



Center Community News

The Newsletter of the Center for Sacred Sciences

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Center Holiday Party

The Holiday Party was held at the end of January. If you were not there, you missed it. It had originally been scheduled for a day in December, the traditional holiday season, but it was postponed by God (manifesting as ice and snow). Who can argue? Being so long after Christmas, Santa did not show up. But God did! Not that any of us were surprised.

The theme of the party was a "Celebration of the Mystics of the Great Traditions" with placards representing each one on each of the tables. Perhaps someday the "Center for Sacred Sciences" will be known as a great tradition and qualify for its own table. The food and drink were appealing, as usual, and we were proud to sing the Center's theme song* in rounds.

Many thanks must go to Megan Greiner for coordinating the affair. Also, thanks to Matt and Hiromi Sieradski for bartending, Lou and Vinnie Principe for providing music and Rich Marlatt, Fred Chambers, and Jack Yousey for their talent. Invariably, in offering thanks, we have left out some contributing planners, cleaners, etc. and we pray that they will be satisfied to have their reward in heaven.

**Row, Row, Row Your Boat*

—JERRY DALEY

NEXT ISSUE: CREATIVITY Share your Poetry, Prose, Art

Email newsletter@centerforsacredsciences.org or snail mail to CSS, address on the back page of this issue.

Deadline for next issue: June 20

Interview with CSS Practitioner Jack Yousey

CCN: Jack, how did you come to a spiritual search?

JY: When I was 21 I dropped out of college in Michigan and traveled west, looking to cure a broken heart and find the adventure my life had lacked. The journey ended in San Francisco, where I rented a tiny room in a hotel and pondered the meaning of life. During this time I discovered books by Alan Watts, Chogyam Trungpa, and Garma C. C. Chang. I was especially attracted to the teachings of J. Krishnamurti because they were free of cultural and religious trappings. He emphasized that one must not depend on dogmas to find the truth. In this spirit, honest questioning and self-observation led to valuable insights and freedom from a lot of fear and hesitation.

With this new-found awareness I was able to face challenges that I previously rejected. I took an extended hitch-hiking trip, and later enrolled in engineering school at Cal Poly. After obtaining a degree I returned to the San Francisco area to find work. I soon began to feel a returning sense of loneliness and alienation, however, and felt the need of a spiritual community and personal guidance from a teacher.

I discovered a spiritual group in Santa Cruz that taught Advaita Vedanta and Chan Buddhism but also revered the teachings of Lao Tsu, Meister Eckhart, and other mystics. I became committed to its sangha and teachings, and after a couple years entered into formal discipleship with the primary teacher. The commitment involved the donation of enormous amounts of time and money. Initially, I found a deepening sense of peace and contentment. Not long after joining, however, the decision was made to build a temple. The construction costs far exceeded our budget and members were urged to make even greater sacrifices. The financial pressures began to weigh on us.

The teachers were demanding and expected total commitment. While the organization was officially run by a board of directors, the decisions were truly made by the
(continued on p.2, see "Interview")



Peer, Deeply

You are the unconditional Friend
Whom I've been longing to see
This lonely life's had just one end:
I've wanted You with me.

My eyes seem rusted into place
With just an outward gaze
Oh, how I wish to see Your face
To break this deep malaise.

I look, I look, and look again
Am I looking the wrong way?
Will I forever look and search in vain
Or will I find my Friend today?

I've forgot to ask What truly looks
To see What sees and hears
I'll never find This in words and books
When the face of the Friend appears.

Oh Love! We've never really been apart
For You appear, deeply from the start
When vision sinks quietly into the heart
And I peer deeply: That Thou art.

—VIP SHORT
*inspired by a gift of bhakti
reading from Paul F*

Hara and the Hound

Just there,
deep in the belly
where it all comes to rest
and nothing is,
the churning point that I couldn't know,
but do know,
is the gateway—

where there is nowhere to turn
for an answer, or yet another question,
no possible way in, or out,
or forward, or back,
where even to wonder
what now?
is the whistle for the hound,
she-bitch
who arises snarling,
frolicking,
or yelping in pain,
what could it matter how?
She knows what she wants;
even look at her
and forfeit heaven.

—ANONYMOUS CSS PRACTITIONER

(*Interview*”, continued from p.1)

two teachers and rubber-stamped by the board. Members were told they were free to question, but were immediately ousted if they did. Put simply, this group had become a cult. Revelations surfaced that the teachers had engaged in deceit and extortion. Many members left the group in disgust. My wife and I chose to ease out slowly and gracefully to avoid being demonized.

