

The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education



ACMHE Newsletter

Summer 2010

Greetings!

From the Editors:

In addition to ACMHE members, we're sending this Summer eNewsletter to all the academic contacts of The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. We're reaching out from our core to the community surrounding--all of you who receive email announcements about our events and activities, but are not yet members--to urge you to consider joining the 500+ educators, scholars and administrators who support contemplative higher education with their membership.

The more of you who step forward, the more the ACMHE will be able to promote a contemplative culture in the academy. This past year, we offered monthly webinar seminars taught by leaders in this emerging field, including Daniel Goleman and Dr. Richard J. Davidson (now archived under the Webinars tab of the ACMHE website); maintained an online community/professional directory; organized a series of events, including the Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development, annual conference, and retreat for academics; and of course, distributed a seasonal eNewsletter. Our activities offer forums for the exchange of ideas and resources for those interested in pursuing the integration of contemplative practices campus-wide.

We invite existing members to serve as ambassadors for the ACMHE by reaching out to your own contacts. Please consider forwarding our email announcements about events to colleagues who may be interested. At the close of each email there's a "forward this to a friend" option that makes it easy to do.

The seasonal eNewsletter gathers news from members, who may submit announcements about their research, publications and activities. We're also delighted to share results of member's contemplative engagement. The pieces by David Levy and Alfred Kaszniak, and Arthur Zajonc (below) are wonderful examples. We invite you to consider sharing your own perspectives and reflections in a future newsletter.

Warm regards,
Beth Wadham
Geri DeLuca

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The Contemplative Academy

*The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE)
Second Annual Conference*

Annual Conference: The Contemplative Academy

September 24-26, 2010 at Amherst College

A broad range of investigations on the use of contemplative practices in various disciplines and co-curricular initiatives will be represented at this year's conference. Its theme is the development of "The Contemplative Academy," a contemplatively oriented college or university that includes reflective and experiential methods across the campus. Over 60 presentations from all sectors--music and geology departments to health and counseling centers--will run in concurrent sessions on Saturday and Sunday, including a number of workshops about specific practices. Selected presentations are listed below.

Stephen Prothero, Professor of Religion at Boston University and author, most recently, of *God Is Not One: The Eight Rival Religions That Run the World--and Why Their Differences Matter* will give the keynote address on Friday, September 24th at 8 pm. His topic, "**The Art of Doing Nothing: Wandering as Contemplative Practice**," presents wandering as a theme in the world's spiritual traditions, and an antidote to our contemporary preoccupation with efficiency and productivity.



Amishi Jha, Assistant Professor of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania will present "**Bringing Attention to Mindfulness Research**" on Saturday September 25th at 9 am. Professor Jha will discuss the hypothesis that changes in the neurocognitive system of attention may underlie a broad range of the benefits of mindfulness training, including stronger immune function, reduced rumination, improved mood, and larger working memory capacity. The experiments she will present describe work her laboratory has conducted on changes in attentional alerting, orienting, conflict monitoring, conflict adaptation, and sustained attention with mindfulness training in medical, educational, military, and prevention contexts.



Ed Sarath, Professor of Music and Director of the Program in Creativity and Consciousness Studies at the University of Michigan, will give an evening performance with a group of his students on Saturday, September 25th at 8 pm. Ed Sarath is active nationally and internationally as performer, composer, and recording artist, author, and founder and president of the International Society for Improvised Music

Panel Discussion Sunday, September 26th:

Do contemplative approaches simply add value by enhancing learning and creativity in the discipline's customary subject matter, or do they change, expand, or even transform, the academic disciplines themselves? "**Contemplative Pedagogy and the Academic Disciplines: Value Added or Changes Everything?**," a plenary panel with faculty from four different academic disciplines (English, Art History, Religious Studies and Psychology), will address this question and explore the intersections of contemplative and academic modes of inquiry in their teaching and scholarly work. **Thomas Coburn**, Visiting Scholar, Brown University and President Emeritus, Naropa University, will serve as the discussant.

Additional Selected Presentations:

Paying Attention: Repetition with and without Learning

Daniel Barbezat, Professor of Economics, Amherst College

Hospitable Space: Spelman's Journey to a Contemplative Campus

Veta Goler, Associate Professor of Dance, Spelman College

The Inner Liberal Arts

Tobin Hart, Professor of Psychology, University of West Georgia

Contemplative Multitasking: A First Report

David Levy, Professor, The Information School, University of Washington, and Alfred W. Kaszniak, Professor Psychology, University of Arizona

Contemplating Time: Contemplative Approaches in Earth Science

Jill Schneiderman, Professor of Earth Science and Geology, Vassar College

A full schedule of the presentations is [available online](#) (PDF link).

