



Center Community News

The Newsletter of the Center for Sacred Sciences

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April 2010 Retreat, Returning to Stillness

This year's Spring Retreat offered many a taste of joy and stillness. It was an awesome week (just ask anyone who was there).

Todd opened by reminding us that our True Being is not a "state" of stillness, but our true home... one we've never left! And not just a home, but the very fabric of who we *are*. This truth was reiterated in many ways throughout the retreat.

Todd spoke about how Stillness is punctuated by every word, and how awareness, which loves stories, "plays a game of hide-and-seek... mostly not finding." He pointed out how every thought is simply an energetic wave arising in stillness, with only our *constant striving* deluding us and keeping us from "just being aware of the sensations... letting life be."

Todd later described how every thought is just a bubble of consciousness, and Megan brought up the image of a "lava lamp." Todd told us that if we truly see these bubbles for what they are, we won't be pulled into their content or see them as important. "Thoughts are not a problem. They only become a distraction when they start linking up." We don't need to *do* anything, just let the phenomena reveal themselves to each other.

So our week moved with determination into concentration practice, which Todd described as our most important *bedrock* practice, strengthening our discernment and allowing for *naked experience*. "The main goal is to identify clearly what is mental phenomena and what is not." We were urged to "be earnest in our practice! We are on our deathbeds now. There is no time to waste." We were also counseled that "We need to love Truth more than life itself."

Thanks, Todd... no pressure there!

But he kept bringing us back to the practice itself. "Awareness," he said, "loves what is here right now. The practice is to align with that. We have to really listen, receiving and resting in what's coming in... not directing all the time, like a conductor."

I felt (and don't think I was alone) how "*wanting* is the veil to this moment," and how the process of "seeing things as they really are" is not something that we *do*, but just happens on its own. Strange how difficult letting go can be!

Todd's teachings on impermanence were deep and extensive and, of course, everyone has favorites. I personally am always touched, and softened, by the notion that *all* phenomena are not only expressions of Consciousness, but are also themselves sentient beings that we, in our attachment, hold and keep from being free to return to their source.

Choiceless awareness, flowing gently but firmly towards calm abiding, became a fantastic next step in our process together, as Todd reminded us once again that "it's all just

happening... There is no meditator doing anything; no one between the perception and the whole. Just the moment arising, the only moment there is. Love *is* the emptiness residing in the middle of past and future."

CSS Meetings to Move to Green Phoenix

Starting September 19th, CSS Sunday talks and evening Practitioners and Foundation Studies Groups will be held at the Green Phoenix Institute, 352 West 12th Ave, Eugene. Library remains on Buck St. See page 6 for details.



Back L: Jack Yousey, Jim Patterson, Laurina Peters, Mel Bankoff, Stefan King, Todd Corbett, Jerry Daly, Sophia Malkasian;
Row 2 L: Ross Oldenstadt, Mark Levy, Oriana Hurwit, Megan Greiner, Mora Fields, Pat Munden, Tom Rundle, Marleen Marshall;
Front L: Nancy Miller, Tom McFarlane, Barb Dewey, Mark Hurwit
not pictured: Deanna Cordes
Photo: Jack Yousey

Well, "I" was reassured to be told that I was not thinking or doing anything, because all those hours in silent stillness sure *felt* like a whole lotta doin' goin' on! "The whole samsaric spin," Todd told us, "you can stop struggling with when you see how ridiculous it is." Guess I'm not quite there, yet... still conditioned to believe in time. "Our attention *itself* is conditioned, and our perceptions in this dream *require* time to appear real to us. The *lynchpin* is time; it doesn't exist and yet we live here..." Luckily we have our friend impermanence, which allows us to notice this arising and falling out of which we make things.

It was wonderful to be constantly reminded that this "stillness" we're heading towards is *already here*. Our consciousness *is* the self that creates the illusion. "After peeling away the layers of the onion, what we find at the center is not *nothing*, but *life*." The silence, Todd said, is quietly waiting for us to tire of the endless grasping and questing. "The true 'I' is imponderable," while the least little thing can obstruct the whole of God. There is no end to the creation of samsara, and we can only end this tyranny by *seeing* thought for what it is. It is not about pushing anything away.