We moved to Oregon in 1995 to an intentional neighborhood in south Eugene. For the next five years our formal spiritual practices were replaced with community activities and home construction. Yet my need for non-dual teachings remained. My wife, on the other hand, was not so inclined. For this and other reasons, we ended up divorcing in 2000. Afterwards, I checked out some contemporary teachers such as Gangaji and Catherine Ingram. After I met my current wife, Janet, we started attending the Center in 2002 and took to it. We joined Todd's Foundation Studies course in 2003 and have been involved with CSS since then.

CCN: *What was it about the Center that drew you?*

JY: I have found Joel to be unique in his synthesis of various mystical traditions and interest in fostering a new worldview. While Joel is clearly the driving force behind the Center, his primary emphasis is on the teachings and practices rather than on himself as a guru. This was a welcome relief from the “charismatic teacher syndrome” I experienced earlier. Joel's respect for the mystical teachings of *all* traditions and even of other contemporary teachers convinced me that he has no desire for power or control over his students. He genuinely wishes the best for each person, even if that means that they ultimately move on to other spiritual communities.

CCN: *Have your ideas of spirituality changed over the years?*

JY: With Krishnamurti's teachings my practice focused on deepening awareness and deconstructing the sense of time in order to eliminate the ego. Later, in the Santa Cruz group, the focus was purportedly on enlightenment but, in effect, was on doing and saying the “right thing.” After leaving the group I went through a period in which my spiritual focus was diffused and confused. I took a more psychological direction, attending self-improvement workshops and receiving personal counseling. After landing at the Center, I once again became aware of enlightenment as a goal, but with the focus on turning my whole life into spiritual practice. Practice has led me to a more balanced lifestyle, with a reduction in obsessive thinking and compulsive activity.

Joel encourages me to customize my practice, taking advantage of my particular strengths, while still being aware of difficulties that I routinely encounter. For example, self-inquiry seems to come naturally to me so I often use this method to explore aspects of the teaching. On the other hand, the intellect tends to get carried away, so the concentration and choiceless awareness methods taught by Joel are very effective in stabilizing attention and bringing me back to that basic awareness. It's all a matter of using the best tool available.

CCN: *Thank you for sharing your journey with us.*

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Your CCN Newsletter -- Paper or Cyber?

One of the precepts practiced at the Center is that of Stewardship: Not to waste the resources upon which other beings depend. Among other things, this precept keeps us mindful of the carbon footprint of the paper edition of the Center's newsletter. Every printed copy uses paper which consumes energy to produce and recycle or dispose. And it takes energy to print and transport the printed newsletter to you through the mail. In addition, the production and mailing of the newsletter takes a significant portion of the Center's financial resources which could potentially be spent in more beneficial ways.

We're going to let you in on the discussion between Newsletter Editor Mora Dewey and Publications Director Tom McFarlane, who have agreed to disagree on this issue. Tom, who wrote the first paragraph (above), would like to see all of us subscribe to CCN electronically. Mora, on the other hand, prefers sitting on her deck with a cup of tea to read her paper subscription to CCN.

Tom: To foster stewardship, six years ago we began offering electronic subscriptions to the newsletter. As an electronic subscriber, instead of receiving a printed copy in the mail, three times a year you get a short email message with a link to the latest issue. With a simple click of the link, the newsletter appears on your computer for viewing and, optionally, printing as well.

The benefits of the electronic edition are numerous:

1. Rather than waiting for carbon-emitting vehicles to transport your paper newsletter, the newsletter instantly appears before your very eyes using the clean and efficient transport of information over the internet.
2. Rather than a black-and-white printed edition, you get the newsletter in full color.
3. You reduce your carbon footprint by eliminating consumption of paper, ink, and delivery.
4. You reduce the Center's newsletter production expenses, freeing funds for other projects.
5. If you do want hardcopy, you can print whatever pages you wish.

Mora: I rarely read electronic subscriptions. I spend too much time at the computer to also give it my treasured moments for reading and pondering. If I do read online, I read cursorily to see whether there's something I want to print for later. The newsletter is one way we maintain community at CSS, and if some folks can't or won't read it electronically, I'd like to provide another option.