The conference is now fully enrolled. We are accepting registrations to a waiting list and have made available a limited number of places at a "no-meals" option rate. For more information visit www.acmhe.org/2010conference.html.

Contemplative Multitasking

David M. Levy and Alfred W. Kaszniak



Have you noticed the recent media flurry about the effects of digital practices on our minds and lives? Lately, there have been a series of stories asking whether the digital age is facilitating interconnection and augmenting our intelligence, or resulting in loneliness, stress, hardened hearts, and shallow, continuous partial attention. In the spring, for example, the journalist Nicholas Carr published a new book, *The Shallows: What the Internet is Doing to Our Brains* (Norton, 2010), as a successor to his much discussed Atlantic Monthly article "Is Google Making Us Stupid?" Carr and NYU media professor Clay Shirky then duked it out on the op-ed pages of the Wall Street Journal, and the New York Times began a series of articles entitled "Your Brain on Computers." A number of other op-ed pieces, books, and book reviews have followed since.

We find this debate interesting for a variety of reasons, not least because it is missing an important insight. All the commentators, no matter what side they're on, seem to suggest that we are passive recipients of these latest changes--that our brains will inevitably be changed for the better or the worse. What they fail to realize is that regardless of the effects wrought by the new technologies, we can educate ourselves to be "smarter" in the sense that's being discussed, that is, more attentive and less distracted. Indeed, we in the Contemplative Mind community know only too well that training in contemplative practices can serve as an antidote to habits that fragment and disorient the mind.

Over the past year we have been conducting an experiment to explore one way that contemplative practices may address the problems that Carr and others are calling attention to. The experiment--sponsored by the National Science Foundation, and conducted with two colleagues at the University of Washington Information School, Jacob O. Wobbrock, an assistant professor, and Marilyn Ostergren, a doctoral student--aims to explore whether training in mindfulness meditation or in relaxation techniques can increase people's ability to conduct information-intensive work in an effective and relaxed manner. It is work inspired in part by the Zen teacher Darlene Cohen's book, *The One Who Is Not Busy: Connecting with Work in a Deeply Satisfying Way* (Gibbs Smith, 2004).

For the experiment, we recruited human resources (HR) personnel in Seattle and the San Francisco Bay Area. All participants were asked to complete a series of information-intensive tasks (scheduling a meeting, writing a memo, answering the phone, and responding to email, instant-messages, and knocks on the door) in a laboratory setting where we gathered data on the speed and accuracy of their responses and their level of stress. Some of the participants were then given eight weeks of training in mindfulness meditation (offered by Darlene Cohen and one of her senior students), while others received eight weeks of teacher-led training in progressive muscle relaxation and autogenic relaxation imagery. The two groups were carefully matched for frequency and length of training, and assessed for equivalency of training program credibility and participant expectation of benefit. Each group was then brought back into the laboratory to be given the multitasking test again. We completed all the training and testing last December, and for the past six months have been "coding" the data in preparation for analyzing it, which we will begin later this summer. We hope to be able to present some preliminary results at the ACMHE conference in September.

While we of course hypothesize that training in meditation and/or relaxation will have had a positive effect on participants' speed, accuracy, or stress level, we are quite clear that this pilot study is as much about developing, testing, and tuning our experimental design as it is about obtaining statistically significant results. Indeed, we have already learned a number of important lessons that will affect the way we design the next experiment. Most importantly, we see this study as a step, admittedly a small one, toward educating the larger culture about the important role that contemplative practices can play in helping us to become not only smarter but happier, more attuned, and more alive.

Breathing Light: a Yoga of the Senses

Arthur Zajonc

(Published on June 18, 2010 on Arthur Zajonc's blog for Psychology Today)

All absolute perception is religious.
--Novalis



Too often we are frantically occupied with the business of today, as well as stewing on the conflicts of yesterday, and worries of tomorrow. In meditation we break this cycle of obsessive thought and feeling by liberating our attention from the craziness of life and placing our freed attention on a simple object of our choosing. Meditation simultaneously deepens our repose and awakens us to a more vivid and wider awareness. The object of meditation can be a sense experience, a line of poetry or scripture, or an image. The manner of working with each is similar. Let us use a bell sound as an example through which we can experience contemplative perception, a kind of yoga of the senses.

