



# Center Community News

*The Newsletter of the Center for Sacred Sciences*

## Center Study Groups Immersed in WOS

Study groups at CSS (both the first-year Foundations Study Group and the ongoing Practitioners Group) have been discussing and practicing with a draft of Joel's forthcoming book, **THE WAY OF SELFLESSNESS** (known as "WOS" in Center parlance). At this writing both groups have covered more than half of the 35-chapter volume. As the book is a preliminary version, chapter and section titles, or even the book title, may change before publication, and a subtitle may be added.

The fourth meeting of each month is a community night meeting attended by both groups. This February, in response to Joel's request for feedback on WOS, the groups brought to community night their insights, questions, and suggestions, which he will use to modify and clarify parts of the text.

*In [this book] you will hear the voices of many different mystics from many different traditions, but it is not meant as an argument for the validity of their claims. Rather, it is meant to be a manual of instruction, a step-by-step guide for anyone who wishes to walk this path and find out for themselves whether or not what the mystics say is true.*

—Joel, **THE WAY OF SELFLESSNESS**

Most students agreed that the book reflects a condensed version of Joel's teachings over the years, beginning with his oft-stated assertion that mystics of our major spiritual traditions are pointing to just one Truth, and that these pointings are remarkably similar across traditions. The book goes on to provide a map for exploring the paths to this Truth along with suggestions for dealing with the hazards and pitfalls that might arise along the way. Teachings are given for both bhaktas and jnanis. As always, Joel's teachings are liberally supplemented with quotes from mystical teachers throughout the ages.

The overall response to the book was enthusiastic and grateful. Some suggestions were offered, such as adding figures and recapping information at intervals. Joel will continue accepting feedback and would like students to submit page-specific comments later this year.

*(continued on p.2, see "WOS")*

## Sangha Sutra

*Last Fall's Center retreat was orchestrated by ferocious yet compassionate Zen master Joel Morwood. For some reason it unleashed an outpouring of poems and song on the final day.*

### Raindrops on Retreat

*(Sung to Raindrops Keep Fallin' on My Head)*

Raindrops are dripping in my cup;  
now that doesn't mean that I will soon be waking up.  
Rinzai baffles me, OH,  
I'll never understand Zen by thinking.  
What does it mean?  
The sound of one hand clapping.

Raindrops keep pounding on my hat,  
but that doesn't mean that I can sit there like a cat.  
Koans aren't for me, NO,  
I'll never understand Zen by thinking.  
What does it mean?  
Zen is quite a mystery.

Raindrops are pouring in my room,  
but that doesn't mean he won't keep pointing to the moon.  
He's got his eyes on me, OH,  
I'll never understand Zen by thinking.  
What does it mean?  
Master, please don't whack me.

—MICHAEL STRASBURGER

**Koan:** A monk asked Zen master, Joshu: "Has a dog Buddha-nature or not?"

Joshu answered: "Mu." (*Mu* is a word in Japanese, meaning "No thing" or "Nay.")

Fred's response:

*I don't know but I hope so for the sake of its puppies.  
The little darlings will be running around and barking:  
"Buddha-nature, Buddha-nature, Mu, Mu.  
Buddha-nature, Buddha-nature, Mu, Mu."*

—FRED CHAMBERS

**Q:** Does a dog have Buddha-nature?

**A:** The Buddha killed that dog.

—TOM MCFARLANE

*(Continued on p. 7, see "Sangha Sutra")*

(WOS, continued from p.1)

### A sampling of student responses to WOS:

*I do not know of any other spiritual book with a conversational approach mixed with such comprehensive and stunning scholarship. Each reading hits me in a different spot and moves me in a different way, so that each read is a different experience.*

—SYLVIA HAWLEY

*As a 15-year-plus member of the Center, I'm no stranger to the material in **THE WAY OF SELFLESSNESS**. What I find valuable is having a reference book so I can revisit all the concepts and practices that Joel has introduced over the years. As my practice has progressed, I find that practicing some of the original concepts with new eyes and new understanding has been extremely useful and enriching. I especially appreciate many of the practices differentiated for jnana and bhakti practitioners. That is very useful.*

—BARBARA DEWEY

*WOS doesn't feel "written" as much as it feels like Joel giving a series of talks, and the book just happens to be the form they're in. And what I most appreciate about Joel's teaching—both in person and in the book—is his ability to synthesize his breadth and depth of knowledge about the teachings of the mystics and convey the essence of them with such clarity. The core of it, for me, is how accessibly he explains the "why" of it—why practice meditation? why practice precepts? etc.—by continually bringing it back to what selflessness actually means.*