It was all so very clear, and many wonders, challenges and a deeper settling followed as our days progressed. We were all grateful for the opportunity to ride those waves in the peace of Cloud Mountain's beautiful serenity.

—Mark Hurwit

Netherlands Guest at Spring Retreat

Stefan King of Maastricht, Netherlands arrived in Oregon last April to attend the Spring Retreat at Cloud Mountain. Arriving in Eugene several days early, he was also able to attend the Wednesday Practitioners Group meeting and meet CSS folks before taking the vow of silence at the retreat. He stayed at the home of Mora Fields and Kent Koester in Cottage Grove and was able to see a bit of rural Oregon. "There is so much space," he reported, "compared to the density of the Netherlands."



Stefan King
Photo: Jack Yousey

Stefan has completed 5 units of the Distance Studies program under the guidance of mentor Fred Chambers. Stefan and Fred were able to spend time together before the retreat to discuss practice and questions.

"It was great to meet the people from CSS," Stefan says. "I felt very welcome. Before I came to Oregon, the relationship was purely virtual. Joel, Fred and the

others were disembodied voices on DVD or through the phone. Meeting everyone face-to-face has deepened the relationship. And the retreat was magical. I have made good progress with my meditation practice. I'm grateful for the time and experiences I have had."

Stefan gets the award for "farthest distance travelled to a CSS retreat".

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Spiritual Psychology

Sunday May 16th, Fred Chambers gave the third talk in his four-part Spiritual Psychology series, this one entitled Spiritual Psychologies: Sufi Perspectives. The other talks dealt with the Buddhist, Jewish and Hindu perspectives. As a former psychological counselor, Fred is well able to discuss the psychological nuances of the spiritual path. This was a lively talk punctuated by quotes and stories of many Sufis including Al Ghazali, Rumi, and Sheikh Robert Frager. Two quotes from the talk follow:

Five Questions Guide Us on the Mystical Path

*What is your misery,
where does it lie?*

*What is your happiness,
in what does it lie?*

*Where do you come from?
Where are you going?*

*For what purpose
were you created?*

—Al-Ghazali's *Alchemy of Happiness*

*If you could get rid of yourself just once,
the secret of secrets would open to you.
The face of the unknown,
hidden beyond the universe,
would appear on the mirror of your perception.*

—Rumi

Understanding Emptiness and Liberating Appearances

A 5-day retreat at Dr. Wolff's Great Space Center

Students from California, Oregon, and North Carolina gathered beginning June 25th for a retreat led by Joel and organized by Andrea Pucci, Joel's first student (1983). It was the fourth retreat given on behalf of Andrea's group of students in as many years, located in the sweeping Owens Valley of eastern California—one of the deepest valleys in the United States.



Approach to the Ashrama

Photo: Vip Short

The theme for this retreat was suggested by Andrea and her students. In our brief time together, we delved into fundamental principles of Tibetan Dzogchen, always underscored with simple practices designed to anchor the teachings in our own experience. (Joel advised us at the beginning that although he would be drawing heavily from Dzogchen, it was not to be considered a Tibetan-style retreat *per se*, and as always the dharma talks were sprinkled with supportive quotations from all the great mystical traditions.)

Among the highlights: we learned a simple 3-breath meditation which was beautifully apt for hiking around the wild and steep terrain; we progressed in understanding the three qualities of Ultimate Reality, namely *emptiness*, *luminosity*, and *compassion*; explored the subtle but crucial distinctions between desire and grasping, and between aversion and pushing away; and we heard a surprisingly adamant truth voiced by Joel, that "suffering is *bad*."



Great Space Center retreatants with Andrea and Joel (center front)

Photo – Matt Sieradski

Solo day took place on the next to final day, and gave an opportunity for a group trek to the celebrated ashrama built from mountain stones, located at the end of a grueling upward hike to about 8,000 feet. Andrea led the group in a dedication ceremony in the center of this impressively large and enduring building. That night, our own Matt Sieradski undertook a vigil at the ashrama, returning by 9 the next morning for a round of final teachings.

Joel gave teachings while sitting in Dr. Franklin Merrell-Wolff's usual chair. Pointing to the mind's tendency to make and then believe distinctions, he quoted a previous resident of the "ranch" as having observed, "Consciousness loves contrast." Joel said another thing that really struck me for both its perspicacity and humor: "Why not find out now that you don't exist, rather than worry for the rest of your life that someday you won't exist?"

