



Issue 2, Winter 2008

This expanded issue of the newsletter is the result of the response to a call for news to which many responded, and we're delighted to bring you reports of the thoughts, plans, and excerpts from articles that members have contributed. Since our last issue in August, the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society has been active organizing and convening many academic program events, including the Summer Contemplative Curriculum Development Session at Smith College, a meeting of the Contemplative Practice Fellows at the Fetzer Institute, and a retreat for academics at Menla Mountain, so you'll find some words about those here as well.

It seems impossible to address any audience of readers these days without making reference to the new environment we find ourselves in as a result of the election of Barack Obama—in our circle, we sense the difference that a contemplative president can have for advancing contemplative values, and feel heartened by this shift in a new direction. As journalists ponder what's behind the calm, thoughtful demeanor of the president-elect, I think many of us can recognize that some kind of practice—those ninety minutes at the gym? Basketball?—has had a role in developing the kind of transformed presence of someone who has become truly dedicated to serving others.

In this new environment, the contributions of contemplative minds and compassionate hearts should have many more opportunities for entering the public dialogue. Conditions appear favorable for offering the contemplative perspective on all the issues: health care, education, climate change, etc., and we know this Association connects many of those most qualified to offer that perspective. We look forward to hearing your reflections here and elsewhere as we go forward.

Beth Wadham
Geri DeLuca
Editors

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Upcoming Events



[Learning from Mindfulness: the 2009 Mindfulness in Education Network Conference](#)

February 6-8, 2009
Philadelphia, PA

More information, including online registration, is available at www.mindfuled.org

This weekend event begins on Friday evening with a public keynote address by Jon Kabat Zinn, founder of the University of Massachusetts Stress Reduction Program, on the ways mindfulness and meditation can support learning, personal growth, and create the foundation for stability in families and communities.

A conference for educators, counselors and administrators on Saturday includes a plenary panel with Amishi Jha, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania, Arthur Zajonc, Professor of Physics and Interdisciplinary Studies at Amherst College, and Susan Kaiser Greenland, JD and founder and director of Inner Kids. Interest group sessions will be formed around topics in early childhood to university teaching, research and personal practice.

On Sunday a full day mindfulness workshop with Jon Kabat Zinn will explore guided meditation instruction, mindfulness practice and group exercises.

Sponsored by Mindfulness in Education Network, The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, PENN Program for Stress Management and the Friends Council on Education.

For more information and to register, go to <http://www.mindfuled.org>. Philip Snyder, Executive Director and Beth Wadham, Academic Associate of The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society will be attending the conference. If you're not able to attend, Beth will be communicating to Association members via her blog in the [Association online community](#) during the conference. Visit her [profile page](#) for the inside report.



First Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference

April 24-26, 2009
Amherst College, Amherst, MA

The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education invites submission of proposals for papers or artistic presentations for its first conference to be held at Amherst College from April 24-26, 2009. The conference welcomes proposals concerning contemplative pedagogy, methodology and epistemology within and across disciplines. Submissions of proposals for panel discussions are also invited. Please send a title and an abstract of not more than 200 words for a 30 minute paper (with discussion) or performance along with name, affiliation and 50 – 100 word professional biography to beth@contemplativemind.org by March 1, 2009.

Additional information on the theme and details about the conference will be available on the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education website at www.acmhe.org.



[5th Annual Summer Session for Contemplative Curriculum Development](#)

August 9-14, 2009
Smith College, Northampton, MA
Registration opens January 2009

Summer Session Participants will devote the week to rigorous investigation, reflection, writing, and

discussion, guided by distinguished scholars and contemplative teachers who have already developed such courses. The Session aims to prepare participants to return to their classrooms with a deeper understanding of the practice of contemplative teaching and a fully developed course.

The Summer Session is designed for teachers at colleges and universities, but instructors from other types of institutions may apply.

Learn more at the [Summer Session webpage](#).