—LISA RALEIGH

*Joel's linking of concepts to common life experiences, along with quotes from mystics from various traditions, provides me with significant resources for deeper understanding. When I hear about a concept I sometimes miss aspects of it that the reading reveals—like mindfulness: I got that it meant being present and aware of what you are doing and what's occurring through the day, but somehow I had missed the part about not judging it until I read about it in WOS. This book is full of lights upon the spiritual mystic path.*

—JANE HARRISON

*Comprehensive, organized, and culled from Joel's years of experience, WOS will serve as resource, guide, and inspiration to seekers on the path. This text has something for all. There is nothing to do but open the book, read, and apply the practices laid forth.*

—STEVE JONAS

*[Reading WOS] I felt like a pigeon following a bread trail—if I'm able to digest all the crumbs, I'll get to the end of the trail.*

—TIM BATES

### Send Us Your News...

News items, Submissions, Comments, Suggestions

Email newsletter@centerforsacredsciences.org or send snail-mail to CCN, Center for Sacred Sciences at the postal address on the back page of this issue.

### Holiday Celebration

The Center celebrated the past holiday season with our traditional December gathering and potluck. We had a change of venue this year (change is inevitable, as we all know), and the party was held at the Washington Park Center, which proved to be a cozy, accommodating environment.



Revelers in the throes of preparing to party

Megan Greiner set the tone with a poem chronicling the trials of a party organizer and ending with a blessing for all, and then the music offerings began. Even without the dynamic Dharma Brothers duo (one Brother was retreating), we managed to get by with some other very creative and talented stand-ins. Vip, Wes, and Deanna combined to form a new musical sensation. The members of last year's Foundations Study Group and others provided a humorous performance, Wesley serenaded us, and Clivonne's husband, Charlie, brought tears to a few eyes with one of his songs.

After all our little bellies were full and content from all the great food, we then tried to dance the calories off to Vinnie and Lou's rock-n-roll. Did that work for anyone?

A big "thanks" goes to everyone who contributed—making this another festive gathering for one and all!

—JANET BLACK

### HOLOS Interviews Quantum Physicist

Is consciousness related to quantum physics? Is the moon really there when you're not looking? Is the world non-locally interconnected at a deep level? These questions and other mysteries of quantum physics are discussed in the latest issue of **HOLOS: FORUM FOR A NEW WORLDVIEW**. In this interview, Bruce Rosenblum, Professor Emeritus of Physics at the University of California at Santa Cruz, uses simple experimental demonstrations to explain the two central enigmas of quantum theory: the dependence of reality on observation and the instantaneous connection between remote events. Through both these enigmas, Rosenblum argues, physics encounters the mystery of consciousness. In a surprise twist at the end of the discussion, Rosenblum turns the tables and asks **HOLOS** editor Tom McFarlane some interesting questions of his own. Read the interview online at [www.holosforum.org](http://www.holosforum.org).

## Library Training

### Yet another Opportunity for Practice

Although I have been a fairly infrequent user of the CSS library over the past five years, I recently found myself volunteering for a Saturday work session. My job involved typing the “spines,” or labels, to put on the sides of newly acquired books. As book after book appeared before me their spirit began to seep into my pores. Afterwards, Jennifer invited me to become a regular library assistant.

To work in the library one must first attend a library training session led by Jennifer and other librarians. I expected this to be a rather dry process but, to my surprise, the whole affair was actually quite relaxing and spiritually energizing. The way in which the librarians approach their volunteer work is balanced, orderly, and selfless. The love and respect for the sacredness of the library impressed me. I now realize much more fully just how central the library is to the Center and its mission.

One of the highlights of the training session was a presentation by Wesley and Jennifer entitled “The Story of a Book.” A diagram was used to explain the process by which books journey through the CSS library system, starting with their acquisition and ending with their retirement. We were also introduced to the Librarian’s Precepts (see below), which reveal the relationship between the library’s function and spiritual practice itself.

—JACK YOUSEY

### Library Volunteer Precepts

*Working in the library is a precious opportunity for spiritual practice. To this end, we strive to keep these five library volunteer precepts.*

1. **Service.** We strive to selflessly serve the spiritual needs of our patrons through maintaining a well organized and easily accessible collection of materials; developing and adhering to appropriate library policies and procedures; and by actively helping our patrons find items in a courteous and respectful manner.
2. **Respect.** We respect the opinions and beliefs of our patrons, and strive to connect them to teachers and teachings that fit their needs in an unbiased manner. We refrain from using library time to promote our own business interests and political causes.
3. **Privacy.** We protect each patron’s right to privacy and confidentiality regarding information sought and materials borrowed.
4. **Conscientiousness.** We strive to be conscientious in our work by being punctual, keeping our shift commitments, calling in advance when circumstances prevent us from doing so, and picking up after ourselves when our work is finished.