On this retreat we also repeatedly explored the Mystery of the Mono Cone—but that's another story (about grasping versus desire)!



Joel gives teachings in Dr. Wolff's living room

Photo: Vip Short

There's nothing quite like sitting in Dr. Wolff's living room for 5 days, receiving teachings from one of his most beloved students! The mountains behind, the valley below, and the lizards, birds and snakes skittering and winging their ways all around: Aho!
—Vip Short

From this place it is possible to shed Joy while accepting the offering of pain. It is useless to pretend that the function is a comfortable one, though there are deep satisfactions. It is not comfortable watching men sowing the seeds of pain, when another and joyful life is near at hand, just waiting to be accepted. It is not comfortable to have to stand by waiting for pain to perform its purifying office. It is not comfortable to resist the desire to leave forever this dreary and empty world. And yet, what else can one do when he knows that he has the means of release which can change the state of the few or the many who will accept?

—Franklin Merrell-Wolff
Pathways Through to Space

Sangha – One of the Three Jewels

Matt Sieradski Shares an Account of Awakening with CSS Community

On April 28, 2010, Joel addressed the combined group of CSS Practitioners and Foundation Studies members to introduce Matthew Sieradski as the latest awakened practitioner. Joel revealed that last October, just prior to the fall retreat, Matt approached him and described an experience which had occurred a few days earlier. Joel said that he believed Matt had experienced at least a gnostic flash. After meeting a few more times over the next six months, Joel became convinced that the realization was stable, and that this was a genuine awakening. Joel then turned the meeting over to Matt, who gave a summary of his spiritual background and related the events surrounding his gnostic awakening in the fall of 2009.

Matt was raised in Eugene, Oregon without any formal religious training. By his teens he was a confirmed atheist. His first exposure to spiritual teachings came via a compelling Hermann Hesse book assigned in high school. In his early teens Matt began the study of Asian martial arts, and in his late teens had transformational experiences while experimenting with psychedelics. Subsequently, he became a committed spiritual seeker, and pursued the study of Eastern mysticism, philosophy of science, psychological counseling, and Chinese kung fu. Early on, Matt came across Franklin Merrell-Wolff's *Pathways Through to Space*, which intrigued him because it was "the first time I'd come across a Westerner who seemed to have the highest wisdom and yet was still very much a Westerner. Something about that was important to me." His interests ultimately led him to the study of Taiji/Qigong, acupuncture, and Chinese herbal medicine.

At the age of 25, while living in Seattle with his wife Hiromi, Matt began to explore Taoist practices. He took an interest in Buddhist Dzogchen, and also returned to the writings of Dr. Wolff. He thought, "There's got to be somebody on the West Coast who was a student of this guy!" In 2005, through Tom McFarlane's website, Matt

discovered Joel and CSS, right in his home town of Eugene! He then convinced Hiromi to move there. "Then I came down and visited with Joel and told him about my plans to move down and study here with him. That was the beginning of my affiliation with the Center and that was when things got interesting."

Matt attended his first CSS retreat in the spring of 2006, and throughout the retreat he experienced extreme physiological fear, his heart pounding for two days straight. He went to Joel for advice and was assured that fear was a good sign on the spiritual path, since it manifests as the ego's reaction to the cognition of emptiness. Joel explained that in the Buddhist tradition fear is considered to be the wisdom energy of clarity. For the remainder of the retreat Matt practiced relaxing into fear, which made the Presence of Awareness extraordinarily sharp.

Later Matt worked with integrating choiceless awareness practice into daily life. As an acupuncturist, and the father of two small children, he found this helpful. "It got to the point where it became clear that there wasn't anything that I could do in order to wake up," he told us. "There's nothing you can do. But it has to be more important than anything else."

Just prior to the 2009 fall retreat Hiromi and the children left for Japan for a three-week visit, leaving Matt to his work and the retreat. He had earlier purchased a Dzogchen text, *Practices of the Day and the Night* by Namkai Norbhu, and one morning, while one of his patients was reclining in the treatment room, resting with the needles, he opened the book.

"I opened the book to some section that essentially talked about non-dual presence. I don't remember how the exact passage went, but it was a direct pointing instruction. Then I looked up and something fell away; it was very simple. I can't describe what happened other than at that point the resistance just fell away. There were some physical energetic kinds of things associated with it but nothing spectacular. Essentially, the mind just opened."