Then there's the matter of aesthetics: The feel of the paper, the 11"x17" folded sheets, the pleasing (we hope) layout: it's just not the same printed out on my inkjet.

Paper subscriptions place the burden of cost on CSS, and I'm willing to donate extra to the Center for this. I'm concerned about our forests and the consumption of paper; consequently, I do my best to recycle and promote sustainable alternatives to tree-based paper, like woody biomass and hemp. It's a difficult issue; my practices with Selflessness and the Stewardship precept are getting a good workout.

Tom and Mora both hope that readers will make informed choices about subscriptions, practice the precept of Stewardship, and help defray the Center's expenses for the paper newsletter. And we hope that all subscribers will actually *read* the newsletter.

Update Your CCN Subscription Preferences

You can use our subscription/address form to change from a paper to an electronic newsletter subscription:

www.centerforsacredsciences.org/subscriptionform.html.

You can also update your email and/or postal address. To sign up for a new paper subscription or change an electronic subscription to a paper subscription, please send a written request by regular mail, including your name and US mailing address. Please also consider including a donation for printing and postage expenses for the paper edition and please, please, cancel your paper subscription if you no longer want it.

Printed on recycled paper using soy-based inks

ATTENTION PAPER NEWSLETTER SUBSCRIBERS:

Here is your opportunity to donate any amount to support the production and mailing of the paper version of CCN:

Make checks to: Center for Sacred Sciences (or CSS)

Send to: Center for Sacred Sciences
1430 Willamette St. #164
Eugene, OR 97401-4049

Electronic subscriber donations also gratefully accepted!

Sangha – One of the Three Jewels

CCN asked the Center's three Associate Teachers to speak to us about the value of retreat – how it has served on their own paths and how it might be of use to us on ours.

Todd Corbett



I recommend retreat to students if they are drawn to it. It is a process of simplification, in which we are given the opportunity to examine our immediate experience through deepening practices of sustained Attention. This examination is supported through temporarily laying aside the prevailing stories and conditioned fixations of worldly life.

For me, attending retreats served as a kind of crucible for grief during a dozen years of frequent 'personal losses.' Retreats provided a nurturing silence within an embrace of safety: the perfect setting for allowing deep fears and sadness to be infused with restful Attention. When seen clearly, attachments to false beliefs lose their credibility. Through sustained attention, particularly while on retreats, movements of denial or 'grief resolution' were quietly exposed. True grieving openly allows the energetic imaginations of sorrow to remain, without denying or fixating; simply allowing them to be as they are, without expectation. If expectation arises, this too is allowed and observed. If we can call this a process, it is one of simplicity embracing complexity; softening, allowing. Retreat provides us the opportunity to listen.

We do not need frequent deaths to motivate us to retreat. Simply paying attention to immediate experience with a degree of commitment, humility and detachment, we begin to notice that we constantly lose everything, and that we can't actually

(See Todd Corbett, p. 5)

Andrea Pucci

Retreat is a breath of fresh air of big-clear-sky possibility; an opportunity to let go of duties and feel the depth of the ocean beneath the waves of daily concerns. Habits dictate our lives. Awareness informs our lives.

Retreat is an opportunity for awareness to shed light on our habitual tendencies. Maybe we can experience more space and creative



play where we have felt solidified and hopeless about our 'bad habits,' as the impermanence of every mental phenomenon burns its truth through our hearts and minds as we JUST SIT together, and discipline is allowed to reveal its liberating effect. I always can use some help with discipline!

We are all enlightened beings playing the game of forgetting. While awake, we sleep. There is an inner war being waged to remain in Truth, while habit tendencies continually flood 'my' mindstream with deluded patterns of thought and reactivity. If this mind struggle is not seen as conditioned, dependent, and illusory, it quickly degenerates into an outer war with the projected objects of my aversion and grasping. Retreat offers an opportunity to simply get used to resting in the true nature of mind.

When mindfulness remains in the illuminated source, habit energies can dissolve in that all-encompassing awareness. In every moment there is the truth of ignorance overwhelmed by awareness, or there is the truth of ignorance playing out samsaric complexity.

If it were not for Retreat, it would be impossible to keep the boat afloat

(See Andrea Pucci, p. 5)

Fred Chambers

Retreats are a sweet balm that helps dissolve the delusion that we are separate selves. This delusion is constantly being reinforced in our day-to-day lives, so if we are interested in discovering our True Nature, which the mystics claim is a Non-Dual Reality, it is very valuable to find the time to step away from our worldly life periodically and see what we can learn in silence and solitude.