## CENTER FOR SACRED SCIENCES STAFF

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Fred Chambers  
Todd Corbett  
Jennifer W. Knight  
Thomas J. McFarlane  
Joel Morwood

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Todd Corbett

### Spiritual Director

Joel Morwood

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Andrea Pucci  
Todd Corbett  
Fred Chambers

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Jennifer W. Knight

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Barbara Dewey  
Paul Flashenberg  
Sylvia Hawley  
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Fred Chambers  
**Event Organizers**  
Megan Greiner  
Michael Strasburger

5. **Conservation.** We strive to conserve and preserve the materials in the library collection by being gentle when handling items, and fixing or reporting items that are worn or broken.

### And a Word from the Library Director...

I think of my crew as the Marines of the Center volunteers. These folks really work: lifting, bending, crawling on the floor, carrying piles of stuff around, doing a whole variety of processes, thinking, memorizing, learning, resolving a variety of issues like broken items, cases returned without the item, or items returned without cases, serving patrons, updating the card catalog... week after week, month after month, without proper work or storage space, and for no pay other than gourmet finger food and chocolate twice a year at their training, some Tuesday snacks provided by Wesley, a lanyard they get to wear on Sunday, and being proclaimed a “real librarian” by Megan during the Sunday introduction.

—JENNIFER KNIGHT

# Sangha – One of the Three Jewels

*The Buddha called it one of the three jewels, or three refuges. How might this treasure, sangha, help point us towards Home? CCN asked the Center's three Associate Teachers, Todd Corbett, Fred Chambers, and Andrea Pucci, to comment on sangha.*

## **Todd Corbett:**

We often use the Buddhist Pali term *sangha* at CSS to designate our community of practitioners. In Buddhism, sangha is regarded as the community of practitioners, and it's one of their three refuges which protect from the snare of worldly suffering. Worldly suffering is what we experience when we struggle within delusions of self-identity.

The three refuges of Buddha, dharma, and sangha are ultimately esoteric in meaning, so although our mind uses these terms to designate a shelter from suffering, the true meaning is ineffable. Until our attention is spontaneously capable of cutting through the din of conceptual mind, we, as sangha, rely on practices handed down by Buddhas in the form of dharma (teachings) in order to stabilize attention and allow the possible recognition of This which we already are—this ineffable One.

These three refuges are a teaching in themselves. When we first hear of Buddha, we may think of an artist's rendition of the Omnipotent One sitting on a lotus or under the Bodhi Tree, as the mind imagines who he might have been. It is only through practice and calming of our fragmented mind that we begin to recognize Buddha as that which is aware of that rendition. Buddha is recognized as the sublime teacher that cannot be found in images, and from which all images arise. These images of "him" and "me" and the entire world are all sameness arising in this One Buddha Mind. The more mind sees this, the more dumbfounded and quiescent it becomes. The more we see all the ways we struggle to hide from this reality through reified metaphors, the more likely that Awareness or Buddha Mind will Recognize Itself.

Initially, we might tend to see sangha as our group of like-minded practitioners, all striving for something more than our worldly predicament offers. We look around at our familiar seeking friends, and just as we saw that original rendition of the Buddha, we imagine who they might be. In fact, we might be quite sure who many of them are. But as we practice, and as we come to see into the subtle nature of mental designations, we begin to find that all of them are clearly, and always, mere designations of mind. We come to see that not only do we not know who or what they are, we also do not know, at bottom, who or what we are.

Sangha becomes a mirror for us. It is particularly valuable because here we are seemingly "mingling together" on the one hand, and mysteriously non-existent on the other. Further, how in the world can it all be One, as the mystics say, if I'm here and she or he is there? This becomes more compelling whenever we feel embarrassed around them, or prideful, or irritated.

Sometimes we think we understand that we are all One and then we feel a certain pride, then maybe embarrassment or confusion, and our apparent separateness pops up everywhere—that is, if we are attentive to these feelings as they move through. Sangha gives us the nuts and bolts teachings for examining the delusions that impregnate our social relationships, not only at CSS but back at the job and in the community. It provides a springboard for opening up to Truth in the midst of worldly friends, relatives, and events.

