

*Working to integrate contemplative awareness and contemporary life  
to help create a more just, compassionate, reflective, and sustainable society*



the center for  
**Contemplative Mind in Society**  
**Program Activity Report**

October 2010 - October 2011



*Above, Otto Scharmer, Ray Sackler and Jerry Murphy practice sitting meditation in the greenhouse garden of the Harvard Business School chapel.*

*On the cover, far left: Jon Kabat-Zinn leading discussion. This and the above image are from the May 23 Contemplative Pedagogy in Leadership Meeting; see page 31 for more information.*

*On the cover, center: at the 2011 Western Regional Conference at Whidbey, Rhonda Magee presents “Contemplative Contributions to Integrative Education,” a plenary session with Arthur Zajonc. At right, the stone labyrinth at the Whidbey Institute.*

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## Dear Friends of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society,

As the outer developments of society, economic life, and technological innovation proceed apace, what will guide them? What values and perspectives are needed in order to secure a bright and sustainable future for succeeding generations? This is not a technical question but one which, like so many others, requires reflection and the cultivation of an interior landscape as rich and varied as the outer. The work of the Center is, as I see it, the cultivation of that interior dimension so essential to our humanity.

The writer, poet, and professor Wendell Berry has written of higher education, “The thing being made in a university is humanity. What universities are *mandated* to make or to help to make is human beings in the fullest sense of those words—not just trained workers or knowledgeable citizens but responsible heirs and members of human culture.” In my view, few things can better contribute to the development of our human culture than the cultivation of attention, compassion, and mindful awareness through contemplative practice.

In the following pages, you will find an overview of the Center’s Academic Program’s current activities, which represents the heart of the Center’s work. Now that the promise of contemplative higher education appears to be greater than ever, what will be the role of the Center in realizing this promise?

I see the Center as providing its community of professors, university administrators and students three crucial functions in the coming years: a trustworthy resource, leadership, and community. This report can be read through the lens of these three functions, and as we look ahead these will continue to be important elements of our future work.

1. The Center is a *trustworthy resource* for contemplative materials and practices suited to all aspects of higher education from community colleges and liberal arts colleges to universities and professional schools.
2. The Center is a *leader* in the emerging field of Contemplative Pedagogy, developing practices, featuring leading practitioners, gathering research, and articulating the rationale for contemplative higher education.
3. The Center, through its Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education, provides the vehicle for the growing *community* of people interested in contemplative higher education to meet and share their work and questions with each other.

## **A Trustworthy Resource**

Our successful annual conference, summer session, and retreat, as well as our webinar offerings and video highlights from our conferences and summer sessions are among the key resources we offer to educators. Through our extensive website and many publications—including syllabi, meeting reports, and a large bibliography—we bring together the fruits of thirteen years of experience in the field. Increasingly, we plan on taking full advantage of the potential offered to us by the reach of our two websites.

## **Leadership**

As with any emerging field, leadership is required. Contemplative education is much more than mindfulness on the breath. There are ethical issues that need to be confronted, research that needs to be done and aggregated, a cogent rationale for its inclusion is necessary, content-related practices need to be developed and shared. If the full promise of contemplation for higher education is to be realized, the quality of our work must meet a very high standard. The Center provides a strong example of the growing edge in the field. We can identify those within our community who are developing the most important contributions and give them a platform. And in addition to featuring the excellent work of others, we will continue to take our own initiatives in selected areas that offer us important opportunities.

## **Community**

Finally, I have come to appreciate the extraordinary importance of community to those academics, whether teachers or administrators, who are seeking to become active contemplative educators. Very often they feel alone in their institutions, or are uncertain as to how the contemplative can be integrated into their teaching. Again and again we hear how important the simple act of coming together is for those involved. I see the fostering of a contemplative education community as especially the function of the Association. This can take place not only through our national and regional conferences, but also through our professional networking software and other online methods. Once people meet, they begin to invite each other to their campuses, and the density of relationships grows in informal ways.

I hope that these few remarks will help to orient you toward the report that follows. Thank you for your continued involvement in the work of the Center. As you read through this overview of our work, please also consider ways that you might support the good work of the Center. We need new funding for the fellowship program, for our project with Israeli Schools of Education, for our diversity and contemplation initiative, and general support. Without you and your efforts on behalf of the Center, this remarkable work would not be possible.

**With great gratitude,**  
*Arthur Zajonc, Director*



# History

For the last thirteen years, the Academic Program of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society has played a leading role in fostering the inclusion of contemplative practice and inquiry in college and university classrooms in North America and beyond. Few experiences are more formative in a person's life than the years spent in college, university, and professional school. Not only does one train for a vocation, but one's intellectual disposition, ethical orientation, character, and inner life are shaped in ways that endure for decades. Good judgment, creativity, compassionate action, social-emotional intelligence, and true insight depend on the ability for balanced reflection, sustained attention to complex and confusing situations, empathy for the suffering of others, and equanimity in the face of life's challenges. In short, contemplation should become an integral part of higher education. The work of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, which has involved thousands of professors and university administrators, has initiated a change in the ethos of higher education in just this direction.

The Center's work in higher education began in 1997 with the Contemplative Practice Fellowship Program, created in collaboration with the American Council of Learned Societies. As of 2009, over 150 Fellowships have been granted and the Center's Academic Program now offers:

- Annual summer sessions on contemplative curriculum development
- Annual or bi-annual meditation retreats for professors and administrators
- Conferences at Columbia University and Amherst College, the last two emphasizing contributed papers from our community with 100-250 attending each conference
- The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education, started in 2008, connects over 600 members and offers professional networking for academics interested in contemplative pedagogy
- A quarterly e-newsletter reaching over 2000 academic contacts
- Monthly webinars featuring leading contemplative educators and researchers
- Extensive on-line resources for academics at our two websites, [contemplativemind.org](http://contemplativemind.org) and [acmhe.org](http://acmhe.org).

*Left to right: Joseph Goldstein at the 2006 Summer Session; Contemplative Practice Fellows Daniel Barbezat, Al Kaszniak, and Renée Hill; Tom Bassarear presents at the 2010 ACMHE conference; Saskia Tait, Shabar Rabi and Heesoon Bai leading a session at the 2011 West Coast regional conference.*

# Core Principles of Contemplative Higher Education

## Capacity-Building

Capacities such as a stable yet flexible attention and emotional balance are of value both in the classroom and throughout life. A wide range of contemplative exercises exist which specifically cultivate these skills. Mindfulness practices stabilize the mind by settling attention on a simple object or process, like the breath. Practices that promote emotional balance allow one to be empathetic yet sufficiently objective and able to cope with difficult life circumstances. Recent research on attention corroborates the in-class experience of thousands of professors who are now using contemplative exercises in their teaching.

## Course-Specific Contemplative Practices

Educators are now developing contemplative practices that are highly relevant to their specific subject matter. For example, art historians are teaching ways of “beholding” art, informed by contemplative practice. Poetry reading can be informed by the ancient practice of *lectio divina*. Technical courses such as economics, chemistry and mathematics are also amenable to course-specific contemplative practices.

## Cultivation of Empathy Supporting Compassionate Action

It is crucial that contemplative education not be misunderstood as aloof or disconnected from life. Indeed, contemplative exercises enhance empathy and compassionate connection to others. This goes on to shape ethical action. The third domain of contemplative pedagogy is therefore directed to the cultivation of compassion and altruistic behavior. Research on this has been undertaken recently by the Center for Compassion and Altruism

Research and Education (CCARE) at Stanford University using an eight-session compassion training designed by Thubten Jinpa. Recent reports given at the Dalai Lama conference in October 2010 (which Arthur Zajonc moderated) were very encouraging.

Finally, the inclusion of contemplative methods in higher education will go a long way towards redressing an increasingly recognized imbalance, the result of which is that the inner life of our students is sorely neglected. In his book *Excellence without a Soul*, Harry Lewis, former dean of Harvard College, explains that “Harvard and our other great universities lost sight of the essential purpose of undergraduate education.” They have forgotten that they are there to help students “learn who they are, to search for a larger purpose for their lives, and to leave college as better human beings.”