Call for Proposals: Research on Spirituality in Higher Education
Deadline: March 1, 2009

The Spirituality in Higher Education project at UCLA is now soliciting proposals from investigators who would like to conduct original research using a new and unique national longitudinal data base on undergraduates. Housed at UCLA's Higher Education Research Institute (HERI) and supported by the John Templeton Foundation, this project has assembled a data base that focuses on students' spiritual and religious development during the first three undergraduate years. This longitudinal data base, which includes 14,527 students attending 136 institutions of all types, offers a unique opportunity to study a wide range of issues relating to students' beliefs, values, and spiritual and religious life.

The purpose of this competition is to stimulate and encourage the study of students' spiritual development in higher education by engaging qualified scholars in original research that utilizes these data. Grants will be awarded to 10-15 recipients in the amount of \$10,000-15,000 each. Grants are intended to fund expenses related to research assistance, travel, and other costs associated with the research. The deadline for receipt of proposals is March 1, 2009. Notifications of awards will be made by April 15, 2009.

For further information concerning the application process and available data, please email spirit@gseis.ucla.edu or go to the website: <http://spirituality.ucla.edu/grantproposals/>.

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Global Economic Crisis: Opportunity for Transformation



Daniel Barbezat
Professor of Economics, Amherst College
2008 Contemplative Practice Fellow
(*Daniel is developing a course on Buddhist Economics to be taught at Amherst College in 2009-ed.*)

When non-sustainable systems break down, when they become so unstable that they stop, flounder and reorder, living through it can be seen as a "crisis." However, tumultuous change can also bring forth new possibilities, sometimes even transformative change.

Rather than a call for us to think of what is currently happening in the global economy as not so bad (the effects will be felt strongly by many through lost jobs, lost retirement funds, etc.), I want to point to the potentially transformative possibilities.

The first and possibly greatest one is the victory of Barack Hussein Obama as President of the United States. Perhaps the name alone is enough to suggest a transformation of what is possible in America,

especially in a post-9/11 world. Add to this that his father is Kenyan, and we have a President elect who might have been considered as unelectable. Obama's election is a clarion call for real change on just about every front: environmental policy, foreign policy, education – you name it. Although his victory can, in part, be explained by his brilliant campaign, his oratory prowess, the unpopularity of Bush, etc., a large factor in polls seems to have been the slumping economy. Obama was seen as the better candidate on the economy in just about any poll, but not favored in other areas like foreign policy or security. I don't know whether Obama would have won had the economy been soaring - certainly a victory, if possible, would have been much narrower and races in Congress would have been different, too. [Keep reading...](#)

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Sitting Still

An exhibition at the Art Museum of the University of Memphis invited viewers to experience the work of New York based artist and Contemplative Practice Fellow 2008 Anne Beffel and students from the University of Memphis and Syracuse University, where Beffel teaches Art Foundation. The exhibition ran from February 23 – April 12, 2008.

Sitting Still allowed the audience to discover different perspectives through the simple act of sitting still and observing videos of daily scenes, ranging from those that inspire awe to those that compel viewers to participate and intervene. It uses fast-paced new media communication forms such as video and Web sites, with an emphasis on slowing down.



"The great thing about these videos is that they can be shared with others," Beffel said. "My hope is that one person at a time we will build a more contemplative, connected culture – a peaceful alternative to conflict. This is a contemporary version of pen pals, using technology to share scenes from our lives."

Beffel works to reverse the common chaos of everyday life into a method that "will inspire people to stop, look, listen, and chronicle their worlds as they unfold."

She drew inspiration from a variety of sources, including her interest in the Dalai Lama and Rosa Parks. Although both individuals came from very different environments and positions in life, they drew strength and courage from stillness, which has affected the world in profound ways.

"This February marks the 48th anniversary of the sit-ins of Ronald Martin, Robert Patterson, and Mark Martin at F.W. Woolworth's luncheon counter in Greensboro, N.C., and of the Nashville sit-ins that lasted through May 1960," Beffel said. "Those were all non-violent and contemplative attempts to overcome differences, in this case to end racial segregation."



Architecture students demonstrate the design and stability of their cardboard stools, created for the exhibition. The exhibition is a collaboration among artist Anne Beffel and University of Memphis art foundation, sculpture and architecture students.