In my early practice, when I was suffering the loss of loved ones, I found immense consolation through the CSS Practitioners Group as the three refuges of teacher, teachings and community. The refuge of sangha reminded me that I was not alone on this path to Truth. There was strength in remembering those many practitioners who had walked this path before me, who had developed these very practices. My fellow practitioners served me deeply and directly, as they earnestly shared their experiences of practice and the development of their own skillful means.

As we wrestle with difficulties of meditation or the application of selfless precepts to our life circumstances, the sharing of our successes and failures with other seekers provides everyone with seeds for insight, within the fertile soil of compassion and appreciation. When we experience the true benefit of sangha, we see that it is not about having others to lean on and to thereby avoid facing our difficulties. Rather, it is through sangha that we are able to fully acknowledge our own difficulties by seeing into the intimacies of how others work with theirs. As we share our insights into ways of working with our stubborn and grasping mind, it serves as inspiration for others who then do the same for us.

As we move deeper into sangha awareness, we are able to notice that behind the designations, every face is Buddha teaching dharma; every face is Consciousness expressing Itself. Ultimately, all that arises is expressing dharma, pointing the way. When attention rests in what is truly here rather than clinging to the artist's rendition, all "forms" of sangha are the shimmering windows of dharma that open into Buddhahood.

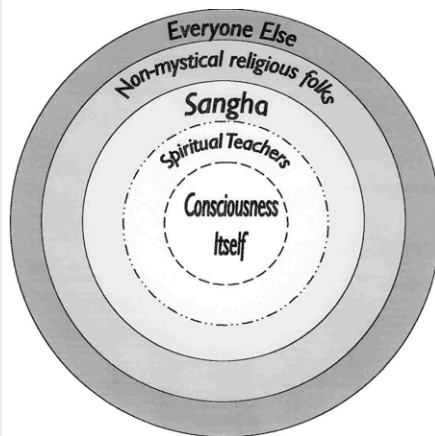
## **Fred Chambers:**

Sangha is a Buddhist term roughly meaning the spiritual community. For our purposes at CSS, I'd like to give it a generic meaning of anyone who has an active interest in, or is walking, a mystical path and seeking to know the Ultimate Nature of Reality for themselves. One of the best descriptions of how sangha works is a quote from Zen Master Seung Sahn that was in the last issue of CCN. To paraphrase, he says,

*The best way to wash potatoes is to put them all in a tub of water and use a stick to push them up and down. This makes the potatoes rub and bump against each other and this causes the dirt to fall off. It takes a long time to clean potatoes one at a time, but if they're all together, many potatoes clean each other.*

To follow that up, I think it might be helpful to create a simple mandala of concentric circles and place the sangha within that so we can get a better idea of how to make use of sangha. The center of the mandala would be Consciousness Itself, or whatever name you prefer to call the Ultimate Reality (God, Buddha-Nature, Tao, Allah, Brahman, En-sof). The next circle would consist of spiritual teachers. This would include Enlightened teachers, your inner teacher, your personal guru, and all other teachers who have had a taste of their True Nature but aren't fully Realized. The next circle out I would label sangha. It would contain everyone on a mystical path, including people at the Center as well as people in other traditions throughout the world. The next circle would contain everyone who considers themselves religious, but are not on a mystical path. The outer circle would consist of all the remaining people in the world, be they neutral or antagonistic toward spirituality.

*A dashed line represents the "boundary" between Consciousness Itself and enlightened spiritual teachers to indicate the recognition that they are identical. Occasional gaps in the boundary between spiritual teachers and sangha represent glimpses of Truth we start to see while doing mystical practices.*



The value of the sangha is twofold. First, there is the great advantage of having access to Enlightened teachers (through direct contact, books, or audio/video tapes) who can provide guidance and support on the path. Secondly, if you are in a group that meets regularly, you have the support and company of like-minded seekers, and this can be very beneficial, especially in a Western culture where the search for mystical Truth is given little if any credence. People in a sangha have similar doubts, fears, and experiences, and sharing these makes us feel less alone in the world. On my path, the sangha was like an extended family that provided much support. When conflicts and obstacles arise, the opportunity to grapple with them from a spiritual perspective is always available and encouraged.

Our compassion and understanding, for everyone we meet in life, arises when we realize that most of us at one

time or another have been in all the circles of the mandala. In my youth, I was an active member of a Christian church; then for the next twenty years I was in the outer circle of the mandala and held at best a neutral view of religion, and most often a negative view. I then found my way to CSS, soon joined the Practitioner's Group and started walking a mystical path. From your own experience, you realize that anyone you meet or know (family, friends, or strangers) could do something similar; no matter where they are in their life at present, they could be walking a mystical path in the next month, year, or decade.

