

# the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

Creating a more just, compassionate, and reflective society

Autumn 2008



## Greetings!

Greetings to all the friends of the Center!



As the words often used in walking meditation say: I am home, I have arrived. With the warm welcome I have received, these simple phrases speak truth to my life.

Now after this first very full month, I can catch my breath and the recognition wells up--what a gift this work is, with such remarkable people in so many different contexts. Mirabai, the staff, board, advisors and so many others have come together in this bold adventure to take the inner life, the "craft" of attention and transformation, out of the private realm of home or monastery into the service of transformation in the wider world. And they have done so with integrity and grace. A deep thanks to them for creating these myriad opportunities for development and growth for so many people. It is an honor to be here and to connect with the many circles that compose the Center. I look forward to meeting many of you over the months ahead.

The theme of our September staff retreat was "Uncertainty, the Future, and Inner Warriorship." With movement practices, guided visualization, and silent meditation we accessed that calm, creative inner space that can provide a center amid the storms of our life and times--and the events of the wider world speak clearly of the necessity of cultivating calmness, clear thinking and emotions that support and connect us with one another.

My arrival coincides with a major futures envisioning process for the Center as we embark on the creation of a new strategic plan that can guide us over the next few years. We are taking a fresh look at all aspects of the Center--its mission, its positioning, name, programs and possibilities. So much has changed since the Center was launched a dozen years ago--how can we best meet the opportunities of the present and future? In what way can we redefine our mission and strategy to sharpen our focus and broaden our impact? Such a process involves a clear and dispassionate look at the past and what we have accomplished. What programs and activities have been effective? In

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## 2009-2010 Contemplative Practice Fellowship Competition



**Application Deadline:  
November 15th**

Award: up to \$10,000

Regular full-time faculty members at accredited colleges and universities in the United States and Canada are eligible to apply.

[Learn more](#)

The Contemplative Practice Fellowships are sponsored by

what ways? Where are new program opportunities?

In what way has the Center touched your life? How might we change? What is important in what we do? We would like to hear from you as we re-envision the life and work of the Center. Please consider taking [our brief 5-question survey](#) to help us evaluate our work, and as always, please feel free to contact us with your thoughts and suggestions!



Philip Snyder  
Executive Director

the [Fetzer Institute](#)



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## CURRENT PROJECTS

### Planning for the Future

**We'd love to know your thoughts and opinions!**

We are currently developing a new strategic plan for the Center, and we'd love to have your input as we evaluate our work. We've prepared [a brief online survey](#) -- please share your ideas with us by clicking the link below.

[Take our Fall 2008 survey](#)



### From Fellowship to Association

**The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education**

On May 1, the Center launched the first professional association to promote a broad culture of contemplation in the academy. The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE) currently connects a network of 195 academics committed to the recovery and development of the contemplative dimension of teaching, learning and knowing. The ACMHE serves members by stimulating scholarship and research; sponsoring forums for the presentation of research and exchange of ideas; supporting course and curriculum development, cultivating contemplative teaching; distributing scholarly

work and general information relating to the field; and providing online resources for member participation and communication. ([keep reading...](#))

[Learn more at http://www.acmhe.org](http://www.acmhe.org)

## RECENT EVENTS

### Law Leaders Gathering

**Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA**  
**June 12-15, 2008**

At the Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary campus at the top of the Berkeley hills, the Center hosted a gathering of twenty leaders in the Contemplative Law movement, with participants ranging from New York to Hawaii. We shared personal and professional experiences in law and contemplative awareness, reflected on recent successes and obstacles, and brainstormed ways to support each other and further integrate contemplative practices into the larger community of legal professionals.

Our time together catalyzed the planning for new continuing legal education programs, law school courses, retreats, and other exciting efforts. In the near future, look for a revised, interactive website featuring a blog, a wealth of writings, and other useful resources to connect the mindful legal community. Please let us know if you'd like to be involved in the activities of our law program by emailing [law@contemplativemind.org](mailto:law@contemplativemind.org).



### Summer Curriculum Development Session

**Smith College, Northampton, MA**  
**August 3- 8, 2008**

What brings a group of 39 educators together for a week of contemplative curriculum development? They come from great distances, including Thailand and Brazil, from diverse institutions, and represent a full range of disciplines across the academy. This is one of the few opportunities for professors to come together across the curriculum, from their departments of Classics, Architecture, Dance, Psychology, Nursing and Law, to address a shared interest: inviting their student's contemplative engagement with the material they teach and seek fellowship with those who share similar aspirations.