A retreat can be a short break in your day like a 20 minute meditation, or it can be a multi-day (or even a multi-year) retreat taken with a group or solo. Different religions have traditional retreats and lengths of time they recommend, but since most of my experience is with a five-day or nine-day retreat that CSS offers, that will be my focus here.



What are some ways that this balm can be applied? One of the main ways is by maintaining silence. At the core of the problem is the fact that all words and speech create distinctions, so most of the everyday chatter we engage in with others serves to reinforce the sense that the world is filled with an untold number of objects and our body/self is one of those. When we are able to withdraw from this external "noise" for several days, the seeming rigidity of the world starts to loosen. Of course, what immediately becomes prominent is the internal noise—the never ending drama that runs through the mind all day, this "story of I" where we encounter the world in terms of protecting this self from harm or finding ways for the self to be happy. We then apply the balm of internal

(See Fred Chambers, p. 5)

(Todd Corbett, from p.4)

‘have’ anything at all. Seeing that our life ultimately has nothing to do with acquisition, attention rests. In such a moment of opening, our fixations and delusions cease to drive attention and the world becomes transparent to itself.

As many of us have discovered, the first few days after a silent retreat can be overwhelming, especially if busy worldly activities resume too abruptly. Within the safe and protective environment of retreat, attention tends to become very sensitive, tender and open, whereas on return to the coarseness of the world, the full flood of circumstances may seem extremely loud and disruptive. The mind may begin to protect itself through familiar reactive mechanisms of grasping, ignoring, and rejecting, and if awareness closes down around these (identifying with them), mindfulness is obscured. On the other hand, allowing reactive states to be embraced by awareness, identification with them loses its hold, openness is sustained, and mindfulness is nourished.

Grasping at familiar states of clarity may arise, but we come to see that clarity can never be found this way. Rather, it is through noticing grasping and other feelings of reactivity that stability of attention is tethered and clarity realized. Just to be aware of them as they arise, these difficult mind-states, though uncomfortable, are great teachers for us. We may be caught up in them repeatedly, yet blessings arise as we discover mindfulness through them, again and again.

I’ve been doing solo retreats at a little cabin down in Umpqua nearly every Fall for the last 5 years. Why? Why do I go for a walk? Why do I breathe? I love to. The leaves fall from the trees. Why? They love to. Is there a ‘real’ answer as to why? Ask yourself, why do you go on retreat? Do you really know? What is it that calls you? Is it wanting to find something? If it is, look right into that and see what lies within the images of wanting. Rest there a while. When you see what is truly there (Here), is there anything to attain; anywhere to escape to? Do you find an *answer* to the ‘Why’ Question?

(Andrea Pucci, from p.4)

on the turbulent sea of samsara. There are so many predispositions and habits too close to be noticed, and often one is just acting on what remains invisible and powerful, in its capacity to run us karmically ragged.

I observe this process of ignorance in daily activities; if I don’t take time to *just sit* and see where space becomes revealed, these unconscious forces wreak havoc in mind and body. Sitting, remaining presence, habit energies can dissolve in the purity of the nature of that conditioned mind. It takes constant intention and devotion to be awake in every moment, and to remain detached from the conditioned desires and aversions that continue to emerge. I need to Retreat regularly to be able to do this!

When these tendencies simply display in the space of awareness, there is a chance for them to simply dissolve without habit energy reacting and reconditioning them to reappear. This is not an easy process, but it is a simple one, which requires no less than everything. In everyday life it requires ceaseless mindfulness to stay with the display. I often fail as attention wanders, wallowing in conditioned experience. I recognize the need to Retreat—to simplify, slow down, take notice, recommit, pay attention, detach, surrender.

The discipline of daily sitting and Retreat time is imperative for my practice to continue to purify ignorance and blossom as the wisdom that outshines ignorance. Practice, Practice, Practice! Some of us may be superior practitioners who can practice (remain awake) in any situation. I am not one of these. I need to take and consecrate time and space to remain on track. Discipline and ceaseless Devotion and Intention, practice of Precepts, and *time out* illuminate the way. To *just sit* with *commitment*, *attention*, *detachment*, and *surrender* strengthens the muscles of mindfulness of the spiritual warrior, so that we can perform our activities in the world with strength of awareness. What joy to hear the call to prayer. What joy to practice enlightenment so that all beings may benefit.