The project was initiated at the Art Museum of University of Memphis in spring 2008, and culminates in exhibitions at the Everson Museum in summer 2009 and a media exhibition at Art Museum of University of Memphis in Spring 09. Currently Syracuse University iSchool students and professors are building a database for an interactive website where artists from around the world can join in the contemplative video collaboration. The project is made possible with generous support from: Art Museum of University of Memphis; the Enitiative Fund supported by Kaufman Foundation; The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society; New York State Council for the Arts; Everson Museum; Interdisciplinary Research Group of the College of Visual and Performing Arts; iSchool of Syracuse University. [Keep reading...](#)

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Synchronous Moments

Development of a Yoga and Mindfulness Class at the University at Albany

by Claudia Ricci, Lecturer in Journalism



Now and then, the universe seems to open up and drop a miracle into our laps. But how does this happen? And why?

Early in September, one such miracle was visited on Rebecca Ossorio, a graduate student at the University at Albany, SUNY, and me, Claudia Ricci, a full-time faculty member at SUNY. For reasons that neither of us can fully explain, the two of us quite suddenly became co-teachers in a very exciting educational venture that incorporates mindfulness, yoga practice and self-reflective writing into a college curriculum. Neither of us can quite believe it's happening.

The class came together almost overnight. Actually, it came together in an afternoon.

The story begins – well, who knows exactly where Rebecca's and my journeys into mindfulness began? But the two of us met on August 6, 2008, at the Center's Contemplative Curriculum Development Session at Smith College.

Curiously, there was one graduate student attending along with the group of international profesors.

That doctoral student -- Rebecca -- happened to sit behind me at the morning lecture. That graduate student, amazingly, was from the very same University where I teach. I remember thinking, "what are the odds of that coincidence?"

Rebecca and I had a brief conversation that morning. We spoke in more depth at lunch, where we shared the table with, among others, Lydia Murdoch, a professor of history at Vassar College (where Rebecca completed her undergraduate degree ten years ago). Rebecca and Lydia explained to me how they were planning to team up in the Spring of '09 to teach a class together, one that incorporated yoga. Rebecca, who is a certified Kripalu instructor, would teach the yoga.

After lunch, we exchanged phone numbers. Rebecca and I promised each other that when we got back to SUNY Albany in September (where she is enrolled in the Education Department) we would get together to talk. She asked me if I'd be open to collaborating on a class together, and I said, "oh sure," thinking that we would probably get around to THAT class in 2011.

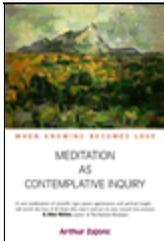
Three weeks later, as we started back to school, I got a call from Rebecca, and a few days later, she came to my office at SUNY. What happened then is quite mystifying. I mean, if I had *tried* to do it, I'm sure it wouldn't have worked!

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Recent Member Publications



Arthur Zajonc. [Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love](#). Lindisfarne Books, 2008.

Click any article title to read an excerpt.

Donald McCormick, University of Redlands. [Indoctrination, Diversity and Teaching About Spirituality and Religion in the Workplace](#). Published in *Organization Management Journal "First Person."* 2006 Vol. 3, No. 2, 77-91.

Len Fox, Professor of English, Brooklyn College, CUNY. [Teaching Mindfulness and Writing](#).

Aditya Adarkar and David Lee Keiser, Montclair State University. [The Buddha in the Classroom: Toward a Critical Spiritual Pedagogy](#).

Jonathan Rollins. [A Healthy Mind-Set](#). Excerpt from *Counseling Today*, November 2006, 14.

Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love by Arthur Zajonc

We warmly welcome the publication of a new title by Arthur Zajonc, professor of Physics at Amherst College and Academic Program Director at The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, just released by SteinerBooks. *Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love* is essential reading for leaders in the field of contemplative pedagogy, outlining an epistemology and providing many methods for a compassionate practice of knowing.

[Visit the Steiner Books website](#) to read the first chapter and learn more about this important contribution to the field of Contemplative studies.

Excerpts from "Indoctrination, Diversity and Teaching About Spirituality and Religion in the Workplace," by Donald McCormick, University of Redlands. Published in Organization Management Journal "First Person." 2006 Vol. 3, No. 2, 77-91.