## The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE)

### *A Contemplative Higher Education Community*

The ACMHE ([acmhe.org](http://acmhe.org)), founded in May 2008, promotes the emergence of a broad culture of contemplation in the academy by connecting a network of institutions and academics committed to the development of the contemplative dimension of teaching, learning and knowing.

The major goals of ACMHE over the next five years, as outlined in the October 2009 business plan draft include the following:

- Increase Visibility and Membership
- Identify and Develop Funding Partners
- Improve and Continue Delivery of Services

ACMHE Events are organized (or co-sponsored) to serve prospective and current members.



# Annual Events

## **Western Regional ACMHE Conference July 1-3, 2011, Whidbey Institute, Clinton, WA**

The first gathering on the West Coast of the ACMHE network brought together over 70 participants for a weekend of practice, presentations, and collegiality. We were graced with unusually brilliant sunshine and treated to the extraordinary hospitality of the Whidbey Institute. It was delightful to join with our existing members and partners from the region as well as meet new friends, including many from Canadian universities. The program included invited and contributing speakers, 17 panel presentations, discussion circles and meditation and movement sessions.

The weekend began with introductory remarks by **Arthur Zajonc** after a welcome dinner on Friday evening, followed by the keynote address by **Laura Rendón**, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Texas-San Antonio, and the author of *Sentipensante (Sensing/Thinking) Pedagogy: Educating for Wholeness, Social Justice and Liberation*.

Saturday morning's program began with silent practice: meditation in the Institute's Sanctuary and a contemplative bird walk on the Chinook Land at Whidbey with **Jean MacGregor**, Director of the Curriculum for the Bioregion Initiative and faculty in the Masters of Environmental Studies Program at Evergreen State College. The conference opened with a plenary panel, "Classroom as Alchemical Container: Educator as Alchemist," with **Heesoon Bai**, **Tom Culham**, **Sean Park**, **Charles Scott**, **Shahar Rabi**, and **Saskia Tait**, faculty from Simon Fraser University and **Avraham Cohen**, from the City University of Seattle (Vancouver, BC site); the group has been working together in the philosophy of education department. After

the morning's plenary, concurrent sessions in four locations included "Insight Dialogue," with **Gregory Kramer**; a panel led by Jean MacGregor on "Why Sustainability Education Needs a Pedagogy of Contemplative and Reflective Practice," and "Integrative Higher Education: A Contemplative Humanity Consciousness Approach," with **Rhonda Magee**.

Saturday afternoon sessions included a 90-minute yoga asana and yoga nidra (restorative) practice and two panels, "Revisiting the Requirements for Intersubjective forms of Contemplative Practice," led by **Olen Gunnlaugson** from the University of Laval, and "Contemplating Consciousness: Teaching and Learning at the Edge of Mind Science," led by **Kate Noble**, Professor of Science and Technology at the University of Washington Bothell, with ten of her students. The inclusion of student perspectives has become an aspiration for ACMHE events, so it was particularly gratifying to hear from this group. Four additional students from Evergreen State College attended at the invitation of their professor, **Sarah Williams**. Scholarship funds supported student attendance.

On Sunday morning, near the end of a wonderful and nourishing weekend, **David Levy**, Professor at the Information School at the University of Washington, moderated the plenary panel and discussion, "Translating Practice, Maintaining Integrity," which included **Patricia Killen**, Vice President of Gonzaga University; **Michael Gillespie**, Interdisciplinary Arts and Sciences Program, University of Washington Bothell; and **Cheryl Metoyer**, Associate Professor at the Information School, University of Washington. The panelists presented challenging questions for discussion.

The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education is honored to provide leadership for the western regional network and meet the eagerness of members to take up these issues on the leading edge.



*Above: A demonstration of an intersubjective sharing exercise, from the "Classroom as Alchemical Container: Educator as Alchemist" panel. Below: Keynote presenter Laura Rendón, Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy Studies at the University of Texas-San Antonio; the stone labyrinth at the Whidbey Institute.*

## Seventh Annual Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development

August 7 – 12, 2011

Smith College , Northampton, MA

By Beth Wadham

The Summer Session has grown over the years to serve 40 participants, which means that introductions during the opening circle have taken on the qualities of a “Zen exercise” in brevity. One-two sentences each, to say name, department, institution, and, at **Mirabai Bush’s** request, “Why you *really* came.”

The invitation to go directly to the essence of the matter started the group off well for a week of extraordinarily honest and engaged connection. Participants came seeking “tools to help student’s wake up,” “put heart into teaching,” “to be with others who are thinking and feeling contemplatively,” as well as “to escape from the Texas sun.”

The week’s presentations and conversations take place in an environment quite different from that of the first Summer Session. There is a new openness to and interest in contemplative approaches, from community colleges to top tier research institutions. During **Arthur Zajonc’s** opening talk, he gave an overview of the Center’s work, including two new initiatives in contemplative leadership education at Harvard/MIT and teacher education in Israel, where he hopes the Center’s involvement can make a positive contribution to a tremendously challenging situation. Quoting Maria Montessori, he remarked, “Preventing conflict is the work of politics; peace is the work of education.”

All these activities are meant to serve students, faculty and institutions by providing support for greater contemplative awareness.

A clearer rationale for the inclusion of contemplative approaches to teaching and learning is emerging, supported by research in psychology and neuroscience. Contemplative methods strengthen attention and emotional

stability and cultivate empathy, altruism and compassion, enhancing the service orientation of students. Contemplative practice can be a mode of inquiry, deepening student engagement as they delve into poetry or the observation of natural phenomena. The inclusion of practice is valid across disciplines for general use, and relevant to course specific content.

In the first evening presentation, **Joel Upton**, Professor of Art and Art History at Amherst College, offered “Contemplating Monet’s painting *Matinée sur la Seine*,” a course specific contemplative encounter with a “stupendous work of art.”

He asked the group to be as present as possible with the image, painted by Claude Monet on the left bank of the Seine near Giverny, in 1897. If we were in the Mead Art Museum at Amherst College, where the painting now hangs, he would suggest we approach with reverence, quietly open and vulnerable. To move in close, where the brush strokes become visible, and move away, observing how the painting changes.

Up close, the brush strokes appear chaotic, but from a distance resolve into an impressionistic scene. These are just the beginning of a long litany of contradictory elements Joel draws to our attention: chromatic contrast between light and dark, a pull between horizontal and vertical, near and far, asymmetry and symmetry, presence and absence.

The artist, Joel suggests, creates out of these fundamental tensions, toward “an intimation of the reconciliation of contradictory reality.” From the primacy of the nearly meditative encounter with the work, he moves on to the history, iconography, and more conventional “ways of knowing” the painting, but these investigations are all informed by the prior experience. In the thrall of his contemplation of the painting, Joel finds he can nearly hear the artist’s own voice speaking, quietly: “be well, have joy, be at peace.”

Each morning of the summer session began with meditation and movement in the Crew House (now a dance studio) on Paradise Pond. The morning



after Joel's presentation, the view of the water, in the morning atmosphere, evoked a similar sense of tranquility. After quietly sitting together, Yin Mei led a series of movements adapted from Tai Chi and Qi Gong, in her own wonderful way. Refreshed and uplifted, the group walked through the gardens to the library's browsing room for the morning program.

**Judith Simmer-Brown** is Professor of Religious Studies at Naropa University, an institution, as she put it, "founded by some very brave people in 1974." She began her talk, "First Thought: Trusting Freshness in Academic Pursuits," by saying that she went first to Naropa as a student. After teaching at the University of Western Washington for some years, she was looking at how to do things differently in the classroom. Naropa, at the time, was quite experimental—a kind of petri dish—that often blurred the distinction between a dharma center and a university. Some of the experiments that succeeded had to do with developing "fresh mind," opened by meditation, into the classroom. She was curious whether a certain state of mind could bring fresh thoughts, a kind of "sky in which clouds arise" or "ocean in which waves arise," bringing one into the present moment and opening the possibility of creativity.