I always begin my meditation by sitting in a manner that that I find supportive of my practice. Each person will gradually discover the posture that is suitable for them. It will include the comfortable placement of feet and legs, of arms and hands. The spine is erect, the head lightly balanced; the eyes may be closed or open. I then spend a couple of minutes during which I attend to the breath that helps settle my body and mind. One can gradually sense the shifting and release of stress, the calming of the mind, the relaxation of tensions in the body. It is as if we step through a doorway into another space that supports the unfolding of what the Trappist monk Thomas Merton called the "silent self." The "social self" is preoccupied with the countless practical details, sorrows, joys, and demands of life. The silent self turns toward what is, in this moment, essential and lets the rest fall away.

When we have quieted the mind (which is never fully accomplished) and awakened in ourselves something of the mood of the silent self, we can take up the sense experience as the object of our attention. We strike a bell or singing bowl. The sound of the bell rings out, calling for our attention.

We listen to it carefully: its onset, its arch of tone, its subtle variations and slow trailing off. Repeat this: sound the bell a second and third time, and on each occasion give the bell your entire attention. Free your attention from distractions, from likes and dislikes, accepting the bell sound for what it is. You are schooling your ability to attend to a sense impression without grasping, judgment, or expectation. Purely and simply, you listen. When the bell sound has died away for the last time, sound the bell in your memory. You may be surprised how exactly you can repeat what you heard. Repeat the inner sounding slowly until you feel full of the bell sound.

Then let go of the bell sound entirely. Strive in yourself for complete stillness and silence. Relax. Do not try to hear or see or do anything. Simply be present, fully and completely present. If you get distracted, return briefly to sound the bell again inwardly from memory, and then return to stillness, silence and presence. In the words of the *Tao Te Ching*:

Do you have the patience to wait
till your mud settles and the water is clear?
Can you remain unmoving
till the right action arises by itself?
The Master doesn't seek fulfillment.
Not seeking, not expecting
she is present, and can welcome all things.
(translation by Stephen Mitchell)

The practice of receptive open awareness is as important as that of undivided attention. They are like the out-breath and the in-breath, or the center point and the wide periphery. After attending to the object of meditation, here the bell sound, place your awareness at the periphery. Become quieter still, deepen the silence, widen your awareness...

Then, in the language of Francisco Varela, having let go of the bell sound, we "let come." What is it that arises as the interior echo of the bell sound, what feeling, gesture, or impression emerges from the distant periphery, making its way into consciousness? The movement from bell sound to silent open awareness can become an archetypal rhythm of attention as familiar and important to us as breath meditation. It can be applied to any sense experience or meditative line or image. Instead of the bell sound, for example, one can attend fully to an image, and then move to open awareness and the long deep stillness that follows.

Rudolf Steiner once gave advice to a student of meditation saying, "The most important, significant moments for our development are those after the meditation, when we let absolute calm enter our soul in order to allow the content of the meditation to work upon it. We must strive to extend these moments more and more, for through this lifting ourselves out of the circle of our everyday thoughts and feelings, through emptying ourselves, we unite with a world from which comes toward us, pictures that we can compare with nothing out of our usual life."

Having touched the mystery of stillness, it is equally important to recommit to life and action. Meditation is not an escape from life but a preparation for it. The questions life poses us, the demands it makes, the suffering we witness and act to relieve, all these are more deeply understood and more skillfully acted upon for our having worked meditatively. Far better to respond instead of reacting, and a deep response is rooted in the still, wide perspective of the periphery from which insight emerges. On stillness as a source, Thomas Carlyle has written, "Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together; that at length they may emerge full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of life, which they are thenceforth to rule." (*Sartor Resartus*, bk. III, ch. III)

I end my meditation with the practices of gratitude and dedication.

Contemplative Higher Education in Contemporary America

Mirabai Bush

This paper was prepared for the "State of Contemplative Practice in America," a meeting of leaders in the contemplative awareness movement at the Fetzer Institute, June 10 - 13, 2010.

PART 1: INTRODUCTION

The fruit of education, whether in the university or in the monastery [is] the activation of that innermost center, that apex or spark which is a freedom beyond freedom, an identity beyond essence, a self beyond ego, a being beyond the created realm, and a consciousness that transcends all division, all separation.