The full text of the article with references is posted on the publication pages of the Association website at <http://www.acmhe.org/publications.html>.

I began teaching one of the first college courses on spirituality and religion in the workplace in 1991. The course has brought me a great deal of personal satisfaction but has also raised many pedagogical questions—the knottiest of which (and the one with the most ramifications for pedagogy in general) is teaching such a course without infringing on students' own spiritual and religious beliefs. This article examines this problem and proposes several solutions, using examples from the literature and my experience.

The first time I (almost) encroached on my students' religious sensitivities happened before I even taught a course about spirituality and religion in the workplace. I was teaching a small doctoral seminar that emphasized personal growth; two of the ten students were evangelical Christians and at the end of one class I mentioned that I planned to use guided imagery in class the next week. After class, one of the evangelical students told me that he had religious concerns about "New Age" training techniques like guided imagery. He felt that it blocked critical thinking and left its recipients far too vulnerable to suggestion. Later I asked his evangelical colleague if he shared this concern. He said yes, so I decided to do something else; I wasn't particularly invested in guided imagery and felt that the learning culture of the class would be stronger if I didn't ask the class to engage in an activity that deeply unsettled two of the students. Before my discussion with these two students, I had no idea that anyone might object to guided imagery on religious grounds; this incident made me realize that it's hard to tell what will offend our students' spiritual sensibilities. [Keep reading...](#)

Len Fox's essay "Teaching Mindfulness and Writing" describes the kind of course Donald McCormick calls for in "Indoctrination, Diversity, and Teaching About Spirituality and Religion in the Workplace." Fox is scrupulously considerate of his students' diverse backgrounds and beliefs. He does not proselytize in his class. He just gives students a chance, in the course of learning expository writing, to explore various religious traditions and to consider the values that those traditions offer them as they face their own problems and the challenges of living meaningful lives. —ed.

Excerpts from “**Teaching Mindfulness and Writing,**” by Len Fox, Professor of English Brooklyn College, CUNY.

The full text of the article is posted on the publication pages of the Association website at <http://www.acmhe.org/publications.html>.

A few years ago, two friends and colleagues of mine at Brooklyn College received a grant from the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society to establish a program of contemplative practices at the college. As part of that program, they started a faculty study group where interested faculty read and discuss texts related to contemplative practices and consider how they can apply the ideas in these texts to their own classes.

In one such text, Krishnamurti (originally published in 1964) challenges us to think about the purpose of education:

I wonder if we have ever asked ourselves what education means. Why do we go to school, why do we learn various subjects, why do we pass examinations and compete with each other for better grades? . . . Is it merely in order to pass some examinations and get a job? Or is it the function of education to prepare us while we are young to understand the whole process of life? Having a job and earning one’s livelihood is necessary – but is that all? Are we being educated only for that? Surely, life is not merely a job, an occupation; life is something extraordinarily wide and profound. It is a great mystery, a vast realm in which we function as human beings. If we merely prepare ourselves to earn a livelihood, we shall miss the whole point of life; and to understand life is much more important than merely to prepare for examination and become very proficient in mathematics, physics or what you will (The Function of Education, 1).

In another text, Carl Rogers (1980) emphasizes the importance of the teacher (facilitator) being in touch with his own thoughts and feelings, being “real” to his students: [Keep reading...](#)

Excerpt from “**The Buddha in the Classroom: Toward a Critical Spiritual Pedagogy**” by Aditya Adarkar and David Lee Keiser, Montclair State University.

The full text of the article with references is posted on the publication pages of the Association website at <http://www.acmhe.org/publications.html>.