Some of the practices developed included "spontaneous poetry," composed from lines invented on the spot by multiple persons, and an adaptation of *lectio divina* or sacred reading of poems. This type of reading process supports an encounter in which, rather than "grasp the meaning," readers "let it dawn" on them. Then they go on to create something out of the experience, such as a line of writing, picture, gesture (dance), or journal entry.

A basic understanding of presence, and a foundation of mindfulness practice is important—fresh thought is not opinion or reaction, or recourse to habitual notions.

*Above: Judith Simmer-Brown, Professor of Religious Studies at Naropa University. Below: Small group discussion during "Waiting," a session led by Linda-Susan Beard, Associate Professor of English at Bryn Mawr College.*

At Naropa, students are supported by sitting/shamatha classes, so it's not necessary to include this in the academic classroom, but in a mainstream setting a taste of practice—five minutes or so—would help bring students to the freshness of the present moment before other exercises begin.

**Sara Lazar**, instructor in the Department of Psychiatry at Harvard Medical School, as well as a scientist at the Beth Israel Deaconess Medical Center's Mind/Body Medical Institute and an Assistant in Psychiatry in the Department of Psychiatry at Massachusetts General Hospital, presented "Meditation and the Brain," a talk that 10 years ago would not have been possible.

"What is meditation?" she asked. It looks like nothing. But with neuroscience instruments a great deal of mental activity can be observed. Just as physical exercise is good for the body, the focused attention (on mantra breathing, etc.) has benefits for the brain.

The studies Sara presented were primarily based on subjects who practiced Vipassana, or insight meditation, a form of mindfulness defined as focus on the breath, in the present moment, without judgment. Early studies reported effects such as states of calm, well-being, and an increased capacity for attention, memory and managing emotion.

What happens in the brain when you meditate? Increased gamma activity (brain waves) connect the limbic system to the cerebral cortex, reinforcing the mind-body connection. The amygdala (associated with the "flight or fight" response) is less active. In stressful environments, for example, the amygdala grows.

Meditation also affects the structure of the brain. Volume (grey matter) differences among taxi drivers, bilinguals, musicians and jugglers can be seen in areas of the brain associated with specific activity. Jugglers, for example, have increased volume in the area of the brain involved in detecting visual motion. The regions of the brain affected by meditation are the insula (associated with

integrating thoughts, senses and emotion), and the pre-frontal cortex (working memory, attention, emotion regulation and moral decision-making).

Practitioners of Mindfulness-Based-Stress Reduction (MBSR) had "increased density" (i.e. their brains grew) in those regions after only 8 weeks of practice. There was also increased density in the hippocampus, associated with learning and memory; the TPJ, linked to perspective taking; and the PCC, involved with "self" processing.

Although few may be motivated to meditate by the promise of a bigger brain, these effects are an important step in understanding the complex of benefits for those who practice and the world in which they live.

**Daniel Barbezat**, Professor of Economics at Amherst College, introduced his presentation on "The Paradox of Self-Control" with his own admission that paradox, and living in contradiction is not easy. It's often unpleasant. On this particular morning, Dan had been preparing to say farewell to his youngest child upon her departure to college. He stood before the group sad, happy and confused: sad to say goodbye, happy for her independence, confused about whether he wanted to be here or home and wondering what it all means. This, he asserted, is what economics is all about.

Economics is the study of scarcity: the interaction of our wanting and what is available. One way to reduce scarcity, he began, is to "get more stuff." Another is to want less. Understanding demand requires an examination of our wanting. Without understanding wanting, he remarked, we can't understand scarcity, the very basis of economics.

In his economics classroom, he invites his students to examine, "What is your deepest, truest wanting?" This identification of preferences is at the heart of economics. Wanting arises constantly and is simultaneously contradictory. The paradox is that you can't always get what you want, not least because your wants themselves are often in conflict.

He often engages students in an exercise, without giving much context, and only afterward presents the theoretical models that demonstrate economic behavior. In this way, students aren't thinking about the theory during their experience; they can have their own reactions and then see if that experience maps (or not) with the theory. While as a teacher, he can't control the outcomes of this process, he respects the integrity of this approach and finds that the degree to which "students are sovereign to their own experience" makes it worth the risks involved.

In his session at Smith, Barbezat asked us, (as he does his students) to write down a list of things we would be better off doing less of, and to "notice whatever arises" when listing these things. He instructed us to choose one with resonance, and asked, "if you had less of this, how would you be better off? And better off in this way, now what would you have? Pursue these thoughts until you come to a still point of wanting—a want that is a want in-itself." He then asked us to write down an essential word or phrase that expresses this want. After a moment of silence, he asked us to write "what do you feel in the body ... what emotions arise and ... what thoughts arise? Allow some space for the writing."

After this process is complete, he asked us to commit to an action that moves us one step closer to our essential desire by limiting the thing or action we'd be better off with less of—for the next three days (not for the rest of our lives). Note: this is an opportunity to do something that we, ourselves, will benefit from. Dan asked us to be aware of emotion arising as we considered making the commitment. To wrap things up, he asked us to consider framing our commitment in terms of our deepest desire rather than a limitation of our wanting.

The exercise suggests that our choices are often predicated on emotion, physicality and the conditioning of thought. It reveals that the conflict between our valuation of immediate and delayed rewards is not simply the opposition

of what is traditionally called the "rational" and the "demon" self, or what economic theory refers to as the "long-term" and "short-term" self. Economics takes the long-term self to be the "real" self, granting to it the authority to make rules for the short-term self, and convincing it that it's better to act on its behalf.

At this point, Dan demonstrated how he presents economic models containing discounting functions and "choice to future allocation" questions, and how students have a basis for understanding these rooted in the experience of the complexity of their wanting. They come away with a deeper understanding of the economic models through a heightened awareness of the ways in which they are wired—to consume, to value—and the extent to which their decisions are not fully their own. Through his presentation, we could see how this kind of exercise informs students' comprehension of the course material, and how it may ultimately affect their own behavior, both short and long term.

Over the past few years there has been a growing interest in issues of diversity and social justice at Summer Sessions. This year a workshop began to formulate the questions and consider what a contemplative perspective could bring. "Embracing our Social Identities: A Path Towards Liberation," led by **Rose Sackey-Milligan, Katja Hahn-d'Errico** and **Mirabai Bush** was an exploratory conversation on the construction of social identity and how practice might be helpful in understanding the layers, both external and internal. Social Justice theory has typically concentrated on the exterior identities of privilege and target groups. Using storytelling and deep listening practices, participants spoke in small groups to the prompt of "The first time I recognized I was (fill in the blank with a particular identity)."

**Linda-Susan Beard**, Professor of English at Bryn Mawr College began her presentation "Waiting" with music, with her eyes closed. Having just finished a session on bringing social identity and contemplative practice together, the participants were in various states of arrival. She waited.

Linda-Susan related her interest in talking about waiting, which she considers a key element of contemplative pedagogy. She spoke at Antioch College in Yellow Springs, Ohio earlier this year for their “Green Space for the Mind” symposium, which investigated the premise that conventional instruction based on critical scholarship and the scientific method can be strengthened by incorporating reflective, contemplative and experiential methods.

When asked how to combine social justice activism and contemplation, Linda-Susan answered, “With waiting, followed by listening, hearing, looking, seeing, cultivating intellectual humility, as preparation for *contemplata tradere* (the motto of the Dominican order for “taking the fruits out into the world”).

**Patricia Wallace**, Professor of English at Vassar College, has been active in campus wide developments that provide resources for faculty to use beneficial practices across disciplines. During her morning presentation at the Summer Session, she discussed her poetry writing course, in which she asks her students to learn by heart a poem of their choice. She finds it useful for training their ear, and as a method of discovery. So much of the meaning of the poem comes out in how you say it from memory.

Since she had asked participants to prepare a line or short poem themselves, she invited small groups to spend 15 minutes speaking, listening and being present to one another, just as she does in her classes.

The speaking and listening is conducted “like a Quaker Meeting.” First say the poem (or line of poetry), then the title and author’s name. No commentary—she insists—“the thing you have to say is in the saying of the poem.”

A similar exercise can also work well with longer texts. In a course on JD Salinger she asks students to come to class with one sentence (from the book, not the critical material). They speak, the others listen, and then sit in silence to let settle. She finds this opening gives students who may be nervous about speaking in class a way to contribute their voices. It both reveals and protects.