-Thomas Merton, *Learning to Live*



Imagine an architecture professor saying this: "I ask my students to sit in silence and then draw a simple map of their childhood, a map of the built environment where they grew up, with their house or apartment, school, playground, city block, friend's house, corner store, grandmother's house, whatever they remember that mattered to them, and they see how the structures of a community fit together and create meaning." Bradford Grant, Contemplative Practice Fellow in Architecture at Hampton University (now Professor and Director, School of Architecture and Design at Howard), shared this practice with us at the conference on "Uncovering the Heart of Higher Education." In his course, "Urban and Community Design and Contemplative Environmental Design Practice," he uses contemplative practices to help students get to a deeper and more connected understanding of what it means to build, to create, to live a meaningful life inside a structure.

Fellow David Haskell, Associate Professor of Biology at the University of the South, teaches a course called "Food and Hunger: Contemplation and Action." As part of this course, students not only learn the biology of hunger but also work with local hunger-relief organizations and learn the contemplative practices that motivate and sustain many of those who work with the hungry. With increased awareness of their own minds and emotions, David reports, students are better able to process the disturbing subject matter. Without some self-knowledge of one's center, it is very hard to receive the bad news about hunger and even harder to discern what one's own response might be.

When University of Connecticut poet and professor Marilyn Nelson was offered a Contemplative Practice Fellowship and an invitation to teach at West Point during the same semester, she combined the two invitations and taught poetry and meditation to cadets who were later deployed to Iraq. They emailed back to her about how meditation and poetry were helping them through difficult times. One said that both he and his wife (both are Black Hawk helicopter pilots) had continued to meditate during their deployments. He said that, although military culture is in some ways the antithesis of the contemplative life, they had both found it an invaluable tool to use in a crisis, especially as officers who must show composure before their soldiers, as, for instance, when one of their soldiers was killed or wounded. He said he camouflaged his meditating by sitting on his cot wearing headphones: Everyone thought he was listening to music, which is cool. But his headphones were silent. He was being in the moment, thinking "here, now, here, now."

Brad, David, and Marilyn are just three of the 158 Contemplative Practice Fellows, a program of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society funded by The Fetzer Institute. At 101 colleges and universities in virtually every discipline, they have been teaching courses that incorporate a range of practices, including mindfulness, lectio divina, yoga, tai chi, and others that emerge from the disciplines. Together they are designing pedagogical methods and building a body of knowledge that

is formulating a new way of teaching -- and of learning and knowing -- that complements critical thinking and the scientific method. They are demonstrating how contemplative development opens the mind to new possibilities, cultivates wisdom through deepening one's relationship to the world, and encourages compassion and empathy through an understanding of the interconnection of all life. And, at the same time, scientific research is confirming that contemplation/mindfulness develops such cross-disciplinary cognitive capacities as decision making, attention, intuitive understanding, and memory as well as emotional capacities such as self-awareness, self-management, and empathy.

Contemplative practices, a vital part of all major religious and spiritual traditions, have long had a place in intellectual inquiry. The predecessors of our colleges and universities in the West, of course, were established as *alternatives* to monastic schools, where contemplative practices had been central to learning. These new institutions were committed to the pursuit of rational knowledge and later to the scientific method. But, as Brian Stock (Professor, Centre for Comparative Literature, University of Toronto) explained in an address to the Symposium on Contemplative Education at Amherst College in 2003, there are important examples in Western intellectual history of the use of contemplative practices, which he defines as based on "a spirituality that does not depend for its validity on pre-existing metaphysical assumptions or associations, that is, a secular spirituality." He names Montaigne, whose writing practice was a form of contemplative reflection, and whose interest in the nature of attention and the nature of the self is shared by contemporary contemplatives. Seneca gave such Zen-sounding advice as "To be everywhere is to be nowhere." Augustine and Seneca both used a literary device, the soliloquy, as a form of self-inquiry through oral dialog. And Augustine was the first to use autobiography as contemplative practice; the *Confessions* is an inquiry into his life and the nature of all life.

These courses have been introduced at an interesting time in academic history. They both complement and challenge the postmodern campus culture. Contemplative practice focuses on moment-to-moment nonjudgmental awareness, the rising and passing away of momentary phenomena, which in some way confirms the idea of the fragmentary nature of reality that postmodernists posit when they claim that there is no metanarrative, no unifying story. No defining story, true contemplatives would agree, but unified nevertheless, in that all phenomena are interconnected, share an "interbeing," are part of a, some would say, divine wholeness.