“Our young people today grapple with too much emptiness and too much fullness. They are too empty of the resources that sustain the human spirit—devoted love, a sense of meaning and purpose, a feeling of ongoing connection to something larger than themselves, adults who model integrity, serenity, and peace. And they are glutted with sensationalism, stuff, and speed. The result of both the spiritual void and this toxic overload that our culture promotes to fill that void is often numbness.” (R. Kessler, Education for integrity: Connection, compassion, and character in R. Eisler & R. Miller (Eds.), *Educating for a culture of peace*, p. 62)

Many public school teachers and teacher educators currently operate under a virtual state of siege: Basic social services for students continue to be cut, high-stakes testing now drives most curricula, and teacher education is increasingly market driven and privatized. To teach with a moral lens, especially one centered in compassion and reinforced by an awareness of suffering, may require taking stands that challenge the dominant quantitative paradigm based on high-stakes testing and accountability. It is incumbent on caring educators to work toward the ethical and equitable education of all students—many of whom are immigrants, students of color, or from low-income families, and many of whom are from groups that have typically underperformed in standardized education—and to renew their pedagogical practice in a manner that allows for true care for all students. [Keep Reading...](#)

“A Healthy Mind-Set,” Excerpt from *Counseling Today*, November 2006, 14.
By Jonathan Rollins.

The full text of the article is posted on the publication pages of the Association website:
<http://www.acmhe.org/publications.html>.

Judy Maris was halfway through her counseling internship and foundering. In her early 50s, she had decided to make a drastic career change and entered Montana State University's mental health counseling program. Now, with the finish line in sight, self-doubt was threatening to overtake her. “I was finding myself knocked off my feet again and again during my internship,” she says. “I was getting caught up in the client narratives and going immediately to problem solving. I was trying really hard to do it ‘right’ each day and instead ended up feeling clumsy and awkward. Struggling had become my M.O.”

At the same time, Maris was beginning a counseling elective course taught by her practicum supervisor, John Christopher. There was double incentive for Maris' enrollment in the class. First, “I had a lot of respect for John,” Maris says. “He is an incredibly ‘present’ person. Even if you don't know that concept, you understand quickly that here is someone who is truly ‘with’ you. I wanted to have that, too.” Her second reason? “The class didn't seem too hard,” she admits. “I basically thought it was a yoga class.”

Christopher's class, Mind- Body Medicine and the Art of Self-Care, does involve yoga. It also involves meditation, relaxation techniques and qigong, a Chinese discipline of gentle, graceful movements related to tai chi. Christopher, a counseling professor and member of the American Counseling Association, designed the course six years ago primarily to improve students' self-care through mindfulness-based stress reduction techniques. To his surprise (and to the surprise of many counseling students, who assume they are simply signing up for an “easy” course), the class has had an even more significant impact. “I've been shocked at how powerful the course has been,” Christopher acknowledges. “It was really more about self-care. I wasn't expecting the overflow into the students' counseling practices to be so profound.” Maris, who earned her master's degree in 2005 and

is now working in a private practice under supervision as she pursues licensure, believes the class ultimately altered the course of her counseling career. "My internship supervisor (at Montana State) started noticing a change in my work before I did," she says. "As I was taking the (Mind-Body Medicine) class, my work took on a new organic quality, showed much more spontaneity and was enlivened. I started getting great results as far as shifts in my clients, and it had nothing to do with problem solving. I was learning how to genuinely feel positive regard for my clients, let go of judgments and be present in the moment. I was learning to contain clients' anxiety without joining in. We're told over and over again (as counseling students) that this is what we need to do, but no one had told us how." [Keep reading...](#)

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Association Update

We are delighted to announce the first Association conference, which will convene April 24 -26, 2009 at Amherst College. Members and others in the network are warmly invited to attend, and please refer to the call for papers and presentations under upcoming events. This is an exciting step in the development of the Association, and will further activate its role in bringing contemplative pedagogy forward. We are also pleased to be launching an interactive Webinar Series this winter, delivered by Arthur Zajonc and Mirabai Bush. Members attend at no cost, and you can plan to login on Wednesday, February 18, 2009, at 3 pm EST for the first. Formal invitations and registration information will be sent in January.

The Association now has over 200 members enrolled, and we are eager to expand our numbers. During this start-up year, the Association is promoting its growth by offering a complimentary 1-year membership to all those participating in the Center's academic events. In the future, program fees for events will include the dues for a 1-year membership. The Association's online community is now being used to distribute information before events (agendas, directions, ride board) and to post information afterward. We hope this will familiarize members with many of the features of the networking platform, such as forums, in advance, so they can maintain contact and continue conversations in the future. So far the online community has been fairly quiet, and we would like to stimulate more activity. If you have suggestions about or contributions to this effort, please let Beth Wadham know.