Furthermore, Consciousness Itself is the ground of the entire mandala, so whether a person is in a sangha or not, they can encounter the divine. For example, Ramana Maharshi was a teenage boy in India with very little interest in anything spiritual, yet when he felt like he was going to die, he let the fear that arose drive his mind inward and, when everything disappeared, he Recognized his True Nature. Remembering this can help us guard against the spiritual pride which can arise as we think of ourselves as among the small percentage of people who strive to directly Know the Truth. Pride is often an obstacle, and evoking a sense of gratitude and humility for receiving the teachings serves much better.

Finally, the thing to remember is that the whole mandala and all its divisions are arbitrary and ultimately not real, but hopefully can be a useful visual way to view sangha and the field of practice.

## Andrea Pucci:

Sangha is the opportunity for practitioners on the path to display Enlightened activity through the practice of precepts or vows that sequentially progress in depth to the highest practice of Nonduality. Nonduality is the culmination of the path, or the Realization that all appearances ("other" beings, all phenomena) have always been, are now, and will always be, none other than the reflection of Enlightened, birthless, deathless, selfless Being. Just Awareness remains, revealing Endless Being in all its infinite forms, with observer and observed melting in silence, into pure, ubiquitous Emptiness Awareness.

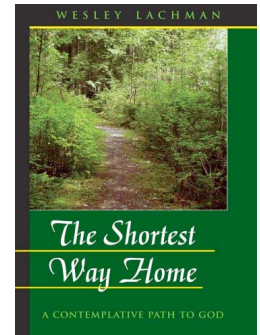
So to get there from here (dual vision of I/other, me/world) we in fact can learn gradually to practice the highest vow or practice of Nonduality, by *remembering* in each appearance, in each reaction to appearance, in each moment—that this appearance is none other than Enlightened wisdom emanation (or sangha). So far, so good, if we can but remember, in spite of our habitual tendency to react with habit patterns karmically engraved by unconscious repetition.

We can consecrate that moment as a precious opportunity for spiritual practice or Enlightened activity to manifest through us, by *simply remaining Presence of Awareness* while all the thoughts and emotions of aversion and grasping arise and dissolve along with the appearance in our sphere of awareness. In that lucid, aware space a compassionate, skilful response may



Library Hours:
Tuesdays 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

THE SHORTEST WAY HOME: A
CONTEMPLATIVE PATH TO GOD
by Wesley R. Lachman, O Street
Publishing, 2008.



Note: Wesley Lachman is a long
time CSS practitioner and senior
library assistant. At the time this
review was going to press, THE
SHORTEST WAY HOME was just
published and is expected to be
available in the CSS library soon.

With a sweet, relaxed clarity and economy of
expression, Wesley introduces selflessness and spacious
awareness on an interfaith basis to Christian churchgoers
and other readers.

It's a wonderful book. In its blend of simplicity and
thoroughness, it is reminiscent of the works of Meister
Eckhart. Wesley developed the content based on Joel's
teachings as well as his own teaching experience at
Central Presbyterian Church in Eugene, Oregon. He
expresses appreciation to both of his spiritual
communities.

In defining two approaches on the contemplative
path, devotion and wisdom, Wesley chooses to focus on
the wisdom path, saying it is devotion that gives us
perseverance.

Step by step the book moves from the beginning to
the end of the spiritual path. It illuminates our need to
investigate for ourselves, from within, as the moment-to-
moment observer, witness, and experiencer. The title
refers to Realization of our inherent Divinity, True
Nature, and the Kingdom that is always before us. In each
chapter, Wesley recommends a practice or two under the
heading, "You find out."

I love the book. It explains many of the concepts on
the path that can be confusing to new practitioners. I think
this would be an ideal addition to the Foundation Studies
reading list. Although it emphasizes Christian teachings,
the practices and their results are universal and inclusive.

Wesley has included comments in the bibliography to
indicate the accessibility of various resources. Of the 73
footnotes, three refer to talks or articles by Joel. Many
refer to Christian contemplatives and mystics, and many
to the Bible (New Revised Standard Version).

Though Wesley considers his slim volume
introductory, he covers each principal step toward
Recognition of our natural but forgotten union with the
Divine.