(Fred Chambers, from p.4)

silence. Through meditation practices, we practice detachment from this internal dialogue so our attention can be freed up to rest in the spacious awareness that begins to become more prominent and out of which everything arises.

As Sufi master Farid Ud-Din Attar says, “Do not imagine that the journey is short; and one must have the heart of a lion to follow this unusual road...” We have been building and clinging to this belief in a separate self for our entire lifetime, so at least initially it takes some effort to turn the tide of convention. Therefore, to help the balm penetrate deeply, we commit ourselves to a constancy of practice both day and night. Even when formal meditation has ended and we are doing chores or going to the bathroom, we still try to maintain a relaxed, clear mindfulness of the reality of every moment. The same thing applies when we are falling asleep. We try to enter sleep with the intention of becoming lucid in our dreams, so we can gain insights into such things as the emptiness of objects.

We maintain our focus on applying the balm by practicing such things as sexual restraint/chastity. The emotional power of human love and desire is very potent and contains within it the seed of True Divinity. However, precisely because it is so powerful, it is easy to become distracted and focus our attention on our self-centered desires. When this happens, we forget that it is this very “self” that must be sacrificed on the altar of love.

I would recommend the sweet balm of retreats to anyone, or at least to anyone who is able to balance the competing inclinations of pride and humility. It takes a healthy degree of arrogance to think we can discover the divine reality that animates the world, but at the same time we need to be able to entertain the notion that all we think is true—about ourselves and the world—is nothing more than a fleeting thought that dissipates as quickly as “the flash of a firefly in the night (or) the breath of a buffalo in the winter time”[Chief Crowfoot, of the Blackfoot Tribe].

Going Solo

Barbara Dewey Talks About her 7-week Solo Retreat

There has been interest in my recent solo retreat both among friends at CSS and from other areas of my life. One friend, who is not currently doing a formal practice, jokingly asked if I could tell her about the retreat so she wouldn't have to do one—to which I had to answer “No.” With that caveat, I would like to share some observations that might be useful to other people considering a solo retreat.



Barbara Dewey

The mechanics which proved to be most useful were in the area of scheduling, food, and practices. This retreat was conducted in a travel trailer located in the yard of a friend in Eugene, making it less expensive than would be possible at a retreat center. However, I needed to find ways to compensate for some of the support which a center provides to a retreatant. For instance, I made arrangements for food delivery with my husband, Mike, who was extremely supportive in delivering fresh food and food which had been prepared ahead of time for the retreat.

The schedule I used was a variation of the one recommended in Joel's book, *The Way of Selflessness*. I found strict adherence to the schedule to be the backbone of the retreat, and the value was from strict adherence. It provided endless opportunities to observe the mind because the mind resisted constantly, and that was challenging. It was also useful, because the benefit of the retreat was to develop and refine awareness—to notice thought. At every point of challenge, there was the mind! By adhering to the schedule, I was never at loose ends trying to decide what to do or how to fill the time in a productive way. The practices I used also came from Joel's book—the same ones we use in the Practitioners Group. The difference was in intensity: they were repeated over and over again, which resulted in deeper and deeper insights.

Limiting the distractions I took with me proved to be a benefit. I took only three books; *The Way of Selflessness*, *A Passage from Solitude*, and *Zen Mind, Beginners Mind*. Because the choices were so limited they quickly turned from time-fillers to continuous repetition, resulting in really plumbing the depths of concepts and practices. The result of the retreat was a deepening of concentration, deepening experiences of selflessness, emptiness, and impermanence of phenomena.

Opportunities for practice without the distractions of the householder's life were constant. That felt hard—the

constancy of it. Mentally and emotionally I wanted relief from it—so the commitment was to not succumb to the temptation to indulge in distractions to gain that relief, but instead to maintain awareness. Gradually the mind settled and I was more and more able to observe the mind rather than feel trapped and overwhelmed by it. The sense of a separate self weakened.

Given the opportunity, I would definitely do it again and probably not change much from the format of the first one. After being back in the householder's life for about six weeks, I find some of the experiences have faded but others, possibly more subtle, continue to result in a deeper practice and greater awareness and happiness.

Barbara Dewey has been a CSS Practitioner for 19 years and lives in Eugene with her husband, Mike.

The mind that does not understand is the Buddha. There is no other.