The Association also offers resources for anyone interested in contemplative higher education, and on the public pages of the site many members have contributed papers, journal articles, and syllabi from contemplative courses in many disciplines. Recent postings include Donald McCormick's "Indoctrination, Diversity and Teaching About Spirituality in the Workplace" and "Spirituality and the Management Teacher," recently published in management journals; David Lee Keiser's "The Buddha in the Classroom: Toward a Critical Spiritual Pedagogy," from the Journal of Transformative Education; "Healthy Mind-Set," about the counseling professor John Christopher in Counseling Today; and a syllabus from Lisa Hess and Irwin Kula's course, "Wisdom Formation in a (Post) Modern World" taught at Union Theological Seminary.

Plans for the upcoming events are in the works, and details will be forthcoming. Thank you to you all for being part of this growing circle in these pioneering days.

Beth Wadham
Association Associate

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Recent Events

4th Annual Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development

August 3-8, 2008

Smith College, Northampton, MA

[View report \(.pdf\)](#)

Contemplative Practice Fellowship Meeting

Oct. 31 - Nov. 2, 2008

The Fetzer Institute, Kalamazoo, MI

Retreat for Academics

November 13-16, 2008

Menla Mountain Retreat Center, Phoenicia, NY

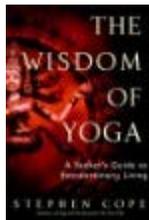
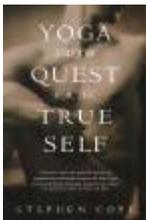
This retreat was made possible with support from the Frederick P. Lenz Foundation for American Buddhism.

[View report \(.pdf\)](#)

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Worthy of Interest

In the Middle of Our Life: a Review of Stephen Cope's *The Wisdom of Yoga: A Seeker's Guide to Extraordinary Living*. New York: Bantam, 2006



*Nel mezzo del cammin di nostra vita
mi ritrovai per una selva oscura,
che la diritta via era smarrita.*

In the middle of the journey of our life/I found myself in a dark wood,/where the way was lost.

- Opening canto, Dante's *Inferno*

The real voyage of discovery consists not in seeking new landscapes, but in having new eyes.

- Marcel Proust, quoted in Cope, *Wisdom*, xxxi

I loved Cope's first book, *Yoga and the Quest for the True Self* (New York: Bantam, 1999). I gobbled it up. Why? Because I loved yoga and the book was in my idiom. Cope was an urbanite writing about being fed up with the pace of his fashionable life with its goals of success, another painting on the wall, elaborate tables laden with heavy food. He finds a friend standing in the kitchen. "Did you get tired of the party, too?" she asks. Yes. So he takes a year off from his career as a psychotherapist and goes on a spiritual quest. To the Berkshires. Not an arduous journey. But what does it matter where one sits to contemplate? He intends to live for four months at the Kripalu Center for Yoga and Health, which turns into 15 years of living there as a writer and teacher, which is still going on. I am heartened by his example.

Yoga and the Quest for the True Self describes his time there, the people he met and worked with. He created composite portraits of seekers whose stories illuminate his claims for the benefits of yoga. Each one struggles, each finds that life becomes less painful as meditation and yoga become a deeper part of their lives. The book also describes the leadership and eventual fall of the resident guru, Amrit Desai, who is discovered to be sleeping with members of the community. One day there is an uproar in the dormitory:

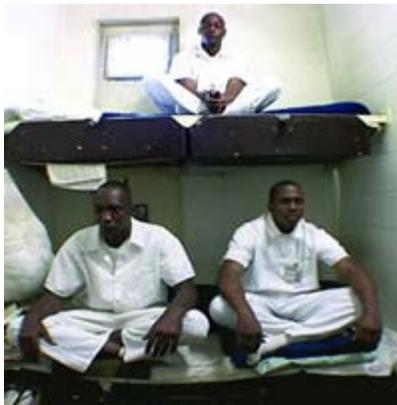
Gurudev had had an affair with Krishnapriya—the senior administrative officer of the ashram. For years. Right under everybody’s nose. Right under the nose of Mataji, Amrit’s wife . . . who was considered to be the real saint in the family. . . .Several longtime community members were stepping forward to say that they, too, had had sexual relationships with the guru. . . . Within days, the guru and his entire family were gone. . . . (*Quest* 286-87)