[CONTINUE READING...](#) (PDF link)



The Meeting of the Contemplative Practice Fellows, June 18 - 20, 2010

Beth Wadham

This gathering of the 2009-2010 fellows occurred at the close of the fellowship year, and many of the professors had already taught the courses they'd developed in prior semesters. They arrived with much to share about what arose from their experience. The weekend promised many opportunities for contemplative engagement, to learn from one another, and from the moment, in a quiet, spacious way.

During the circle of introductions on Friday evening, each participant was invited to share, in addition to a standard professional identity, an insight, or "aha" moment, gleaned from their work in the classroom. These realizations, sometimes revelations, set a tone for spontaneity and discovery that resounded in the days that followed.

On Saturday morning, Eric Nelson welcomed the fellows on behalf of the Fetzer Institute and expressed his excitement for learning about the challenges and breakthroughs in higher education. Arthur Zajonc, in a continuation of the theme of harvesting insights from the night before, invited the group to sit for a few minutes to recollect a "mentoring moment" that could then be described to a partner in a deep listening practice. He suggested that the gesture of listening during this practice can be a kind of offering--the gift of attention.



In "**Bringing Contemplative Practice into the Classroom**," a panel of 3 fellows described their approaches to teaching courses that integrate the contemplative dimension. John **Makransky**, Associate Professor of Theology, had the opportunity to teach "Meditation, Service and Social Action" to Masters of Divinity students at Harvard University in addition to his students at Boston College. The meditation he teaches is adapted from Tibetan Buddhism's loving communion and connection practice, but is

accessible to those with any (or no) faith background. He finds most students have some foundation of faith, even if they've rejected it, and that his invitation to identify the "ancestors" of one's spiritual foundation begins to unearth many benefactors, those who have been loving, or had a wish for one's deep well being. In addition to readings from Martin Luther King, Jr., Dorothy Day, Aung San Suu Kyi and other social activists, he assigns a daily meditation practice that involves "being held in the wish for well-being." Each week students write about the specific way the meditation informs the reading and the reading informs their meditation. They are also asked to reflect on how their daily meditation and reading informs their individual development and social action.

This approach has emerged from particular needs of social service work, which often results in feelings of exhaustion and anger. Coming back every day to be "cradled in compassion" allows practitioners to be present for themselves, and discern their own hidden strengths and underlying capacities. They do this for themselves so they can do it for others.

Professor Makransky finds that social service professionals need to acknowledge that the dynamic of fighting oppression, on behalf of the oppressed, can often break down to a duality that is too limited, defining their role as "I am the helper, and these people are to be helped." The meditative practices he introduces can foster greater unconditionality and the recognition that all are caught in the predicament of an unjust situation. Martin Luther King and Mohandas Gandhi embodied this truth, and their work was oriented toward the amelioration of suffering for all, not on behalf of some, against others.

[CONTINUE READING...](#) (PDF link)

Retreat for Academics

November 11- 14, 2010 at the Garrison Institute



The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society began offering retreats for academics in 2007, out of the awareness that depth of practice and familiarity with the contemplative space within is strongly related to success implementing a contemplative approach with students. Arthur Zajonc and Mirabai Bush will teach a variety of practices that cultivate capacities central to teaching, learning and knowing, including methods that can be adapted for use in the classroom. In the tradition of retreat, much of the time, apart from the instruction and addressing questions, will be spent in silence, allowing participants to settle into a deep stillness and heighten their awareness of the present.

The Garrison Institute is a former Franciscan monastery overlooking the Hudson River one-hour north of New York City. It was restored and renovated for retreats in 2002.

Single and double rooms are available. The retreat is designed to appeal to participants with a wide range of experience in contemplative practice. For more information and to register, [visit the retreat web site](#).

Announcements from Members

Contemplative Practices at Burapha University, Chonburi, Thailand

David Lee Keiser, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, College of Education and Human Services, Montclair State University



Over a March 2010 fortnight, I visited Burapha University in Chonburi, Thailand to investigate contemplative practices in a university context quite different from my own. Although I was not able to observe classes as the week I visited fell between two semesters, I did meet with many professors and administrators who gave me a strong feel for the place. One professor with whom I met and am now writing is a former monk, one who brought his 'forest bag' to our meeting, complete with all the necessities of his monastic existence. Below is an observation/abstract we submitted for a new book on contemplative pedagogies. Look for a forthcoming chapter:

Fitting in Breath Hunting: Thai and US Perspectives on Contemplative Pedagogy

by David Lee Keiser, Department of Curriculum and Teaching, College of Education and Human Services, Montclair State University and Saratid Sakulkoo, International Graduate Studies, Human Resource Development Center, Burapha University, Chonburi, Thailand

Saratid, a former monk, has for five years "tried to think about how to provide Meditation Techniques

for his students," yet wonders if "it is useful at all." He teaches both graduate and undergraduate classes at Burapha University in Thailand, including *Modern Concepts of Human Resources Development (HRD)*, *Leadership and Ethics*, and *Research Methodology*. He believes that meditation "will help all of my students for their study and in their daily life," but as a professor, he feels he must couch it in different language.

I found that the term "Meditation" does not fit with the young generation. The challenging word of "Breath Hunting" hit their heart. To become a "Breath Hunter" one may need to learn how to hunt the breath... I believe that class is everywhere. Everywhere can be a class. The class is in your heart not in the room. I always emphasize that do not forget your breath in and breath out.

Our case studies will describe how contemplative pedagogies are, or can become, accepted, even expected parts of curriculum, accreditation, field standards, and program coherence; and the general fit of contemplative teaching within our settings. We will discuss reactions and responses of students and colleagues, as well as reflect upon ourselves as contemplative teacher-scholars. We will also investigate class activities from our courses, including specific contemplative practices--such as breath hunting--and implicit contemplative approaches to teaching. The chapter will conclude with an overview of next steps for the fields and paths of each of the professors.

Grants Awarded to the Faculty Initiative for Transformative Learning

Margaret A. DuFon, California State University Chico



The "Mindfulness, Self and Society" Pathway Team Members meeting with GE Implementation Consultant Thia Wolf. From left: Tom Imhoff (Philosophy); Thia Wolf (GE Implementation Team Consultant); Patricia Smiley (Kinesiology); Peggy DuFon (English); David Philhour (Psychology & Social Science Program). Not pictured: Lee Altier (Agriculture); Eddie Vela (Psychology); Suzanne Zivnuska (Management)

The Faculty Initiative for Transformative Learning (FITL), a faculty learning community at California State University-Chico, has been awarded two internal grants to promote contemplative practice and mindfulness on its campus. First, the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching (CELT) has awarded a CELT Impact Grant of \$5500 to enhance instruction by incorporating contemplative practice. As a first step, the FITL will bring speakers to the Chico State campus during the 2010-2011 academic year. One set of speakers will introduce university students, faculty, and staff as well as the larger Chico community to various types of contemplative practices. A second set of speakers will discuss the benefits of contemplative practice. A third will educate the faculty with respect to how they can incorporate contemplative practice into the classroom and use it as a pedagogical tool. A fourth will discuss the application of contemplative practice to the areas of sustainability and civic engagement. The proposal had a broad base of support on campus as it was endorsed by the deans of six colleges as well as the Counseling and Wellness Center and the Office of Civic Engagement.

Second, the General Education Implementation Team in collaboration with the General Education Advisory Committee (GEAC) has awarded the Faculty Initiative for Transformative Learning a grant for \$1500 to develop a proposal for a *Mindfulness, Self, and Society Pathway* as part of the new General Education (GE) curriculum. The GE curriculum at Chico State is currently being overhauled and will

include a total of five to ten pathways or options for students to choose from for a more cohesive general education. There are currently 19 candidate pathways, one of which is *Mindfulness, Self and Society*.

The Faculty Initiative for Transformative Learning at Chico State was formed in December 2005, inspired initially by the article [Meditate on It: Can adding contemplation to the classroom lead students to more eureka moments?](#), which appeared in *The Chronicle of Higher Education* in October 2005, and later by the work of Edmund O'Sullivan and his colleagues at the Transformative Learning Centre at the University of Toronto. The Faculty Initiative for Transformative Learning is committed to transforming education through the creation of a community of contemplative teachers, scholars, administrators and students who support the development of contemplative literacy through the use of contemplative pedagogy in the university classroom, the creation of a campus environment that is conducive to contemplation, a forum for the discussion of contemplative practices in higher education, and research on contemplative pedagogy.

Contemplative Practices in the Classroom: A Cross-Discipline Discussion

Maggie Lowe, Associate Professor of History, Bridgewater State University

On May 12, 2010, Maggie Lowe presented her research regarding integrating contemplative pedagogy into American history courses at Bridgewater State College's Center for the Advancement of Research and Teaching May 2010 Celebration. Her panel, "Contemplative Practices in the Classroom: A Cross-Discipline Discussion" provoked an extremely lively discussion and generated calls for continued conversation and collaboration.