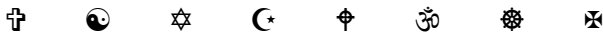
—SYLVIA HAWLEY

emerge and manifest. It is often difficult to do this
practice in the world (or sangha at large), which seems to
be such a hotbed of confusion, suffering, and unconscious
behavior. We can often feel failure and powerlessness as
we succumb to our reactions of aversion (Self-loathing) in
the face of such a challenge. So we can practice with our
intimate sangha of fellow practitioners, and use this
sangha refuge as our gym to get in shape, to have the
hidden secrets of our practice be revealed, and become
more and more ready for the Bodhisattva Olympics.

The ego or habit tendencies of defence and manip-
ulation to get what we want and push away what we don't
like are revealed by paying attention to our conditioned
reaction to spontaneous appearance. By ceasing to react
through our karmic veils of self-interest (detachment), we
can moment-by-moment renew our commitment to
Realize Enlightened body, speech and mind (sangha). We
surrender our personal self (story of I and its likes and
dislikes) to that greater Reality or Realization of
Nonduality (sangha). Through this surrender, the subject
(story of I) and the object (appearance) melt into Silence.
Without anything remaining there but pure space of
awareness, the ongoing flow of clear spacious awareness
or love radiates in nondual celebratory dance (sometimes
known as the tango).

This is how sangha manifests as Enlightened activity.
One forsakes the self for the Self. This joyful secret of
liberated expectations, liberated identity, feels so good
(da, da, da, da, da, da, da), and the dance goes on and on,
and pretty soon, you want to learn how to dance with
everybody as you gain confidence in your increasing
capacity to boogie.

Good luck to all, and may all beings benefit.



Librarian Comings and Goings
Center Library Loses a Senior Librarian

We mourn the departure of Miriam Reinhart, who
resigned from our crew last fall, and yet stayed through
February to pass much of her wisdom to Barbara, her
replacement for overdue calling and collection. Miriam
spent eight years as a library volunteer helping with all
the regular tasks, as well as getting our overdue
procedures back under control and streamlined, helping
design and implement new staff training, mentoring new
staff, and countless other duties. She will be remembered
for her qualities of fun, combined with a serious work
ethic and integrity. We wish her all the best in her life
adventure.

Bill Carter spent last year helping in the library—we
thank him and wish him the best. In January Barbara
Dewey completed the official cycle of library trainings
and graduated to "real librarian" status, while a fresh crop
of library helpers began their training. Please welcome
Paul Flashenberg, Sally Snyder, Betty Vail, and Jack
Yousey.

## Elephant Dreamer in Our Midst

CSS member Cathy Jonas returned in February from a month-long trip to India and Thailand to volunteer with three different wildlife organizations: Here is what she reports from her journey:



Above: Cathy Jonas and friend

“what is.” You can log on to my travel blog to read this unfolding story of compassion, healing, and advocacy at <http://www.travelblog.org/Bloggers/Elephant-Dreamer>.

## Internet Sangha Shares Wisdom, Support, in Spirit of 9th Precept

**9<sup>th</sup> Precept:** *Charity. Not to be possessive of people or things, but to give unsparingly of my assets, both material and spiritual, for the alleviation of suffering.*

Even folks who choose an ascetic life of solitary sadhana can access sangha wisdom if their cave has an internet connection. An online Yahoo group called *csspractice* is available to committed Center practitioners.

To join the *csspractice* group one must be a current member of the Practitioner’s Group, **or** have attended at least one CSS retreat **or** have completed Level 3 of the Distance Studies Course. The group was started in 2004 by CSS practitioners and is not officially affiliated with the Center. It currently has 59 members. Some speak (post) often, some just now and then, and some observe silently.

According to list moderator Megan Greiner, the group was formed “in order to maintain contact with dharma brothers and sisters, and to deepen our commitment to Truth and enhance our understanding of that Truth which all of the mystics point to.... By sharing our insights and concerns, and continuing discussions, and dispensing views from mystics living and past, may we continue to support one another on our spiritual journey.”

In addition to this noble purpose, the group supports its members in more mundane, temporal ways. It has become a vehicle for sharing inspiring art, poetry and books. When we hear of accidents, illnesses, or other

challenges arising for CSS members (as well as the rest of the world), the group responds with a mixture of pointings, prayer, and online hugs. When one member’s computer was stolen several months ago, donations were collected online to assist in replacing it. Some posts offer links to articles and events of interest, and even the occasional political or environmental issue is discussed. Of particular note was a timely alert last year to the hazards of dihydrogen monoxide, an environmental threat previously unknown to most of us. And it must be mentioned that hoaxes, scams, and jokes occasionally make an appearance.