Over the course of the week there were presentations on the means and methods of contemplative pedagogy, sessions in yoga and meditation, and opportunities to meet in small groups. But from the outset it was clear that the development of contemplative courses is not a simple matter of learning a practice and introducing it to students. It's a radically different way of learning and knowing which has dramatic implications for teaching. While hearing what others have done, and adapting it for one's own use has value, more transformative effects arise from each educator inhabiting his or her discipline deeply enough to hear how to understand the material from a contemplative perspective. ([keep reading...](#))



## Effective Lawyering

### A Meditation Retreat for Legal Professionals and Students

From September 11 - 14, at the beautiful Menla Mountain Retreat Center in the Catskills in upstate New York, over forty lawyers, judges, mediators, professors, and students gathered to meditate and reflect on their lives as legal professionals. Teachers Charlie Halpern, Susan B. Jordan, and Norman Fischer presented talks about enhancing capacity to be trustworthy, relating to emotions, bringing a meditative perspective to zealous advocacy. We spent time meditating, practicing qi gong and yoga, and engaging in thoughtful discussions connecting our inner experiences with the external realities of our professional lives. As one participant remarked, the retreat helped to "gain perspective and create space to be less reactive and more thoughtful - which, given the stresses and pressures playing on each lawyer today, is a tool of tremendous utility."

## UPCOMING EVENTS



### Retreat for Academics

**November 13 - 16, 2008**

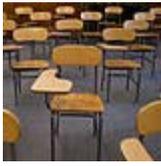
**Menla Mountain Retreat Center**

**Phoenicia, NY**

The Center is pleased to offer our third retreat for academics. Much of our time together 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.

[Get more information & register on our website](#)



## Mindfulness as a Foundation for Teaching and Learning

**February 6 - 8, 2009**  
**Philadelphia, PA**

This 3-day event will include a public lecture and one-day workshop on mindfulness by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of the University of Massachusetts Stress Reduction Program, as well as a conference for educators, counselors and administrators.

Co-sponsored by the [Mindfulness in Education Network](#), [PENN Program for Stress Management](#), [The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society](#), and the [Friends Council on Education](#)

[Visit our website](#) for more information.

Online registration will be available through the Mindfulness in Education Network in October 2008.



## Effective Lawyering: The Meditative Perspective

**A Retreat for Legal Professionals and Students**  
**April 2 - 5, 2009**  
**Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Woodacre, CA**

**5 California MCLE credits will be available for this retreat in the areas of ethics and elimination of bias.**

The theme of this year's retreat is Effective Lawyering: The Meditative Perspective. We will be spending an entire day in silence and exploring the role of wisdom in law practice as well as issues related to reducing bias. We plan to work through a hypothetical legal scenario, examining it through the lens of the meditative perspective.

We hope this retreat will serve as a useful tool to help you reconnect with the contemplative law community, make new friends and re-energize your connection with meditation and its integral role in supporting the challenging work of being a legal professional.

Registration opens December 2008.

[Visit the Spirit Rock web site](#) for more information.

5th Annual Summer Session for  
Contemplative Curriculum



## Development

**August 9 - 14, 2009**

**Smith College, Northampton, MA**

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.

**Applications will be accepted beginning in January 2009.**

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

## Scientists' Insight Meditation Retreat

**Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Woodacre, CA**

**January 11 - 18, 2009**

Note: This is not a Contemplative Mind event, but we wanted to help spread the word!

The Scientists' Meditation Retreat at Spirit Rock will introduce neuroscientists, cognitive scientists, psychologists and others who study the mind to ways in which a rigorous and systematic approach to introspection through mindfulness practice can inform their research. The goal is to introduce researchers to in-depth training in meditation.

This retreat is open to graduate students, post-doctoral trainees and faculty who work in the mind sciences. The retreat will be conducted in most respects like a traditional vipassana retreat and the faculty will be vipassana teachers Sylvia Boorstein, Wes Nisker, Trudy Goodman, Diana Winston and Richard Davidson, PhD, Dept of Neuroscience, University of Wisconsin (Dr. Davidson is also a member of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society's Advisory Council).

**[Visit the Spirit Rock website](#)** for more information.

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