The Solloway Mindfulness Survey: Giving Teachers Access to Both Quantitative and Qualitative Data for Their Students' Mindfulness Experiences

Sharon G. Solloway, Associate Professor of Developmental Instruction, Bloomsburg University

Most current mindfulness assessments focus on aspects of mindfulness that specifically relate to mental health. Rosch (2007) argued that this means that most existing mindfulness questionnaires fail to capture core objectives of mindfulness practice--wisdom insight, seeing the interdependence of all things, and an experience of timelessness. The Solloway Mindfulness Survey is an exception as it is aligned with these objectives.

Teachers and researchers now have access to opportunities to capture their students' mindfulness growth as novice practitioners with both quantitative and qualitative data when they use the [Solloway Mindfulness Survey](#) and the accompanying journaling function. While the SMS provides a quantitative measure, the journaling function provides the opportunity for qualitative corroboration. Both are free to teachers and their students, and offered at a nominal fee for researchers. The SMS [measures mindfulness at five levels](#). Students have protected access to their measures and the narrative descriptions accompanying their measures. They also have protected access to their journal entries and instructor comments. Teachers and researchers can download both the SMS measures and journal entries of their students. The SMS can be used as a pre and post measure to monitor growth.

SMS items are based on the journal entries of mindfulness students who commented on their (1) ability to experience a state of intentional attention--paying attention on purpose, with curiosity, kindness, openness, and a non-judgmental attitude, and (2) associated experiences, such as new insights, new connections and changes in their experience of time. The SMS measures the effects of intentional attention: (1) the experience of intentional attention itself, and (2) the results of intentional attention. Because the statistical reliability of the SMS is high (.94 or higher), it can be used to monitor the progress of individual students as well as groups.

Narrative descriptions of mindfulness practice accompany SMS measures. The narrative for each measure has three parts: Description of mindfulness practice at that level, a representative journal entry of a student at that level, and suggestions for the stage in Alan B. Wallace's book, *The Attention Revolution: Unlocking the Power of the Focused Mind*. A person at that measure most likely would

benefit in order to continue growing in mindfulness practice. You can see these narrative descriptions at the bottom of the "[Teacher Information](#)" page.

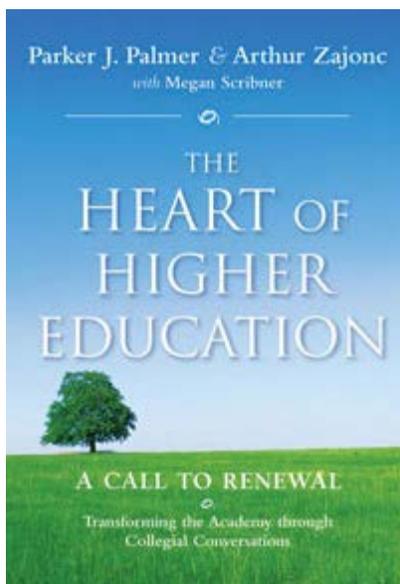
During the mindfulness intervention the student can post journal entries online describing her mindfulness experiences. The instructor has the opportunity to mindfully respond. This dialog throughout the mindfulness intervention not only provides snapshots of the student's journey but also gives the instructor the opportunity to provide gentle coaching in support of the student's mindfulness growth.

The SMS provides several sets of rich resource pages. Explore the site!

Recent Publications

The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal

Parker J. Palmer & Arthur Zajonc with Megan Scribner



Available now on Amazon.com

From Parker Palmer, best-selling author of *The Courage to Teach*, and Arthur Zajonc, professor of physics at Amherst College and director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, comes this call to revisit the roots and reclaim the vision of higher education. *The Heart of Higher Education* proposes an approach to teaching and learning that honors the whole human being--mind, heart, and spirit--an essential integration if we hope to address the complex issues of our time. The book offers a rich interplay of analysis, theory, and proposals for action from two educators and writers who have contributed to developing the field of integrative education over the past few decades.

The Heart of Higher Education presents Parker Palmer's powerful response to critics of holistic learning and Arthur Zajonc's elucidation of the relationship between science, the humanities, and the contemplative traditions; explores ways to take steps toward making colleges and universities places that awaken the deepest potential in students, faculty, and staff; and offers a practical approach to fostering renewal in higher education through collegiality and conversation.