Learning in this way is anything but rote: it cultivates attention and a kind of intimacy; a “going out to meet, emptying out to let in, and allowing space for the way the words speak in the heart.”

Understanding poetry, Pat suggests, is not about explaining everything. It’s a process, and is built up out of “partial understanding (which is real understanding).” When asked about the role of assessment in her courses, Pat responded that a creative reimagining is called for, and that “we who are good at that need to be part of this conversation, which may have been dominated by some with rigid and reductionist views.”

Attention is a skill that can be developed and practiced. Simone Weill considered that the single most important thing in education is “to see things truly, to see what is” and asserted that this effort “is never fruitless.” Iris Murdoch defined attention as “patient and loving regard,” an attitude that Pat finds well cultivated when reading student work. Judgment “closes” the space while patience “allows the opening to hold.” Loving regard, Pat relates, is not sentimental or lacking in rigor. It can be exacting, seeing clearly, but gently. This kind of patience is a point of aspiration for her, to hold in her heart and communicate to her students.

At Friday’s closing oval (to be precise), each person was invited to say something, and the quality of patient and loving regard for one another’s words was strongly present. Participants expressed appreciation “for the opportunity to connect what we’re doing to what really matters, and to each other, which is often foreclosed because of the heaviness of institutions,” “for feeling affirmed in my work, and psyched to see what I can do with my kids this year,” for a “community of people who are a reflection of who I am,” and “for the ephemeral beauty, like a Tibetan sand painting, of our coming together and saying goodbye.”

**Third Annual Association for  
Contemplative Mind in Higher  
Education Conference:  
The Contemplative Campus  
November 11-13, 2011  
Amherst College, Amherst, MA**

The conference will focus on contemplative approaches to teaching, learning and knowing taking place across the campus. Over 50 contributed papers, a poster session, and artistic presentations as well as plenary speakers, panels and practice sessions will explore the ways that contemplative practices serve higher education.



*The following report was prepared for last year's Second Annual Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference: The Contemplative Academy.*

**The Contemplative Academy:  
The 2010 ACMHE Conference at Amherst College**

*By Carrie Bergman, Program Associate*

The Contemplative Academy, the second conference of the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE), filled Amherst College's Converse Hall for the weekend of September 24-26, 2010. 130 educators from the US, Canada, Mexico, England, Italy and Dubai attended two and a half days of lectures and presentations exploring the integration of contemplative approaches in higher education. This year's conference offered 68 presentations as well as poster sessions and plenary and keynote addresses, an increase over the previous year and one more indicator of how the contemplative education movement continues to grow.

In the conference's opening address, Arthur Zajonc, Professor of Physics at Amherst College and Director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society and the ACMHE, recalled a conversation with Jerome Murphy, a longtime Dean of the School of Education at Harvard. Murphy stated that his experience with contemplative education began when a TA—a longtime meditator—had, with his permission, introduced contemplation into their leadership seminar with an intriguing result. In previous years, Murphy's students had always complimented the course, finding it very stimulating and well-presented; but once meditation practice was incorporated, the feedback shifted. Now the students were telling him, "This course has changed my life." But what exactly had contemplative practice contributed to their experience?

As Zajonc observed, a contemplative approach to education integrates intellectual enterprises with students' daily lives. It is a form of experiential learning: we find new ways of discovering the "answers" traditionally sought through study and research, and

our lives become a response to the questions that we carry with us. Contemplative inquiry is an invitation to growth, change, and transformation. But what ongoing responsibility do educators and institutions have to the students they encourage to undertake a serious contemplative practice? And how can we more clearly articulate contemplative modes of inquiry and the benefits of such methods?

Conference participants expressed that the field of contemplative pedagogy is now ready to be clearly articulated in order to achieve greater legitimacy, as many have faced skeptical or antagonistic colleagues and administrators who question the inclusion of contemplative methods in the classroom on the grounds that they are not sufficiently rigorous—a perception that, it was clear at this conference, requires correction. The relationship of traditional academic approaches to inquiry to the more indirect, exploratory methods of contemplative practice was a recurring theme of discussion. **Stephen Prothero**, Professor of Religion at Boston University, used the metaphor of wandering in his keynote address, “The Art of Doing Nothing: Wandering as Contemplative Practice.” Wandering, he noted, is an expression of openness and receptivity: a willingness to respond to unexpected circumstances and spontaneous changes. Although it plays a valuable role in many of the world’s great religious and philosophical traditions (perhaps a founding teacher or mystic acquired wisdom while wandering through the wilderness) it also holds many negative connotations; in many Western stories, it is the result of a punishment. “There is a hint of malfeasance in wandering...settled folk have often considered unsettled folk dangerous,” Prothero noted. He hopes to rescue wandering from these negative associations; studies show that brain activity increases after walking, and that scientific insight is more likely to occur after the mind reaches an impasse and a scientist goes out for a stroll. But Prothero praises wandering not only for its potential usefulness in achieving desired goals, but for its very existence as directionless exploration, a form of playful contemplative practice: “wandering as an antidote to our purpose-driven culture.” It can “liberate us from the tyranny of voices of authority who tell us who to be, how to think, and how to live.” As a suggestion to how this might apply to scholarship and research, Prothero suggested sometimes allowing the mind to wander between topics without first worrying about the connections between them.

The value of exploration, openness and meandering in experiencing and articulating the contemplative was echoed in parallel sessions such as “Wondering and Wandering: Getting Lost as a Narrative Encounter with Contemplative Knowing” by **Linda-Susan Beard**, Professor of English at Bryn Mawr College; “The Contemplative Moment: An Artistic Presentation” by **Cynthia Huntington**, Professor of English at Dartmouth College; and by **Patricia Wallace**, Professor of English at Vassar College, in her presentation



“On Lightness.” Wallace identified several forms of contemplative knowing (wonder, intimation and intuition) and asked: how can we cultivate these in our classrooms? She suggests that we promote a “lightness of thoughtfulness” in our students: a playful and exploratory attitude, an open responsiveness to the world, a state of receptivity necessary for “contemplative knowing.” This mindfulness allows us to overcome creative blocks and obstacles to understanding, overcoming the heavy, opaque mindset that comes from resisting the present moment. Wallace related the story of Perseus, able to defeat Medusa (who could turn people to stone with only a glance) while looking at her reflection in his shield. In this allegory, Perseus, with his winged sandals, represents lightness and ingenuity, and Medusa is the heavy obstacle to learning and discovery who cannot be overcome with a direct approach. The indirect approach, despite its apparent illogic or inefficiency, achieves the victory. In this way, contemplative practices, though they may seem circuitous, even irrational, help us contend with difficult information and circumstances.

In the Saturday morning plenary presentation, **Amishi Jha**, director of the Jha Lab at the University of Miami, noted that research on the effects of contemplative practice provides a more conventional rationale for the integration of contemplative practices in the classroom. Jha described several studies designed to test various faculties of attention and working memory. Results indicate that meditative practices help students integrate information; promote personal wellness and balance; develop improved attention and retention; and expand their understanding of the information taught in their courses. The studies associated improved test performance with mindfulness training, but also suggested that the effect is more pronounced and sustained with additional practice.

But is there a way to quantify practice or tell how much is “enough”? In many classrooms which are integrating contemplative practices, students may sit silently for a few minutes each class period, or spend time in private practice

outside of class. Could there be any lasting effects from these short exposures, or should educators expect to plan retreats and extended practice sessions in order to see results? Jha mentioned a study on Marines, who showed improvement after just 12 minutes of practice per week. Though, she reiterated, more experience with practice does seem to equal more benefit. But the question remains: would a contemplative academy, encompassing institutional changes beyond the scope of an individual’s personal contemplative practice, actually promote more effective learning?