Immediately after that, Matt returned to his patient and completed the acupuncture treatment. He found that functioning was no problem since there was no longer any resistance to what is. Later, on the retreat, "There was a deepening into the Presence of Awareness. Accompanying that there was bliss, but unconditioned bliss, and there were some things that happened on the retreat too, as I went through layers of conditioning, because after the initial insight there is still stuff—still conditioned responses to things. But as they're seen they either go away or come back, but it doesn't matter. In that retreat setting you can really get into a very deep kind of state."

Matt then took questions from the group.*

In an effort to expand upon some of the topics briefly touched upon that evening, *Center Community News* met up with Matt less than a month later:



Hiromi and Matt Sieradski

Sangha – One of the Three Jewels

CCN: You say that you had not developed a consistent meditation practice until being exposed to Taoist practices. Can you describe some of those practices, and how they worked?

MS: The first Taoist system I practiced involved a series of increasingly difficult sets of static postures combined with breath regulation and retention methods. Basically, this practice, called Sun Do, is a Korean Taoist version of exercises similar to hatha yoga and pranayama, to use the terminology from Indian yoga. I practiced regularly for one year and made it to the third level before abandoning the methods when I began studying the Hunyuan Taiji and Qigong system. The Hunyuan system uses movements (rather than static postures) combined with a gradual refinement of the breath to deeply relax and heal the body, calm and concentrate the mind, and create a reservoir of vital energy in the center of the physical body, in a location known as the dantian, or “elixir field,” behind the navel. This leads to a type of concentration meditation that is the foundation of Taoist discipline, generally known as internal alchemy, skill in which can produce unusual abilities, including health and longevity.

CCN: How did your practice actually begin to change when you arrived at the Center? What had you been missing before that time?

MS: I was missing formal insight practice. I began to practice choiceless awareness—Joel’s method of insight meditation—which was very powerful for me.

CCN: So did choiceless awareness become your primary method of meditation?

MS: Choiceless awareness (and the more refined version called spacious awareness or effortless contemplation) has become the formal insight method that I practice, but I continue to practice a concentration method as well—the Taoist method of meditation I mentioned earlier, which is very good for our health. I probably formally practice them about equally as far as hours put in.

CCN: Did you find that dzogchen practices grew naturally out of concentration and insight meditation?

MS: First, I should be clear here: I have never formally studied with a dzogchen teacher. I find Joel’s choiceless awareness and spacious awareness meditation methods to be similar to what I have studied in books about dzogchen meditation, but not identical. Dzogchen has its own special terminology and worldview that is not part of the curriculum at CSS.

Second, both dzogchen and choiceless awareness meditation are themselves insight practices, in that they are designed to lead us towards greater awareness of reality. Concentration practice develops the power of attention, but applying that power toward liberation requires insight. As far as choiceless awareness growing naturally out of concentration practice: it will if you let it. It’s best to find a teacher to guide you in that direction, as there are many pitfalls.

CCN: Did that first spring retreat introduce you to the practice of liberating afflicted emotions, or was it only

during last fall’s retreat that you were able to make use of the practice?

MS: The first spring retreat introduced me deeply to the formal practice of liberating fear. However, it should be noted that all of us have been working with informally liberating emotions our whole lives, to greater or lesser success. Liberation is a technical term for fully allowing into awareness, without grasping or pushing away—in other words, with love. Anytime we transcend a negative emotional reaction to someone we love we are liberating emotions. My relationship with my wife, for example, has been extremely useful in this regard.

CCN: You recommended using afflictions as a stepping stone for self-examination. Could you give us some examples of how this was applied in your own practice?

MS: I’ve always been a very passionate person. Lust, anger, arrogance, envy, terror—I’ve tried them all. If you pay attention, they’re red flags for something deeper. In truth, seeing into them is the royal road to the bliss and peace of our true nature. In my case, before the breakthrough, I was paying a lot of attention to global political issues and was experiencing fear quite intensely for some time. Concurrently, there were often objects of desire that moved my mind. As time went by, I developed subtler and subtler attention to how these emotions (really the movements of grasping and pushing away) restricted the openness and expansive freedom of awareness that I had begun to experience through choiceless awareness practice. This restriction was felt to be localized at the heart center. The final insight was simply that identifying with this restriction is optional—let it go. If we cease identifying with these restrictions of energy, yet also maintain presence of awareness, these energetic knots self-liberate.