—Ma-Tsu,
8th Century Zen Master

Ask Dr. Gnositall

Dear Dr. Gnositall:

I've heard that Awakening happens by shutting down the left side of the brain. Is it really that simple? Could a lobotomy help me?



—Brainless Soon?

Dear BS:

The wild speculations of quacks will always be with us. Don't listen to these ducks, even atomic ones. All kinds of magic gets attributed to a kind of conceptual sleight-of-hand which manipulates the effects of causes, and the causes of effects. You were already here way before your brain, as any decent tulku could tell you. If some twig of neuroscience has noticed a correlation regarding Gnosis and the quieting of the left cerebral hemisphere, so what? It's not worth taking a hammer to your head to investigate further. (Leave the whacking to your teacher.) Speaking of hammering the head, I believe it was Tom Waits who sagely observed, "I'd rather have a free bottle in front of me than a pre-frontal lobotomy."

Peggy Prentice Update

Peggy Prentice, one of our Eugene CSS practitioners, has just completed her last chemo treatment. Now she'll take a month off to recover before starting 8 weeks of radiation. She continues to regard each moment as a precious opportunity for spiritual practice, and says "Thanks, everyone, so very much for all of your love and support." Love and best wishes, Peggy.

LIBRARY CORNER

Library Hours

Tuesday Evenings 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.
2nd & 4th Sundays 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.
1571 Buck St., Eugene (see map, last page)

Here is a sampling
of the many retreat
resources in the
Center's library,
compiled by CSS
Library Director
Jennifer Knight:

Where to find a place to go on a solo retreat:

Campgrounds and Fire Lookouts in the Pacific Northwest
<http://www.fs.fed.us/r6/recreation/rentals/>

Jack and Marcia Kelly. *Sanctuaries: The Complete United States: a guide to lodgings in Monasteries, abbeys, and retreats* (New York: Bell Tower, 1996).

Patricia Christian-Meyer. *Catholic America: Self-Renewal Centers and Retreats* (Santa Fe: John Muir Publications, 1989).

Don Morreale, editor. *The Complete Guide to Buddhist America* (Boston: Shambhala, 1998).

Some places tested and recommended by folks around the Center:

Cloud Mountain Retreat Center, Castle Rock, Washington
<http://www.cloudmountain.org/>

Nestucca Sanctuary, Pacific City, Oregon
<http://www.nwjesuits.org/HowWeServe/Nestucca.html>

Our Lady of Guadalupe Trappist Abbey, Lafayette, Oregon
<http://www.trappistabbey.org/>

New Camaldoli Hermitage, Big Sur, California
<http://www.contemplation.com/Hermitage/home.html>

Lama Foundation, San Cristobal, New Mexico
<http://www.lamafoundation.org>

How to structure a solo retreat:

Steven Foster with Meredith Little. *The Book of the Vision Quest: Personal Transformation in the Wilderness* (New York: Simon and Schuster, 1992).

David A Cooper. *Silence, Simplicity, and Solitude: A Guide for Spiritual Retreat* (Skylight Paths, 1999), and *The Heart of Stillness: The Elements of Spiritual Discipline* (New York: Bell Tower, 1992).

Retreat Accounts:

Michaela Ozelsel. *Forty Days: The Diary of a Traditional Solitary Sufi Retreat* (Brattleboro: Threshold Books, 1996).

David A. Cooper. *Entering the Sacred Mountain* (New York: Bell Tower, 1994).

Maura "Soshin" O'Halloran. *Pure Heart Enlightened Mind* (Boston: Charles E. Tuttle, 1994)

Vicki Mackenzie. *Cave In the Snow* (New York: Bloomsbury Publishing, 1998).

Let your covenant at your entry into retreat be that there is nothing like unto God. And to each form that appears to you in retreat and says "I am God," say: "Far exalted be God above that! You are through God." Remember the form of what you saw. Turn your attention from it and occupy yourself with dhikr continually.

—Ibn 'al-Arabi (Sufi)

Additional reference books, books on advanced meditative practices, recorded talks, files on various retreat centers, and more, are available at the Center library.

Send Us Your News...