A plenary panel on Sunday morning, “Contemplative Pedagogy and the Academic Disciplines: Value Added or Changes Everything?” continued the conversation on the relationship between academic and contemplative modes of inquiry. Do contemplative approaches simply add value to courses by enhancing learning and creativity, or do they transform the academic disciplines themselves? Panelists discussed their personal paths in contemplative pedagogy and their current “edge issues.” **Susan Burggraf**, a developmental psychologist, Associate Dean of Undergraduate Education and Associate Professor of Contemplative Psychology at Naropa University, borrowed the language of child development to ask, “Is it parallel play or cooperative play? Can they share their toys?” Can contemplative methods integrate with the academic disciplines and support their modes of discovery? She is now exploring how a self-awareness introspection condition could be added to the standard psychological test design.

**Barry Kroll**, Rodale Professor in Writing and Chair of English at Lehigh University, has developed a course called “Arguing Differently,” which includes challenges to traditional argument models. It has been very successful; the contemplative component has enabled students to understand that “strategies for resolving conflict are really about conflict within.” Kroll’s students understand that techniques for handling external adversaries can also work for their own internal issues. Yet Kroll is wrestling with a deep responsibility to

clearly and succinctly explain to administrators, colleagues, students and their parents exactly why contemplative learning is relevant to conflict resolution now that contemplative practice feels instrumental to his course. “On the other hand,” he says, “there’s a tension between the necessity of instrumentalizing this approach, to say ‘it’s good because it helps me do this other thing,’ and another impulse I have to say, it’s really good in itself. It doesn’t ultimately need that instrumental argument.”

He also feels a responsibility to his students after they leave his classroom. What happens to a student’s personal development after an intense and personal course such as this one concludes? “Do I have any responsibility after opening this box?” Kroll is taking seriously the idea that he does have a responsibility to keep in touch with his students more, in person and via email, is organizing events and reunions incorporating contemplative practices, and is considering ways for them to stay connected online. Similarly, **Judith Simmer-Brown**, Professor of Religious Studies at Naropa University, asked,

Am I prepared to be the kind of educator who can really hold the situation properly for my students? When we do this kind of work, we are getting much more than we bargained for as professors. Are we prepared to be there for our students? Are our universities prepared... to provide support and mentorship in an ongoing way? And are we prepared to meet them where they are, rather than where we want them to be?

**Tom Coburn**, Visiting Scholar at Brown University and President Emeritus of Naropa University, remarked that any subject can be taught contemplatively or non-contemplatively. Therefore, the contemplative component of any course is a function of the teacher, not the subject matter, and to bring contemplative practice into the classroom successfully, the teacher must have a committed personal practice. An additional challenge is that we have inherited an assumption of contemplation and meditation as private, solitary, reclusive

activities. But this is just one end of the spectrum; at the other end, we find activists such as Martin Luther King, Thich Nhat Hanh and Dorothy Day. “My sense,” says Coburn,

is what we are about is redeeming the concept of what meditation and contemplation mean, from the idiosyncrasies that have led the modern West to think of meditation as a private activity. There are implications here for the way we conduct our contemplative educating. Self-knowledge certainly comes from sitting on the cushion, but it also comes from engaging others...I’m pressing the case here for reclaiming the activist end of the contemplative spectrum.

To conclude the conference, **Ed Sarath** (University of Michigan) and **Patricia Wallace** (Vassar College) led a session of mindfulness, poetry and improvised music, moving the audience through thoughts and emotions with a beautiful variety of word and sound. Remarking on the performance, Arthur Zajonc observed,

It seems to me a form of engagement that brings these kinds of experiences to us, so vividly and fully, that we come to know them in a way that we otherwise would have missed. In this direct and immediate sense, I feel that the contemplative is a very deep and profound way of knowing. We can argue intellectually for different worldviews, but when you live inside a contemplative experience fully, it’s not a question of argumentation, it’s a question of lived experience, and that has its own reality. Your worldview grows of its own accord. It’s a kind of epistemological leverage point where your whole idea of yourself, in your discipline, in your family, with your colleagues, the world in which we inhabit, begins to shift and grow.

## Contemplative Retreat for Educators

November 17 – 20, 2011

Garrison Institute, Garrison, NY

Arthur Zajonc and Mirabai Bush will lead this year's retreat at Garrison. It is designed for secondary school, college and university education professionals, and offers introductions to a variety of contemplative practices, including contemplative methods adapted for the classroom.

## Retreat for Academics

November 11 – 14, 2010, Garrison Institute, Garrison NY

*by Beth Wadham, Academic Associate*

For its fifth retreat for educators, the Center offered three days of practice and exploration at the Garrison Institute, a setting particularly well designed for contemplation. The Capuchin Franciscan monastery was restored and renovated in 2002 to provide retreat facilities for traditional (Buddhist, Christian) and secular groups. The group of 46 professors that gathered for the weekend hailed from the US, Canada, UK, Japan and Australia, and represented a wide range of experience with contemplative practice, personally and in their classrooms. At opening circle they all expressed openness to sharing the reflective space and practicing together.

Over the days that followed, Arthur Zajonc and Mirabai Bush offered introductions to mindfulness-based practices and contemplative inquiry techniques that can be used in classroom settings. Mirabai emphasized at the first session that what is most important is that educators themselves practice, to focus their own awareness and develop their own responsiveness, capacities that are critical for teaching and learning. While examples of what others have done are helpful in exploring possibilities, practice brings an awareness that applies to everything we are called upon to do in our lives and is part of way of living and being that is relaxed and alert.

On the first morning the group explored sitting and stilling practices alternating with mindful walking. The winding pathways overlooking the Hudson River offered a particularly welcome setting in which to practice this tradition, drawn from Asian and Western monasticism, in which one becomes conscious of all the sensations that arise through the simple movements. At the morning's end, the group prepared for and entered a time of silent practice, which they would share through the next 30 hours. Silent practice also derives from monastic traditions and, in secular application, has value for quieting the mental activity that goes along with conversation, allowing greater access to inner perception. It is a challenging practice, however, especially during activities such as meals, when sociability is often in the foreground. The thoughts and feelings that arise during the time one is dedicated to silence are an opportunity to notice what's going on outside and inside and to cultivate a sharper awareness of the whole environment.



In the afternoon, Arthur Zajonc introduced exercises that extend contemplative awareness to include contemplative inquiry. The four-stage process, which alternates between focused and open attention, explores how ways of knowing can be extended beyond the discursive, logical inference of ratiocination to include introspective methods that lead to new discoveries and insight. Throughout the period of silent practice, Arthur and Mirabai responded to written questions submitted by the participants. They addressed questions about the ethical foundations of practice, how to create a personal practice, and why mindfulness takes so much effort.

By the second day of silence, the sitting meditation sessions had become very still. The contemplative exercises that Mirabai and Arthur guided felt more refined, and participants took up the opportunities to look inward and to explore nature with greater focus and engagement. When the time came to break the silence in the afternoon, Mirabai suggested that “silence is the beginning of mindful speaking.” Practice with silence develops the ability to ask oneself, before speaking, “Is this helpful? Is this true?” One may find one doesn’t need to say so much. As a way back into the speaking world, participants first wrote for five minutes, finishing the prompt, “During the time spent in silence, I learned that...,” before turning to a partner to engage in mindful listening practice. The speaker spoke for five minutes as the listener listened without interruption and then related back to the speaker what he or she heard.

The final evening of the retreat was given to conversation, as the educators spoke in small groups about the relationship of contemplative practice to teaching, learning and knowing. Sharing their experience and questions and offering their ideas to help one another, the participants found many points of convergence and recognition. These supportive and stimulating conversations, many of which continued during breakfast on the final morning, are a wonderful feature of these contemplative gatherings. Somehow, it always seems that just the right people have come.

At the closing circle, many participants shared how they were able to find very particular personal and professional value in their retreat experience.