As with any sangha, difficulties arise and teachings are seen. This group of yahoos is first and foremost a dharma group, supporting, encouraging, and challenging one another to open our hearts, inquire more deeply, and keep on keeping on. The group welcomes new members as they complete the Foundations Studies or Distance Studies course levels. Those who wish to join can email Megan Greiner at [megan@efn.org](mailto:megan@efn.org)

(Sangha Sutra, continued from p.1)

### Lentils

Yet again, unending lentil sea.  
Dahl slides from my spoon like mud after rain.  
Oh Krishna, clever trickster,  
where have you run off to,  
leaving this empty bowl?

—MORA DEWEY

### The Leaf And I

Oh maple leaf, oh maple leaf.  
Will you help me to get beyond my clinging belief?  
That somehow I am immune  
And will not end up inside a tomb.  
While I've watched you turn from green, orange,  
and pissy yellow.  
I prefer to think I will only mellow.  
When you are nothing but a crinkle,  
Must I become a dried up wrinkle?

Oh maple leaf, oh maple leaf.  
You look so very drooped,  
I'm sure you must feel very pooped.  
And with the wind you are sure to fall  
At rest below the dining hall,  
Where you will turn a morbid brown,  
As I blissfully return to town.  
Naively thinking of my immortality,  
I become the next fatality.

—MIKE BARKHUFF

That crazy old half-blind Irishman from the East Coast  
Tells his students to look for what can't be found  
Then tells them to do nothing, and to just sit there.  
What does this silly nonsense have to do with Zen?

—TOM MCFARLANE

I have no pome,  
I just want to go Home.

—VIP SHORT



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

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## CONTACT THE CENTER



Meeting address: 1571 Buck St., Eugene, Oregon  
Web address: [www.centerforsacredsciences.org](http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org)  
Phone: (541) 345-0102  
Postal address: 1430 Willamette St. #164  
Eugene, OR 97401-4049

## 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

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# CSS CALENDAR

## MAY 2008 – SEPTEMBER 2008

### MAY 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
4 Video* 11 am	5	6 Library 6:00–8:30	7 Practitioner 7:30
11 Talk 11 am	12	13 Library 6:00–8:30	14 Practitioner 7:30
18 Talk 11 am	19	20 Library 6:00–8:30	21 Practitioner 7:30
25 Talk 11 am	26	27 Library 6:00–8:30	28 Practitioner 7:30 (ALL)

#### \* Joseph Goldstein: Gateway to Wisdom

American-born Buddhist meditation teacher Joseph Goldstein discusses such topics as spiritual freedom, karma, transformation, and how to integrate meditative wisdom into our everyday lives.

### JUNE 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
1 Video* 11 am	2	3 <b>CLOSED</b>	4 <b>CLOSED</b>
8 <b>CLOSED</b>	9	10 Library 6:00–8:30	11 Practitioner 7:30
15 Talk 11 am	16	17 Library 6:00–8:30	18 Practitioner 7:30
22 Talk 11 am	23	24 Library 6:00–8:30	25 Practitioner 7:30
29 Talk 11 am	30		

#### \* Interview with Adyashanti

In this rarely seen videotaped interview with Adyashanti, the Western-born mystic reveals many intimate details about his life, path, and teaching.

### JULY 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
		1 Library 6:00–8:30	2 Practitioner 7:30 (ALL)
6 Video* 11 am	7	8 Library 6:00–8:30	9 Practitioner 7:30
13 Talk 11 am	14	15 Library 6:00–8:30	16 Practitioner 7:30
20 Talk 11 am	21	22 Library 6:00–8:30	23 Practitioner 7:30
27 <b>CLOSED</b>	28	29 <b>CLOSED</b>	30 <b>CLOSED</b>

#### \* Fearless Mountain

This beautiful and inspiring video documents the lives of forest dwelling monks, living in a traditional Theravadan Buddhist Monastery located in California.

### AUGUST 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
3 Video* 11 am	4	5 Library 6:00–8:30	6 Practitioner 7:30
10 Enlightenment Day Talk 11 am	11	12 <b>CLOSED</b>	13 <b>CLOSED</b>
17 <b>CLOSED</b>	18	19 <b>CLOSED</b>	20 <b>CLOSED</b>
24 <b>CLOSED</b>	25	26 <b>CLOSED</b>	27 <b>CLOSED</b>
31 <b>CLOSED</b>			

#### \* Eckhart Tolle: Stillness In Everyday Life

In this video, Eckhart Tolle, the contemporary mystic and author of *The Power of Now*, talks about the value of stillness as a gateway to Awakening to the Presence of Awareness that we truly are.