CCN: It is interesting that your awakening occurred while the family was out of town and your life was “simpler”, as you put it, during that period. Do you think that confirms the need for periods of retreat from heightened activity or responsibility?

MS: Yes, but instead of “need for,” I would use the term “usefulness of.”

CCN: Please talk about the “unconditioned bliss” that occurred during the fall retreat and how that is different from manifest bliss.

MS: The main distinction to make with regard to bliss is whether or not there is Gnosis. Gnosis reveals that the ground of reality is blissful already. Joel sometimes calls this “unmanifest” bliss. I like the term “unconditioned” bliss, as it describes how reality does not rely on causes or conditions for its nature. Bliss may manifest in many different ways, but if there is Gnosis then it is seen to be of the nature of one’s own being and is understood to be at essence unconditioned, like a mask being removed for a time; and if there is delusion it is seen as coming and going and is experienced as conditioned, like a passing parade. So the most relevant factor is whether or not there is grasping. Nisargadatta Maharaj says, “Desirelessness is the highest bliss.”

CCN: This is a fascinating topic and one that is the source of much confusion among spiritual practitioners. Since it is rare for the literature to make a clear distinction between them, people often confuse conditioned bliss with unconditioned bliss. Do you have any advice for us regarding the cultivation of bliss through meditation practices?

MS: Please don't forget that these distinctions we are now discussing are imaginary (as with all distinctions). But I think they are useful ones to make for spiritual practitioners. As far as advice regarding the cultivation of bliss: don't get stuck on it! Holding onto *any* experience, no matter how sublime, misses the key point. That said, I think that the cultivation of blissful states of consciousness has gotten a bad rap amongst some Buddhist-style practitioners of meditation. Blissful states have their place, but in the ultimate manner of speaking are no more and no less useful than states of affliction. They both show us where to look. Remember Dr. Wolff's metaphor of the carrot and the stick. To get a donkey to climb a trail, you can do two things (depending on the donkey, you may have to do both): hold a carrot out in front of his nose, and smack him on the behind with a stick. Bliss is the carrot, suffering the stick. The donkey's response is to grasp the bliss and push away the suffering. We are the donkey and the trail is the spiritual path—there is no escaping this basic mechanism of delusion.

Yet the goal *is* bliss, but not bliss of the sort that can be created by thought, practice, an act of will, or any effort whatsoever. That is why the mystics say that Realization, or the attainment of the highest bliss, comes through grace—it is the will of God, or the will of the universe, so to speak. This is because it arises through the breakdown of the subject/object duality, which is the very foundation of the whole delusional house of cards. Essentially, reality is bliss itself, but it is not a bliss that is enjoyed by anyone at all. It is more apt to call it Enjoyment itself. In truth, it is so eternally blissful that it doesn't mind hiding its bliss from itself so that we can have this discussion!

CCN: You are certainly the first teacher at the Center with a background in Chinese medicine, Taoist practices, and martial arts. Do you see yourself incorporating any of these elements into your teachings at the Center?

MS: I'm already teaching and practicing these disciplines in my work at the Green Phoenix Institute, so I'm not looking for another venue to present them. However, I do see the practice of Hunyuan qigong as a great complement to the practices at the Center, particularly in the way that it deeply relaxes the body and—as a consequence of this—the mind. How this background will influence what I teach at CSS is an interesting question, but one to which I don't yet know the answer. I think it's more up to the students than to me, with the caveat that it is important not to water down the direct message of Joel's teachings, which is to quickly ascertain the true nature of reality.

CCN: How do you see your vocation as an acupuncturist and Chinese herbal medicine practitioner supporting your spiritual practice?

MS: It was very useful to come face to face with the suffering of others on a daily basis. This gave me the blessed

opportunity to practice compassion, which is fundamental to the mystical path.

CCN: With respect to the Bodhisattva vow, you said that it is extremely important to try as hard as we can to do the most good that we can because that aligns us with the will that isn't ours. Do you think that this also figures into one's choice of vocation?