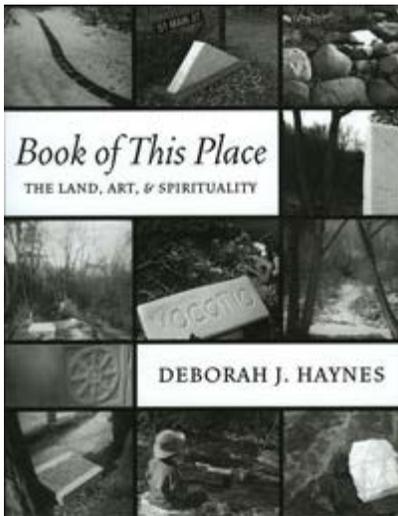
The Heart of Higher Education is for all who are new to the field of holistic education, all who want to deepen their understanding of its challenges, and all who want to practice and promote this vital approach to teaching and learning on their campuses.

Book of This Place: The Land, Art, and Spirituality

Deborah J. Haynes (Pickwick, 2009)

The title of this engaging book emphasizes that the author lives, works, and creates art in this place - a particular site in the foothills of the Colorado Rocky Mountains. The subtitle indicates that place is the arena for investigating engagement with the land and nature, art and creativity, and spiritual life. By exploring the significance of place in our fragmented world and by using her artistic practice as an example, she hopes to offer readers new definitions of the interrelationship of religion and art.

This book is the first to examine the intersection of these three themes, which may be variously defined. First, the land and nature provide the literal site for the book, and the language of ecology is woven throughout. In the face of contemporary global



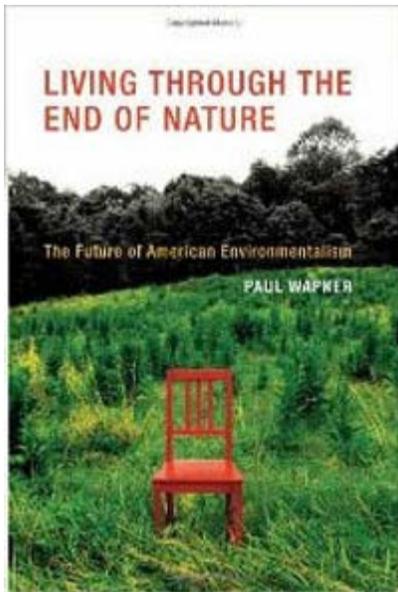
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crises, Haynes believes that we have a moral imperative to address how we live and work in the physical environment. Second, visual art, creativity, and the creative process are discussed using historical and contemporary examples.

Haynes is a philosopher of art and artist, whose primary creative work involves carving marble and drawing. Using her stone sculptures to frame the book's chapters, she takes the reader on a meandering journey into the history, philosophy, and practice of art. Third, the religious and spiritual life is highlighted with examples from her practice of yoga and Buddhist meditation, and her work with hospice.



***Living Through the End of Nature:
The Future of American Environmentalism***
Paul Wapner (MIT Press, 2010)



Available now on Amazon.com

Environmentalists have always worked to protect the wildness of nature but now must find a new direction. We have so tamed, colonized, and contaminated the natural world that safeguarding it from humans is no longer an option. Humanity's imprint is now everywhere and all efforts to "preserve" nature require extensive human intervention. At the same time, we are repeatedly told that there is no such thing as nature itself--only our own conceptions of it. One person's endangered species is another's dinner or source of income. In *Living Through the End of Nature*, Paul Wapner probes the meaning of environmentalism in a postnature age.

Wapner argues that the end of nature represents not environmentalism's death knell but an opportunity to build a more effective political movement. He outlines the polarized positions of environmentalists, who strive to live in harmony with nature, and their opponents, who seek mastery over nature. Wapner argues that, without nature, neither of these two outlooks--the "dream of naturalism" or the "dream of mastery"--can be sustained today. Neither is appropriate for addressing such problems as biodiversity loss and climate change; we can neither go back to a

preindustrial Elysium nor forward to a technological utopia. Instead, he proposes a third way that takes seriously the breached boundary between humans and nature and charts a co-evolutionary path in which environmentalists exploit the tension between naturalism and mastery to build a more sustainable, ecologically vibrant, and socially just world.

Beautifully written and thoughtfully argued, *Living Through the End of Nature* provides a powerful vision for environmentalism's future.

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