### SEPTEMBER 2008

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday
	1	2 <b>CLOSED</b>	3 <b>CLOSED</b>
7 <b>CLOSED</b>	8	9 <b>CLOSED</b>	10 <b>CLOSED</b>
14 <b>CLOSED</b>	15	16 <b>CLOSED</b>	17 <b>CLOSED</b>
21 Talk * 11 am	22	23 <b>CLOSED</b>	24 Practitioner 7:30 (ALL)
28 Talk 11 am	29	30 Library 6:00–8:30	

\* NO VIDEO

**MEETING ADDRESS:  
1571 BUCK STREET  
EUGENE, OREGON**



**PHONE: (541) 345-0102**

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## Center Publications

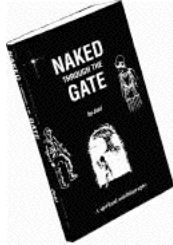
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For a complete catalog of our current publications and for pricing and ordering information, please visit our website at [www.centerforsacredsciences.org](http://www.centerforsacredsciences.org)

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### Book Publications

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#### **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, 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.

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### Audio Publications

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#### Enlightenment

##### **Consciousness Unveiled: Fred's Awakening**

*Fred Chambers, March 29, 2006.*

Tape# 1915; CD# cd450; 61 minutes

#### Foundational Teachings

##### **Four Kinds of Practice**

*Joel, June 26, 2005.*

Tape# 1898; CD# cd400; 59 minutes

#### Mysticism and Society

##### **The Feminine Face of Mysticism**

*Joel, July 31, 2005.*

Tape# 1903; CD# cd413; 45 minutes

#### Aspects of Practice

##### **Truth Has No Name**

*Todd Corbett, November 12, 2006.*

Tape# 1928; CD# cd476; 69 minutes

##### **Inner Renunciation**

*Joel, October 15, 2005.*

Tape# 1944; CD# cd500; 62 minutes

#### Aspects of Practice—Devotion Series

##### **Devotion #1: Verbal Prayer**

*Joel, October 16, 2005.*

Tape# 1908; CD# cd416; 60 minutes

##### **Devotion #2: Prayer-in-the-Heart**

*Joel, October 17, 2005.*

Tape# 1909; CD# cd417; 62 minutes

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## New MP3 Audio CDs

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#### Meditation Series

5 Talks by Joel on an MP3 CD, from the Fall 2003 Retreat:

**#1: Concentration Practice; #2: Choiceless Awareness; #3: Liberating Thoughts, Desires, and Aversions; #4: Returning to the Source; #5: Doing Nothing**

*Joel, October 2003, \$20.*

#### Devotion Series

7 Talks by Joel on an MP3 CD, from the Fall 2005 Retreat:

**#1: Verbal Prayer; #2: Prayer-in-the-Heart; #3: Purifying the Heart; #4: Entering the Spiritual Heart; #5: Unceasing Prayer; #6: Silent Prayer; #7: Doing Nothing**

*Joel, October 2005, \$28.*

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## DVD Publications

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#### Shifting the Base of Reference

*Joel, August 8, 1992; Great Space Center, Lone Pine, CA # DVD-32; 67 minutes \$17.95\**

Joel discusses two of Dr. Wolff's most important concepts: *shifting the base of reference*, and *substantiality is inversely proportional to ponderability*. These ideas served as steps to Dr. Wolff's own Recognition of that Truth which transcends all concepts and ideas, and Joel shows how they can be used as the basis for a meditative inquiry by anyone following a *jnana* path.

*\* Please note that while the quality of the audio is fine, some portions of the video display sharp contrast fluctuations.*

#### Here and Now News Service:

##### **Joel Interviews Franklin Merrell-Wolff**

*Joel, June 21, 1983; Great Space Center, Lone Pine, CA #DVD-30; 70 minutes \$17.95*

Readers of *Naked Through the Gate* know that during the final months of Joel's path, he took to the road, visiting spiritual communities and teachers to record the video magazine "The Here and Now News Service."

Meeting Franklin Merrell-Wolff, Joel recognized he was someone special and dropped the 15-minute "Here and Now" format for a longer interview. Today Joel says of this recording, "I didn't know the right questions to ask Dr. Wolff. I wish I'd thought to redo this video after my awakening." This film also has some spots of snow and segments of hand-held camera work. Even so, it's a fascinating document for those familiar with Dr. Wolff's work, or interested in the formation of Joel's teachings.

##### **Final Thoughts: Keynote from the 2007 Franklin Merrell-Wolff Conference**

*Joel, June 9, 2007; Great Space Center, Lone Pine, CA #DVD-171; 46 minutes \$21.95*