhance academic performance, and promote emotional and social well-being, is increasingly recognized as essential for students, educators, and parents. This one-day conference brings together leaders in the field for workshops and panel presentations.



[Retreat for Academics](#)

March 6 - 9, 2008
Menla Mountain Retreat Center, Phoenicia, NY

Time will be spent in silence and engaged in a variety of contemplative practices, in addition to several sessions providing training in contemplative methods adapted for the classroom and discussions about the relationship of the contemplative perspective to teaching, learning, and knowing. The retreat is designed to appeal to participants with a wide range of experience in contemplative practice, from beginners to seasoned practitioners.

[Lawyer's Retreat](#)



April 2 - 6, 2008
The Angela Center, Santa Rosa, CA

This retreat will bring together members of the legal community, local legal scholars and clinicians, judges and mediators to learn and practice meditation together. We will also explore contemplative practices such as yoga, qigong and walking in nature, and discuss key questions about the connections between contemplative awareness, social justice and law.



[A Gathering of Activists and Organizers of Color](#)

April 29 - May 2, 2008
Menla Mountain Retreat Center, Phoenicia, NY

This retreat is for grassroots social change organizations committed to transforming the culture of organizing. 6-8 mentors, senior organizers and activists, will serve as allies and mentors. We encourage registrations from individuals beginning their careers in activism and organizing, ages 17-35.



Meditation Retreat with Rev. Ryumon Hilda Gutierrez Baldoquin

June 13 -15, 2008
Smith College, Northampton, MA
Save the date ~ more info TBA!



[Deep Replenishment and Connection](#)

with Lama John Makransky
July 18 - 20, 2008
Garrison Institute, Garrison, NY

The meditation practices of loving communion and presence taught in this retreat are adapted from Tibetan Buddhism to make them freshly accessible to people of all backgrounds. These practices can help us become more fully present and connect more deeply with others, so as to evoke their hidden strengths beyond the limiting judgments of society.



Meditation Retreat for Law Professionals

September 11 - 14, 2008
Menla Mountain Center, Phoenicia, NY
Save the date ~ more info TBA!

Events and Announcements from our Friends

Introduction to The Soul of Education: Helping Student Find Connection, Compassion and Character at School

Boulder, Colorado
March 7 - 9, 2008.

Based on the groundbreaking work of Rachael Kessler in her book *The Soul of Education* (2000), this two and ½ day PassageWorks intensive explores:

- The theory and practice of social and emotional learning (SEL);

- How to develop your own reflectiveness and teaching presence;
- How to help students focus and increase their motivation to learn;
- How to create caring in the classroom and develop empathy and compassion;
- Stages of group development and methods appropriate to each;
- The integration of play, ritual, stillness, expressive arts and community building.

For more information about this course and other training opportunities, visit the PassageWorks website www.passageworks.org under upcoming events, or call 303-247-0156.

Authentic Leadership in Action, Summer Institute

June 22-28, 2008
Halifax, Nova Scotia, Canada

presented by [The Shambhala Institute for Authentic Leadership](#)

Over the past seven years the Authentic Leadership Summer Institute has become a vibrant meeting-place of people, practices, and ideas engaged at the frontier of organizational and societal change. It brings together 250 - 300 forward-thinking leaders, managers and change agents of all levels from business, government, education, NGOs and civil society.

Participants will experience five days of integrated personal and professional development, including one of ten skill-building modules, daily mindfulness meditation, creative process, and small- and large-group inquiry, reflection, and dialogue. This year, module leaders include Margaret Wheatley, Adam Kahane, Sarita Chawla, Barbara Bash, Arawana Hayashi, Tom Hurley, Bill Torbert, Wendy Palmer, Toke Moeller, Victoria Castle, and others at the forefront of the quest for higher-functioning workplaces and communities.

Discounts and scholarships available.

To access the daily schedule, module descriptions, registration information, and more, call 902-425-0492 or visit the webpage: http://www.shambhalainstitute.org/2008_summer.html

New Dharma Center for Urban Peace Seeks Resident Practitioner

The Center for Urban Peace in Berkeley, CA, is looking for a Residential Practitioner to work part-time (25 hours) in exchange for room and board. All food in the house is vegetarian, vegan and fish-etarian friendly. While an additional part-time job or part-time school attendance is not prohibitive, supporting the general operations of the Center is priority for anyone living there. Commitments include weekly house meetings, shared chores, and community, sangha and organizational roles.

For more information, [visit the New Dharma website](#) or [download the .pdf flier](#).

An Invitation from the Buddhist Peace Fellowship

Do you yearn to be part of a community that shares a commitment to engage in peace and justice work with compassion? Do you see your concern for the world and your spiritual practice as inseparable?

If so, the [Buddhist Peace Fellowship](#) invites you to become a member. Our members are the source of our energy, and provide support for our Peacework, Transformative Justice Program, Youth Program, and more.

As a BPF member, you'll receive:

- A subscription to Turning Wheel, which Jack Kornfield calls "the best Buddhist journal I read." Every issue is filled with stories from grassroots spiritual activists as well as from leading socially engaged Buddhists such as Joanna Macy and Robert Aitken Roshi;
- Invitations to BPF events, conferences, and member gatherings;
- Discounts on selected products, including books, t-shirts, and more.

Most of all, being a BPF member means being a part of a community that aspires to meet suffering with compassion and to raise a collective voice for peace. Since 1978, we've been present on the frontlines of efforts to work for peace in Iraq, call for nuclear disarmament, and end the death penalty. Your membership helps to support all these efforts, and more.

Please join the thousands of people from many Buddhist and other spiritual traditions who count themselves as BPF members, including Robert Aitken Roshi, Pema Chodron, Ven. Thich Nhat Hanh, Joanna Macy, and Robert Thurman. We look forward to your partnership!

To Join, visit <https://secure.groundspring.org/dn/index.php?aid=8113>

For more information, contact:

charis@bpf.org

phone: 510-655-6169, ext 304

web: www.bpf.org

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