MS: Vocation is due to karma or inclination and isn't of itself a hindrance to the spiritual path. What is important in one's work is the intention behind it. "Even as the unwise work selfishly in the bondage of selfish works, let the wise man work unselfishly for the good of the whole world." (Bhagavad Gita, 3:25)

CCN: Thanks for sharing your insights with us, Matt. We are looking forward to hearing more in the future!

—Interview by Jack Yousey

*An edited transcript of Matt's talk, including his answers to questions from the audience, can be found on the website at www.centerforsacredsciences.org/teachings/matt.html.

CSS Meetings Will Change Location in September

When CSS meetings start up again after the six-week summer break, they will be held at a new location: the Green Phoenix Institute, 352 West 12th Ave. in downtown Eugene (between Lincoln and Lawrence Streets). The Green Phoenix will host Sunday talks and Wednesday night meetings. Street parking is available at no cost after 6 pm M-F, and all day on Sunday, and there is also free parking available (during these times only) in the lot on the northwest corner of 12th and Lincoln. The LTD terminal is located 7 blocks away.

The Green Phoenix Institute offers its martial arts training hall for the meetings, a large, elegant bamboo-floored room full of natural light. The Institute, directed by CSS teacher Matt Sieradski, is a Chinese medical clinic and taiji (tai chi) academy which also offers massage, yoga and other classes and workshops.

Plans are in the works for Green Phoenix to offer childcare during Sunday morning meetings. Volunteers will be sought to help out on a rotating basis—stay tuned for further info.

The CSS library will remain at 1571 Buck St.—see map on back page for directions to the library.



Green Phoenix Institute
352 West 12th Avenue
Eugene, OR 97401
541-344-0073

GreenPhoenixInstitute.com

LTD BUS ROUTES 30 and 43 travelling west on 11th Ave and 30 travelling east on 13th Ave both have stops just a couple of blocks from Green Phoenix Institute.

LIBRARY CORNER

Library Hours

Tuesday Evenings 6:00 - 8:30 p.m.

2nd & 4th Sundays 2:00 - 4:30 p.m.

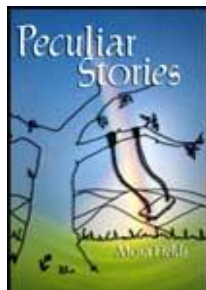
1571 Buck St., Eugene (see map, last page)

PECULIAR STORIES

By Mora Fields

O Street Publishing, 2010

Youth Fiction ages 6-10



Called the “Mark Twain of spiritual literature” by Joel, our own Mora Fields has written a book of teaching tales called *Peculiar Stories*. Both plain spoken, absorbing, and layered with depth, these stories delve into such topics as where do thoughts come from, how do we deal with things like emotions, fear and peer pressure, how to experience spaciousness, and the meaning of life. Here are a few bits from a story called “Thought Machine”.

[eating eggplant]...Which Uncle E knows, so I was a little upset that he cooked it when he knew I was coming over.

“What don’t you like about it?” He wanted to know.

“Nothing, except it tastes really horrible and terrible,” I said.

“No it doesn’t, it tastes delicious.”

“That’s just your opinion,” I told him, real huffy.

“And I guess it’s just your opinion, too. Just an idea.”

Like a conversation at any dinner table with a youngster (or picky eater), so begins a discussion of how the thoughts we collect form our opinions, which leads our heroine along with Uncle E and some classmates on an adventure to build a thought machine. In a few short pages this story touches on where thoughts come from, how to gain some detachment from them, building confidence, making friends, and ends with a completed science project.

Always engaging and never preachy, I highly recommend this book to any age reader.

—JENNIFER KNIGHT

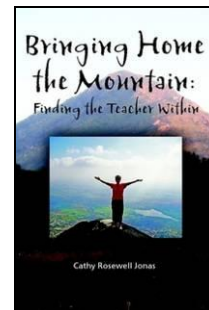
Peculiar Stories is available at www.ostreetpublishing.com

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

BRINGING HOME THE MOUNTAIN:
FINDING THE TEACHER WITHIN
By Cathy Rosewell Jonas
Free Heart Press, 2010



Another book by a Center member, this time an autobiography, is *Bringing Home the Mountain: Finding the Teacher Within*. “Cathy Jonas’s exciting account of her spiritual journey, *Bringing Home the Mountain*, overflows with an abundance of experiences and insights. Any genuine seeker should find plenty here to both inspire and instruct on his or her own path to Awakening.” —Joel Morwood

This book is fascinating not least because of its description of a spiritual path that combines elements of both bhakta and jnani approaches.