## Webinar Series

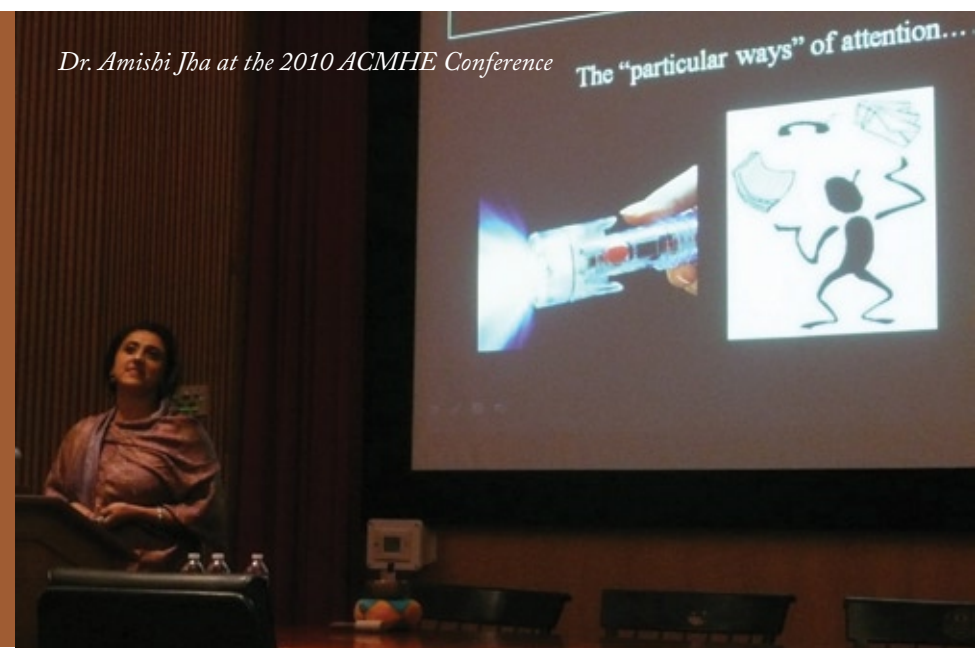
The ACMHE Webinar series provides monthly online seminars, drawing between 60 and over 100 participants (members and others on our academic contact list). The current series began in October 2010 and ran through September 2011:

- **David Haskell**, Professor of Biology, University of the South presented “**Contemplative Pedagogy and Deep Listening**” on October 27, 2010.
- **Peter Schneider**, Professor of Architecture, University of Colorado, Denver presented “**Architecture and the Use of Meditation: Architecti et usus meditatio**” on December 1, 2010.
- **John Makransky**, Associate Professor of Buddhism and Comparative Theology, Boston College presented “**Contemplative Activism: Meditations Adapted From Tibet to Empower Service and Action**” on February 23, 2011.
- **Linda-Susan Beard**, Associate Professor of English, Bryn Mawr College presented “**The Contemplative Spirituality of Toni Morrison**” on March 30, 2011.
- **David Zlotnick**, Professor of Law, Roger Williams University School of Law presented “**Integrating Trial Advocacy and Mindfulness Theory & Practice**” on May 25, 2011.
- **Jeremy Hunter**, Assistant Professor, The Peter F. Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management, presented “**Cultivating the Executive Mind: Is Mindfulness the Key to 21st Century Economic Survival?**” on September 28, 2011.

Faculty for webinar presentations are drawn from the Contemplative Practice Fellows and other leaders in contemplative higher education.

An archive of past webinars is available at [acmhe.org/pastwebinars](http://acmhe.org/pastwebinars). Those who were unable to attend the live presentations can view recordings in their entirety on this page. Our archived webinars have been watched over 2000 times.

*Dr. Amishi Jha at the 2010 ACMHE Conference*





# Special Events

## **The Mindful Lawyer: Practices and Prospects for Law School, Bench and Bar**

**October 29-31, 2010, UC Berkeley School of Law**

Over 185 judges, lawyers, mediators, law professors, law students, and other legal professionals gathered at the University of California at Berkeley School of Law for the first ever national conference exploring the integration of meditation and contemplative practices with legal education and practice.

The conference offered a blend of academic presentation, practical experience and discussion, meditation and movement practice, and recent developments in neuroscience and psychology relevant to meditation practice. Led by Charles Halpern, Berkeley Law scholar-in-residence and former chair of the Board of Directors of The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, the proceedings included presentations on “Alleviating Lawyers’ Stress, Depression and Substance Abuse: Mindfulness and Health,” “Sitting in Meditation, Sitting on the Bench,” “Mindful Emotional Intelligence as a 21st Century Lawyering Skill” and “What Does a Mindful Lawyer’s Practice Look Like?” Recordings from the conference are available at [mindfullawyerconference.org](http://mindfullawyerconference.org).

In 2011, a well-attended retreat for legal professionals was hosted at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Woodacre, CA, from September 8-11.

## **Meditation for Academic Excellence—and Beyond** **February 11-12, 2011, Middlebury College, Middlebury, VT**

Arthur Zajonc visited Middlebury College to speak with a group of about 70 students and faculty about the interior dimensions of education, and the benefits of cultivating a healthy, balanced emotional life and a “contemplative mind.”

The following day, Arthur led a workshop for 25-30 faculty and staff as part of a series sponsored by their Center for Teaching and Learning. Workshop participants expressed their interests in integrating practice to support time management and stress reduction; develop attention and empathy; and to help students “sit without understanding” when confronted with complexity and contradictions. Arthur responded with examples and exercises from his courses, and led a practice to demonstrate how to engage students deeply with the course material, using their own experience as a source for understanding.

Following the workshop, participants remarked that it helped them “to solidify and identify a group of people for further study,” “to be more effective in articulating these methods and key concepts to students and colleagues,” and that it “reminded them of the importance of presence.”

## **2011 Mindfulness in Education Conference: Mindfulness: A Foundation for Teaching and Learning**

**March 18-19, 2011, American University, Washington, DC**

The ACMHE was a co-sponsor of this conference which included a keynote address by **Susan Kaiser Greenland**, founder of Inner Kids and author of *The Mindful Child*, who presented a range of techniques for developing the mindful awareness of children in K-12 settings. Plenary Panel members were **Bradford Grant**, Professor and Director of the School of Architecture and Design and Associate Dean of the College of Engineering, Architecture and Computer Science at Howard University; **Wynne Kinder**, of Kinder Associates; and **Diane Reibel**, Director of the Mindfulness Institute at the Jefferson-Myrna Brind Center of Integrative Medicine. Over 140 teachers, counselors and other educational professionals attended. Beth Wadham shared information about the Center's work at two breakout sessions for college and university educators on Saturday afternoon.

## **Throughout the Curriculum: Contemplative Practices in Higher Education**

**March 25-27, 2011, Amherst College, Amherst, MA**

*By Beth Wadham*

**A**mherst College and The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society hosted this series of presentations featuring professors across many disciplines—Physics, Economics, English, Environmental Science, Chemistry, Law, Religious Studies, Music and Psychology—to explore the relevance of a contemplative approach to each and all. The presentations were intended to open conversation between the speakers across disciplines, and consider what commonalities could be found within their differences.

The presentations and conversations, held in the Red Room at Converse Hall, were open to the public. Several sessions offered panels with open discussion.

**Patricia Wallace**, Professor of English at Vassar College, led off the weekend with an investigation of “lightness,” in verse. Drawing from lines from Ovid, Italo Calvino and Robert Frost’s “Star in a Stone Boat,” Wallace displayed how, as a counterforce to weight, lightness can show up as agility and flexibility in leaping lines of poetry. And as illumination, lightness can reveal a way through the opacity of the world, as when Mary Oliver’s Egrets

“opened their wings  
softly and stepped  
over every dark thing.”

Wallace invites her listeners, and her students, to adopt an attitude of “patient and loving regard” when reading poetry, and finds that their quality of attention is often rewarded with unexpected perceptions and “apprehensions” of reality.

**Ed Sarath**, Professor of Music and Director of the Program in Creativity and Consciousness Studies at the University of Michigan, has been bringing “A Tale of Two Epistemologies” to the academy for the past ten years, developing jazz improvisation and contemplative ways of knowing within an environment that often appears to have what he calls an “epistemological auto-immune disorder.” As he relates it, similar questions arise for both: Can you take jazz out of the “university of the street?” Can one abstract contemplative practice from its spiritual roots?