The community, writes Cope, had to undergo a death and rebirth, people had to leave, property had to be sold, the governing structure had to be rewritten. Jungian therapist Marion Woodman, who was there at the time, observed that the ideal father had to be destroyed. “[T]he light was practically blinding. There had to be a huge shadow there. What did Gurudev [Amrit Desai] say, ‘The back is as big as the front?’” (*Quest*, 287)

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Film Review: The Dhamma Brothers

By Dessa Bergen-Cico, Ph.D., Assistant Professor Department of Health and Wellness in the College of Human Ecology, Syracuse University



The Dhamma Brothers is an excellent film for both its content and illustration of the profound humanity that can be revealed through mindfulness and meditation. This is a documentary of the powerful effects a Vipassana meditation program has on inmates and the implementation challenges it poses for Donaldson Prison. Donaldson is a maximum security facility in the heart of the Bible Belt of Alabama. The film illustrates the religious and cultural barriers that the prisoners and administration must overcome to enable a group of prisoners to participate in the 10-day intensive Vipassana program and the challenge to maintain this profoundly effective and simple program.

During the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society 2008 Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development in Higher Education there was discussion regarding potential opposition from colleagues regarding the incorporation of mindfulness meditation and contemplative practice in higher education. This film shows us that although there may be those who are concerned about Buddhism as a spiritual, religious or mystic practice; at its core it is a secular practice about compassion, kindness and forgiveness.

I have shown the film “Dhamma Brothers” to students enrolled in my Cognitive Behavioral Approaches to Stress Reduction course and to community outreach workers who are focused on violence prevention and gang reform; each of them were profoundly impacted by the film and the personal stories it weaves. Research has shown that on average there was a three minute period of time in which inmates had engaged in behavior that resulted in their imprisonment, sometimes for years. The stories of the prisoners highlighted in this film illustrate this point and begs the question how much pain and suffering could be avoided by cultivating mindfulness and emotional insight through meditation? Had they had the capacity to tolerate distress and not be consumed by emotion in the heat of the moment it seems likely things would be different for everyone.

Despite the reduction in violence and the dissolution of gangs among the Donaldson inmates who participate in the meditation program, great opposition to the program came from administrators and

religious leaders who seem threatened by the fact that change is possible. We spend an incredible amount of time, money and energy suppressing thoughts, and avoiding the truth and blocking introspection. Vipassana simply means "to see things as they are." Perhaps the greatest threat contemplative practice represents is that it is not a commodity to be marketed or a quick fix to be purchased; it is as challenging as it is simple.

Since the 2002 implementation of meditation at Donaldson Prison, meditation has grown in US prisons as a constructive alternative to warehousing people. The Zen Center of Syracuse provides male and female inmates with opportunities to meditate three times per week. For more information visit The Dhamma Brothers <http://dhammabrothers.com/film.html> and The Prison Dharma Network <http://prisondharmanetwork.org/index.html>.

Two Kinds of Intelligence

There are two kinds of intelligence: One acquired, as a child in school memorizes facts and concepts from books and from what the teacher says, collecting information from the traditional sciences as well as from the new sciences.

With such intelligence you rise in the world. You get ranked ahead or behind others in regard to your competence in retaining information. You stroll with this intelligence in and out of fields of knowledge, getting always more marks on your preserving tablets.

There is another kind of tablet, one already completed and preserved inside you. A spring overflowing its springbox. A freshness in the center of the chest. This other intelligence does not turn yellow or stagnate. It's fluid, and it doesn't move from outside to inside through the conduits of plumbing-learning.

This second knowing is a fountainhead from within you, moving out.

*- from the poetry of Mevlâna Jalâluddîn Rumi
translated by Coleman Barks*



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