A passage from Cathy’s book:

Despite telling myself I was traveling empty-handed, I still had notions about India and what this retreat would mean to me spiritually. I anticipated spending most of my time meditating, deepening my self-inquiry practice and simply basking in the Source. Since this trip was in honor of Ramana Maharshi, I planned to visit his ashram often. The Mystery seemed to have other plans. It was not until arriving in Tiruvannamalai that I felt the intense pull of the mountain Arunachala.

—JENNIFER KNIGHT

Bringing Home the Mountain is available from www.lulu.com or www.amazon.com.



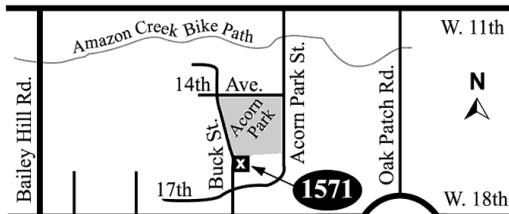


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MISSION AND PROGRAMS

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
1430 Willamette St., #164, Eugene, OR 97401-4049
newsletter@centerforsacredsciences.org

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CSS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER 2010 – JANUARY 2011

SEPTEMBER 2010

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

* **NO VIDEO**

OCTOBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
3 Video* 11 am	4	5 Library 6:00–8:30	6 Practitioners 7:30
10 CLOSED	11	12 CLOSED	13 CLOSED
17 CLOSED	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
31 Talk 11 am			

* **Healing Dreams**

In this fascinating video interview, author Marc Ian Barasch, talks about how understanding our dreams can help us heal physically, psychologically, and spiritually.

NOVEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1	2 Library 6:00–8:30	3 Practitioners 7:30
7 Video* 11 am	8	9 Library 6:00–8:30	10 Practitioners 7:30
14 Talk 11 am Library 2-4:30 pm	15	16 Library 6:00–8:30	17 Practitioners 7:30
21 Talk 11 am	22	23 CLOSED	24 CLOSED
28 CLOSED	29	30 Library 6:00–8:30	

* **JOSEPH CAMPBELL: Sacrifice and Bliss**

In this video, the fourth of a six-part series called *The Power of Myth*, renowned scholar Joseph Campbell explains why sacrifice is a necessary aspect of spiritual life and how it ultimately transforms into unimaginable bliss.

DECEMBER 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
			1 Practitioners 7:30
5 Video* 11 am	6	7 Library 6:00–8:30	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 CLOSED	The Center will only be open this week on SATURDAY, CHRISTMAS DAY, for a Special Talk 11 am		
26 CLOSED	27	28 CLOSED	29 CLOSED

* **BEDE GRIFFITHS: The Human Search**

An intimate video portrait of Father Bede Griffiths, a British-born Benedictine monk and mystic who spent most of his adult life in India developing a spirituality that harmoniously blends East and West.

JANUARY 2011

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

* **In Search of Self**

This fascinating documentary follows two dozen Zen Buddhist nuns as they undertake a traditional Dong Ahn Geo (Winter Meditation Retreat) in order to discover their true nature.

MEETING ADDRESS:

**GREEN PHOENIX INSTITUTE,
352 W. 12TH ST., EUGENE, OREGON**

LIBRARY ADDRESS:

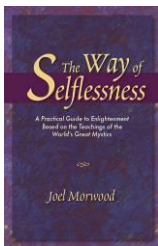
**1571 BUCK ST., EUGENE, OREGON
Phone: (541) 345-0102**

IMPORTANT NOTICE: Starting Sept. 19th, all CSS meetings will relocate to the **Green Phoenix Institute**, 352 W. 12th Ave., Eugene. This includes **Sunday meetings and evening Practitioners and Foundation Studies Groups**. See p.6 article for more information.

