

Dance 203 Physical Mindfulness: Embodying Contemplative Practice
MWF 9-10:50 am Warner Main Space

Ann Cooper Albright
Warner 110 x8156
office hours m/w 11-noon

This class will explore various forms of physically-based contemplative practices. We will progress from individual practices to partnering practices, to exploring the possibility of creating a group practice, and the creation of a public contemplative space.

Basic texts required:

Thich Nhat Hanh The Miracle of Mindfulness
Lenore Friedman/Susan Moon (ed.) Being Bodies
Arnold Kotler (ed.) Engaged Buddhist Reader
Silva, Mira and Shyam Mehta Yoga: The Iyengar Way
Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen Sensing, Feeling, and Action (ACA has copies of this)
Alison Hawthorne Deming Temporary Homelands

(N.B. There will also be a required reading packet to fill in some gaps.)

Basic course requirements:

This is a course that explores ideas and physical experiences that are not easily quantified. Therefore, you must be honest with yourselves and the class right from the beginning. If you have difficulty with regular work habits, with getting to class on time, or with self-discipline, this is not the course for you! You will need to be able to design a contemplative practice and follow through with it. Attendance is crucial, even when the class meets separately. Don't mess with the group karma by sleeping! I will be giving out reading assignments week by week, so even if you miss a class, you are still responsible for completing the reading in time.

Informal writings:

Students in this class will each keep a practice notebook from which they will extract selections to include in a class notebook. I expect you to write about a page or two after each class/practice session. In addition, I will ask you to prepare written responses to questions that I give you during class. (i.e. today's question is: "What daily practices do you do which put you in a contemplative mode?")

Formal papers:

Before spring break and at the end of the semester, I will ask you for a more formal essay. The first (4-6 pages) will design a personal contemplative practice to follow through for the second half of the semester. The final essay (5-7 pages) will explore a contemplative tradition of your choosing.

Final Project:

In addition to your own exploration, the class will design and build a contemplative space in Tappan Square in May. Ideally, this area will be built out of organic materials, a space that calls people to enter and sit/walk in a contemplative mode. I am interested in including the notion of service and the physical experience of work as part of our contemplative experiences.

Readings for Physical Mindfulness:

embodying contemplative practice DANC 203

Kakuzo Okakura The Book of Tea (Dover Publications, NY, 1964)

Susan Lydon The Knitting Sutra: Craft as Spiritual Practice (Harper, San Francisco, 1997)

Matthew Fox Hildegard of Bingen's Book of Divine Works (Bewr and Company, Inc., Santa Fe, 1987)

Sabina Flanagan, ed. Secret of God: Writings of Hildegard of Bingen (Boston, Shambhala, 1996)

Elizabeth Petroff Medieval Women's Visionary Literature (Oxford, NY 1986)

Alison Hawthorne Deming Temporary Homelands: Essays on Nature, Spirit, and Place (Pecadue, NY 1994)

Natalie Goldberg Writing Down the Bones: Freeing the Writer Within (Shambhala, Boston, 1986)

Thich Nhat Hanh Buddhism and Ecology

Andrea Olsen Bodystories, A Guide to Experimental Anatomy

John Elder Reading the Mountains of Home

Ian Friedlander The Whirling Dervishes (NY, MacMillan Publishing, 1975)

Shigenori Nagatomo Attunement Through the Body (Albany, Suny Press, 1992)

Thich Nhat Hanh Touching Peace (Paralex Press)
Teachings on Love (Paralex Press)
The Miracle of Mindfulness (Paralex Press)

Parker Palmer The Active Life: Wisdom for Work, Creativity, and

Bonnie Bainbridge Cohen Sensing Feeling and Action

BKS Iyengar Light on Yoga (Schocker Books, 1979)

BKS Iyengar The Tree of Yoga (Shambhala, 1985)

Lenore Friedman/Susan Moon, ed. Being Bodies (Shambhala, 1985)

Sandy Boucher Opening the Lotus (Beacon Press, 1997)

Georg Feuerstein and Stephen Bodean Living Yoga (GP Putnam, 1993)

Arnold Kotler Engaged Buddhist (Parallex Press, 1996)

Miranda Shaw Passionate Enlightenment (Princeton U Press, 1994)

Carol Lee Flinders At the Root of this Longing 1998

Mehta Yoga: The Iyengar Way