News items, Submissions, Comments, Suggestions, Questions for Doc Gnosital, Opinions, Grips

**NEXT ISSUE: CREATIVITY
Share your Poetry, Prose, Art**

Email newsletter@centerforsacredsciences.org or snail mail to CSS, address on the back page of this issue

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MISSION AND PROGRAMS

The Center for Sacred Sciences is dedicated to the study, practice, and dissemination of the spiritual teachings of the mystics, saints, and sages of the major religious traditions. The Center endeavors to present these teachings in forms appropriate to our contemporary scientific culture. The Center also works to create and disseminate a sacred worldview that expresses the compatibility between universal mystical truths and the evidence of modern science.

Among the Center's ongoing events are Sunday public services with meditations and talks by the Center's spiritual director, monthly video presentations, and—for

committed spiritual seekers—a weekly practitioners' group and regular meditation retreats. The Center also maintains an extensive lending library of books, audios, videos, and periodicals covering spiritual, psychological, and scientific subjects. In addition, the Center provides a website containing teachings, information, and other resources related to the teachings of the world's mystics, the universality of mystical truth, and the relationship between science and mysticism. The Center publishes a newsletter containing community news, upcoming programs, book reviews, and other information and resources related to the Center's mission.

The Center for Sacred Sciences is a non-profit, tax-exempt church based in Eugene, Oregon, USA. We rely chiefly on volunteer labor to support our programs, and on public donations and membership pledges to meet our operating expenses. Our spiritual director gives his teachings freely as a labor of love and receives no financial compensation from the Center.

Center Community News is published three times a year by the Center for Sacred Sciences. Submissions, comments, and inquiries should be sent to:

Publications Director, Center for Sacred Sciences
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CSS CALENDAR

MAY 2009 – SEPTEMBER 2009

MAY 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
3 Video* 11 am	4	5 Library 6:00–8:30	6 Practitioners 7:30
10 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	11	12 Library 6:00–8:30	13 Practitioners 7:30
17 Talk 11 am	18	19 Library 6:00–8:30	20 Practitioners 7:30
24 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	25	26 Library 6:00–8:30	27 Practitioners 7:30 (ALL)
31 Talk 11 am			

* Mystic Iran

In this remarkable video, filmmaker Aryana Farshad takes us on a spiritual tour of her native Iran, documenting Sufi rituals and practices never before recorded on camera.

JUNE 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1	2 CLOSED	3 Practitioners 7:30
7 Video* 11 am	8	9 CLOSED	10 Practitioners 7:30
14 Talk 11 am	15	16 CLOSED	17 Practitioners 7:30
21 Talk 11 am	22	23 CLOSED	24 Practitioners 7:30
28 Talk 11 am	29	30 CLOSED	

* Krishna Das: One Life at a Time

In this exciting video documentary, we get an intimate look at the life and music of Krishna Das, the western-born chanting master who has inspired American and Indian audiences alike.

LIBRARY ADDRESS:

1571 BUCK ST., EUGENE, OREGON



PHONE: (541) 345-0102

JULY 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1 Practitioners 7:30
5 Video* 11 am	6	7 CLOSED	8 Practitioners 7:30
12 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	13	14 Library 6:00–8:30	15 Practitioners 7:30
19 Talk 11 am	20	21 Library 6:00–8:30	22 Practitioners 7:30
26 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	27	28 Library 6:00–8:30	29 Practitioners 7:30 (ALL)

* Susan Postal: Zen Journey

American Zen priest Susan Postal describes her more than twenty years of highly personal experiences with various Buddhist teachers and traditions.

AUGUST 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
2 Video* 11 am	3	4 Library 6:00–8:30	5 Practitioners 7:30
9 Enlightenment Day Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	10	11 Library 6:00–8:30	12 Practitioners 7:30
16 CLOSED	17	18 CLOSED	19 CLOSED
23 CLOSED	24	25 CLOSED	26 CLOSED
30 CLOSED	31		

* Father Keating: Centering Prayer

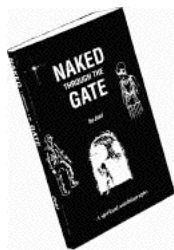
In this video-taped workshop, Christian monk Father Thomas Keating explains the principles of the mystical practice of centering prayer which comes down to us from ancient times.