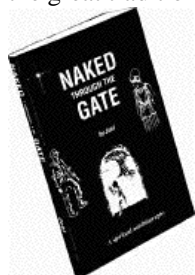
Center Publications

The Way of Selflessness: A Practical Guide to Enlightenment Based on the Teachings of the World's Great Mystics

By Joel Morwood, *Center for Sacred Sciences*, 2009, Paperback, 364 pages, \$27.95 (or from www.Lulu.com for just \$18.00)



A distillation of Joel's teachings on the path of selflessness drawn from his extensive study of the world's mystical classics. Will help seekers in any (or no) tradition understand and take to heart the teachings of the mystics of the great traditions.



Naked Through the Gate: A Spiritual Autobiography

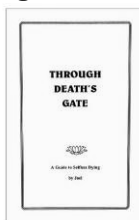
by Joel, *Center for Sacred Sciences*, 1985. Paperback, 262 pages, \$11.95

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 teachings and practices from the world's great mystics.

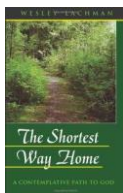


The above three books may be ordered at <http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org/catalog.html>

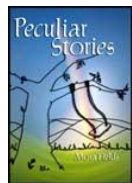
Book Publications by Members

The Shortest Way Home: A Contemplative Path to God

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



An introduction to the contemplative mystical path for those seeking a radically new and deeper way to God. A step-by-step presentation of the path of spiritual realization. Each chapter ends with a *You find out* exercise so the reader can test what has been read against his or her own experience.



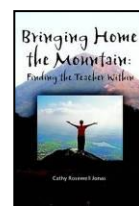
Peculiar Stories

By Mora Fields, *O Street Publishing*, 2010. Paperback, 94 pages, \$6.95
Youth fiction, ages 6-10 and up
www.ostreetpublishing.com

A book of teaching tales that are plain spoken, absorbing, and layered with depth. These stories delve into such topics as where do thoughts come from, how do we deal with things like emotions, fear and peer pressure, how to experience spaciousness, and the meaning of life.

Bringing Home the Mountain: Finding the Teacher Within

By Cathy Rosewell Jonas, *Free Heart Press*, 2010. Paperback, 224 pages, \$16.95
www.lulu.com and www.amazon.com



"Cathy Jonas's exciting account of her spiritual journey, *Bringing Home the Mountain*, overflows with an abundance of experiences and insights. Any genuine seeker should find plenty here to both inspire and instruct on his or her own path to Awakening."
—Joel

Einstein and Buddha: The Parallel Sayings

by Thomas J. McFarlane, *Ulysses Press*, 2002. Paperback, 176 pages, \$14.00
www.amazon.com

This remarkable book contains sayings from the founders of modern physics paired with parallel sayings from the works of Buddhist, Hindu and Taoist contemplatives. *Einstein and Buddha* challenges us to think deeper about the relationship between modern physics and mystical insight.

New Recordings

<http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org/catalog.html>

New CDs

Enlightenment: a twenty-six year perspective

Joel, 8/9/2009, 47 minutes

Sweet Little Babies

Todd Corbett, 4/26/2009, 58 minutes

Treasure Hunt for God

Fred Chambers, 5/17/2009, 35 minutes

Liberating Emotions Series (Set of Seven)

Seven Talks from the Fall 2009 Retreat

Spacious Awareness, Joel, 10/16/2009, 69 minutes

Understanding Emotions, Joel, 10/17/2009, 61 minutes

Desire and Aversions, Joel, 10/18/2009, 62 minutes

Pride and Envy, Joel, 10/19/2009, 60 minutes

Ignorance, Joel, 10/20/2009, 61 minutes

True Nature, Part 1, Joel, 10/21/2009, 62 minutes

True Nature, Part 2, Joel, 10/22/2009, 59 minutes

Liberating Emotions Series (above) is also available as an MP3 AUDIO SET

CSS resources on new worldview available at the Center library and in the online catalog:

DVD:

Universal Principles of Mysticism and the New Paradigm
Joel, 2005, 71 minutes

CDs:

What Are Sacred Sciences?, Joel, 10/27/02, 57 minutes, cd133

Logos and the New Worldview

Tom McFarlane, 6/22/03, 68 minutes, cd243 1833

Consciousness: Two Worldviews

Joel, 10/29/00, 65 minutes, cd132 1370

Quantum Mechanics and Consciousness

Joel, 1/26/97, 77 minutes, cd164 1070

Beyond Theories, Tom McFarlane, 1/11/04, 46 minutes, cd280