He hasn’t resolved these questions, but continues to manage the tensions by strengthening the firm grounding of his own anchor—a sitting practice—that allows for lightness of movement, and posing big questions. Sarath’s passion and idealism is activated by considering, “What is a human being?” and “What is the purpose of education?” He’s interested in developing his students’ creativity as an integrated state of consciousness that rewards them not just

with artistic success, but as a means for making their unique contribution to the world. He finds that the methodologies of both jazz and contemplative practice serve these expansive goals.

**Al Kaszniak**, Professor and Head of Psychology at the University of Arizona, investigated the longstanding question of whether compassion is natural or not in his course on “Psychology of Empathy and Compassion: Contemplative and Scientific Perspectives.” The question can now be informed by recent neuroscience research on “mirror neurons” and the brain effects of meditation on the response to the suffering of others (amplified). The course made use of journaling, mindfulness, council, metta, “dyadic nonjudgmental listening,” and self- vs.-other-focused perspective taking and ended with a contemplative garden gathering. Kaszniak loved teaching in this way, and both he and the students found the course logic rewarding, as it offered the opportunity for “being that which one is speaking,” to quote Gregory Bateson’s concept of “metalogue.”

**Daniel Barbezat**, Professor of Economics at Amherst College, is interested in how to “engage students as human beings, as teachers.” While they will be evaluated, and graded, he recognizes that students have “sovereignty over their own experience” and he looks for ways for them to engage introspectively with the course content so they can relate the theories and models presented in economics to their own lives.

One example from his field is the how the idea of “utility,” or satisfaction, as determined by the interaction between wants and supply, is based on subjective measures of well-being. To investigate, Barbezat brings in Tibor Scitovsky’s *The Joyless Economy*, and asks whether our level of comfort (as members of the Amherst College community, anyway) makes our lives less fulfilling. We may cling to comfort levels because they’re habitual even when they don’t optimize our pleasure, and we may need to navigate some discomfort to move toward optimal states.

To test this, Barbezat designs some discomfort into his class. He asks students to leave the familiar person with whom they sat to sit by an unfamiliar person and have a short introductory conversation. Then he asks them to notice: are you as well, better or worse off than when you were sitting with your friend? Nearly every student was as well, and many reported being better, than before.

This kind of exercise may not appear on the surface as a contemplative in the way attending to breathing or a bell sound does, but as an invitation to greater self awareness it reveals to students the complexity of their wanting. They see, to their own perturbation, how they might “overchoose” comfort, even as they return to sit with their friends the next time class begins.

**Judith Simmer-Brown**, chair of the Religious Studies department at Naropa University, looked at the relationship between contemplative education and traditional academic skills, specifically writing. While Naropa is not a traditional academy, neither is it a dharma center, and she finds that students are often not as engaged with their academic writing as they are with developing their inner wisdom. Their writing, typically in the third-person, passionless style, has not yet found a voice.

To address this, Simmer-Brown has developed a way of mindful reading: a sequence of reading, speaking, and sharing, interspersed with sitting, that concludes with writing “the meaning for them at that moment,” resulting in a fresh take. To make appropriate use of personal material, students begin by making distinctions, asking, “How does it feel?” from multiple perspectives: physically, as sensation; emotionally, as mood and feeling; and cognitively, as thought. As students navigate from thought to senses they learn to attend to what is happening moment by moment, and can go beyond habitual thinking that runs a story line in the past (reruns) or future (planning). She finds these techniques bring student’s own voices forward, so they inhabit their writing, and bring greater personal integration to the topics they write about.

**Harold Roth**, Professor of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies and the Director of the Contemplative Studies Initiative at Brown University is now teaching the 10th version of Introduction to Contemplative Studies, which focuses on ways human beings have found over time to increase conscious awareness. He considers contemplative states on a spectrum that extends from ordinary to mystical experience.

He uses a combination of third-person study of texts and what he calls a “critical first-person approach,” in which students engage directly with the practices they’re investigating, and appraise their experience. They try out specific meditation techniques in “meditation labs” that meet 3 times a week and process the results through journal entries that monitor their development. When students are asked to apply the ideas they are exploring to their own experience, he finds that a new dimension emerges that yields a deeper understanding of whatever they are studying.

**Michelle Francl**, Associate Professor of Chemistry at Bryn Mawr, finds that incorporating a contemplate approaches to scientific studies has pragmatic rewards. Contemplative practices are useful tools for developing the patience, persistence and broad vision that result in scientific inquiry that is not reductionist. She offers her students “thresholds of writing” at the beginning and end of each class to collect themselves and their observations. Francl relates stories from Barbara McClintock and Gregor Mendel that demonstrate how science relies upon an “unforced pace,” and “a long, loving look at the world.” This quality of attention can open students to “more marvelous things than the scientific method allows,” and trains capacities for real insight.

**Arthur Zajonc**, Professor of Physics at Amherst College, shared his reflections on the development of Einstein’s theories and joined Michelle for questions and discussion following their presentations.

**Rhonda Magee**, Professor at the University of San Francisco School of Law, related how contemplative practice is spreading through the law world, but is mindful of the challenges in trying to shift such a formidable profession.

Embedded in resolving a legal case is a set of values that gets transmitted: that humans are by nature alienated, that we must have the right to sue, that if the law doesn’t require it, we may not act well with each other at all. A contemplative approach can lead students to question these values, and consider what the law is, in all our lives.

In all her courses, Magee makes some use of contemplative techniques—a bell, some silence. She also introduces practices as ways to develop skills for effective lawyering: writing briefs in a contemplative way, using contemplative communication, and developing the capacity to deal with differences. Immigration and criminal law often involve clients who are very different from their lawyers, and practices support interacting in a more fully human way.

In the study and practice of law, decisions are often not clear, and their outcome is unknown. There are gut wrenching challenges. Magee believes lawyers need contemplative practices to sustain themselves so they can help create a more just world for the rest of us.

**Paul Wapner** is Associate Professor and Director of the Global Environmental Politics Program at the School of International Service at American University in Washington DC. He and his colleagues are “experts in urgency” and he finds that contemplative practices help. Wapner just finished writing a book, *Living through the End of Nature*, and reflected on our immediate situation: meeting here, remote from nature, eating food grown we know not where. We haven’t been outside all day.

And from a wider perspective, he notes, everything on the planet that is frozen is melting, 2010 was the hottest year on record, and conservation biologists say we are in the Sixth Great Extinction (dinosaurs were the fifth). Wapner wonders, “How do we respect this information, and hold it?” For years, he felt his job was to go into class and bum people out. They called his course “Introduction to Doom.” Then, in the last week, “like the credits to Al Gore’s movie,” he would tell them they can do something.

A contemplative approach has given him a different way to teach, to present crisis as both danger and opportunity. True, the stakes are high, but a mindful perspective looks at what is, and we are often looking away. Wapner is interested in turning discomfort into an inquiry that has the potential to make us more human and develop new capacities. He considers climate change a path to inner growth, a way to know what is and what should be and somehow love both.

As this last presentation came to a close, Wapner remarked, “I wish the weekend were starting now. We’re beginning to identify the questions.” And Ed Sarath went on to pose a pointed one those gathered in the Red Room, “What might it mean to let this rip?”

The papers presented will be revised and developed and will result in a published volume with an introduction and summary written by Arthur Zajonc and Dan Barbezat.