SEPTEMBER 2009

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
		1 CLOSED	2 CLOSED
6 CLOSED	7	8 CLOSED	9 CLOSED
13 CLOSED	14	15 CLOSED	16 CLOSED
20 Talk 11 am	21	22 CLOSED	23 Practitioners 7:30
27 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	28	29 Library 6:00–8:30	30 Practitioners 7:30

* NO VIDEO

Center Publications



Naked Through the Gate: A Spiritual Autobiography

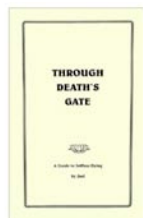
by Joel, Center for Sacred Sciences, 1985. Paperback, 262 pages, \$11.95

Joel's personal account of his remarkable spiritual path, ending with a Gnostic Awakening.

Through Death's Gate: A Guide to Selfless Dying

by Joel Morwood, Center for Sacred Sciences, 1996. Paperback, 83 pages, \$6.95

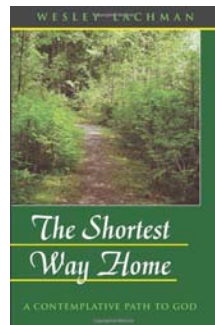
A guide to death and dying from a spiritual perspective, including fundamental teachings and practices from the world's great mystics.



Book Publications by Members

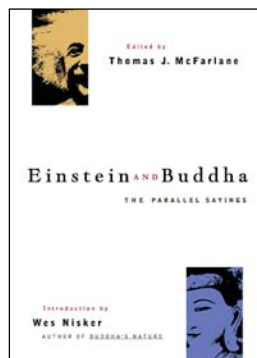
The Shortest Way Home: A Contemplative Path to God

by Wesley R. Lachman, O Street Publishing, 2008. Paperback, 136 pages, \$10.95



This book provides a short introduction to the contemplative or mystical spiritual way. It is a rare book in that it is based upon the everyday experience of the reader rather than upon dogma or religious concepts. The author lays out the extraordinary spiritual discoveries that can be made by looking at ordinary experience. For example, he helps us to observe that we do

not actually possess anything at all, not even the entity that we refer to as "me." He goes on to indicate the transformations resulting from being in God instead of in self or ego. In succession he deals with overcoming suffering, presence of God, love and compassion, kingdom of God, and spiritual practice. The chapters each end with a *You find out* exercise so that the reader can take what has just been read and test it against his or her own experience. The book offers several features to make it easier for the reader. It gives a logical, step-by-step presentation of the path of spiritual realization starting with dissatisfaction and ending with divine union. Written simply and clearly, it assumes only a minimum knowledge of the Christian scriptures and story. The book includes a number of relevant quotes from the scriptures and from contemplatives new and old. **The Shortest Way Home: A Contemplative Path to God** is a book for those seeking a radically new and deeper way to God.



Einstein and Buddha:

The Parallel Sayings

by Thomas J. McFarlane, Ulysses Press, 2002.

Paperback, 176 pages, \$14.00

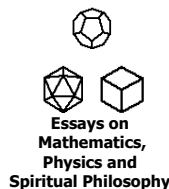
This remarkable book contains over 120 sayings from the founders of modern physics paired with parallel sayings from the seminal works of Buddhist, Hindu and Taoist contemplatives. *Einstein and*

Buddha is a fascinating collection of quotes that challenges us to think deeper about the relationship between modern physics and mystical insight. Although these two ways of understanding and investigating reality have significant differences, the parallels suggest that they share a mysterious and profound connection.

The parallel sayings are organized by theme and touch upon the nature of matter and energy, the relationship between subject and object, the understanding of time and space, the importance of direct experience, the role of paradox and contradiction in our understanding, the limits of language in describing reality, and the interdependence of all created things. Each section is accompanied by a brief introduction to how these concepts relate to the scientific and spiritual ways of knowing. On each page is an insightful quote from an eminent physicist such as Albert Einstein, Niels Bohr, Erwin Schrödinger, Werner Heisenberg, or David Bohm, together with a surprisingly similar statement from a renowned authority of Eastern religion such as the Buddha, Chuang Tzu, the Upanishads, D. T. Suzuki, or the Dalai Lama.

All books listed above may be ordered easily through Amazon.com (www.amazon.com)

SACRED SCIENCE



Thomas J. McFarlane

Sacred Science: Essays on Mathematics, Physics and Spiritual Philosophy

by Thomas J. McFarlane, self-published, 1995.

Tom's book **Sacred Science** may be obtained for free on the internet. A booklet with one essay entitled "The Play of Distinction" may be purchased at the CSS Library. For a complete catalog of our current publications and for pricing and ordering information, please visit the CSS website at www.centerforsacredsciences.org