### **Presenters:**

**Daniel Barbezat**, Professor of Economics, Amherst College

**Michelle Francl**, Associate Professor of Chemistry, Bryn Mawr

**Al Kaszniak**, Professor and Head of Psychology, University of Arizona

**Rhonda Magee**, Professor, University of San Francisco School of Law

**Harold Roth**, Professor of Religious Studies and East Asian Studies and Director of the Contemplative Studies Initiative, Brown University

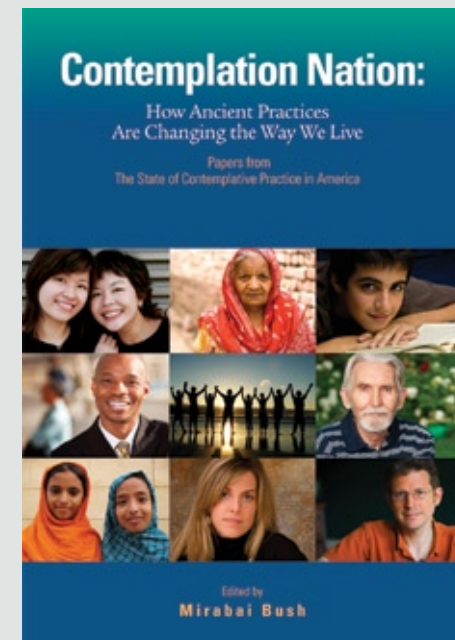
**Ed Sarath**, Professor of Music and Director of the Program in Creativity and Consciousness Studies, University of Michigan

**Judith Simmer-Brown**, chair of Religious Studies, Naropa University

**Patricia Wallace**, Professor of English, Vassar College

**Paul Wapner**, Associate Professor and Director of the Global Environmental Politics Program, School of International Service, American University

**Arthur Zajonc**, Professor of Physics, Amherst College



*Contemplation Nation*, a new anthology edited by Mirabai Bush now available on amazon.com, offers papers presented at the 2010 Conference on The State of Contemplative Practice in America at the Fetzer Institute. Religious and spiritual teachers, as well as thought leaders from various secular arenas including law, business, and health, reflect on the state of contemplative expression in their respective sectors. These papers offer a range of definitions and provide perspectives on the maturation and practical application of contemplative practice in the United States over the past several decades. Authors include Rhonda Magee, Susan Burggraf, Patricia Jennings, and Mirabai Bush.

# Four New Initiatives Integrating Contemplative Pedagogy

## 1. Contemplative Practices and Pedagogy in Schools of Education

### Contemplative Education in North America

A meeting on integrating contemplative awareness, pedagogy, and curriculum into schools of education is planned in collaboration with Garrison Institute. Both organizations share a common interest in bringing the benefits of contemplation to educational settings. Garrison's focus and experience has been in K-12 and the Center's in higher education.

The meeting will examine how contemplative education is currently being incorporated in teacher education, and will develop strategies for increasing research and practice in this field within schools of education. It will also promote the networking and collaboration needed to support continued outreach to teacher educators. It will build on a variety of efforts already being implemented in schools in the U.S and Canada. This meeting could lay the groundwork for a larger initiative (e.g. a conference or summer session).

Those in attendance will include professors of education and educational researchers from diverse sub-fields of education (curriculum, educational philosophy, school administration, etc) as well as those developing curricula for classroom instruction with an interest in the inclusion of contemplative methods in teacher training; administrators of schools of education; and educators developing curriculum for K-12.

This meeting will be held at the Garrison Institute, January 10-12, 2012.

### Contemplative Education in Israel

The Dean of the Faculty of Education at the University of Haifa has requested expertise and guidance from The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society to introduce contemplative pedagogy into Israeli schools. Professor Ofra Maysel leads the largest School of Education in Israel and is the elected Head of the Israeli Forum of Deans of Schools of Education for all eight universities in Israel.

All secondary school educators in Israel study to be teachers in these Schools of Education, and changes to teacher education will have wide effects. Due to its small size, geographically and in terms of numbers, Israel offers a unique opportunity to leverage a modest investment in introducing contemplative methods with the prospect of making a great difference.

From July 12-14, 2011, **Tobin Hart**, Professor of Psychology at the University of West Georgia and co-founder of the ChildSpirit Institute, and **Rona Wilensky**, Fellow at the Spencer Foundation in Chicago, represented the Center and presented two workshops through the School of Education at the University of Haifa, including a retreat/workshop for the faculty of the Teach First/Teach for Israel program prior to the beginning of the their summer training.

Both the three-hour workshop and the two day retreat/workshop integrated experiential activities with theoretical frameworks, applications and discussion. Practices that were introduced in both settings included contemplative listening and short periods of silent reflection.

Feedback from both workshops was extremely positive. Participants were eager for more and deeper opportunities to work with this material and to find the myriad ways to incorporate it into their personal lives, the ongoing work of higher education in general, and teacher preparation in particular. For those who already had a personal contemplative practice, the presentations legitimized, normalized and demonstrated how to make a crossover into the classroom.

In 2012, a workshop modeled on the Center's Contemplative Curriculum Development Sessions will be offered February 6-9 near Haifa University.

In this workshop, teacher education faculty members from universities and colleges throughout Israel will explore the role of contemplative practice in teaching and learning. Participants will consider how contemplative practices cultivate classroom presence; contribute to the development of reflective practitioners; foster teacher resilience; and develop capacities to manage the intense stress of the contemporary classroom.

Arthur Zajonc and Rona Wilensky will serve as faculty along with teachers and guest speakers from Israel, including Professor **Yaakov Raz**, Professor of Buddhism at the Department of East Asian Studies, Tel Aviv University.

To support contemplative curriculum development in Israel, the Center would like to continue to work with Israeli partners over a 3-year period. In the second year, faculty responsibility would shift to Israelis. By the third, Center representatives would still attend, but transfer practical responsibility for organization and teaching to Israeli partners.

## 2. University Teaching & Learning Centers (TLC) Project

The Center has inspired and supported contemplative pedagogy in universities through fellowships and program activities. From here, one promising way forward is to establish analogous, smaller centers on individual campuses. A new project is focusing on college and university teaching and learning centers (TLCs) as promising sites.

There are currently over 200 TLCs on U.S. college and university campuses. TLCs at Vanderbilt University and Middlebury College have already demonstrated an interest in encouraging contemplative pedagogy. Professor Peter Felten, president of the Professional and Organizational Development (POD) in Higher Education network—the group that links TLCs nationwide—has also expressed strong interest in contemplative pedagogy.

To plan the TLC project, the Center convened a strategic brainstorming and planning workshop on September 10-11, 2011. Participating organizations included POD, Vanderbilt University, Notre Dame, University of Virginia, and Kennesaw State University. The intended outcome of this workshop is a three-year plan for developing contemplative pedagogy on campus via TLCs, as well as a list of schools that are willing to partner with the Center in implementing this strategy. In addition, the Center will use the results of this workshop to inform fundraising for this initiative.

As noted below, the Center also organized two sessions on contemplative pedagogy during the October 2011 annual POD conference; this will be an important network for reaching out to TLCs across the U.S.

## **Panel Presentations at the Annual POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network) Conference October 26 - 30, 2011, Atlanta, GA**

Two panel presentations on contemplative education were accepted to the Professional and Organizational Development Network (POD) Conference. POD has a membership of 1800 and includes faculty, academic administrators, staff of teaching and learning centers, faculty development, evaluation, and assessment professionals, and many others interested in enhancing the quality of teaching and learning, and supporting the community of teachers and learners in higher education. The first, “Design & Use of Contemplative Pedagogy for Higher Education,” featured **Daniel Barbezat**, Associate Director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, as the lead presenter with panelists from Vanderbilt University’s Teaching and Learning Center. The second, “Contemplative Pedagogy and Diversity: Creating Collaboration and a Research Agenda,” had a special designation as a collaboration between POD and the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Faculty Development Network (HBCUFDN) and addressed this year’s conference focus on the central role of diversity. The presentations were well attended and promoted the inclusion of contemplative pedagogical methods within teaching and learning centers.

## **Contemplative Pedagogy and the African-American Higher Education Community June 18, 2011, Howard University, Washington, DC**

As a step towards exploring ways of ensuring that contemplative pedagogy develops with sensitivity to racial, ethnic, class and religious diversity, the Center convened a group of Contemplative Practice Fellows and other contemplative educators, including several from historically black colleges and universities, for a one-day workshop to focus on outreach to the African-

American higher education community. Workshop participants included **Carolyn Jacobs**, **Rhonda Magee** and **Brad Grant** from the Center’s Board, as well as Professors **Renée Hill** and several colleagues from Virginia State University, **Linda-Susan Beard** (Bryn Mawr College) and **Veta Goler** (Spellman College).

The workshop prepared some of the participants for the panel presentation at the POD (Professional and Organizational Development in Higher Education Network) Conference, October 26-30, 2011 in Atlanta, GA. The annual POD conference this year was co-organized with the Historically Black Colleges & Universities Faculty Development Network (HBCUFDN).

The conversation was intended to increase understanding and possibly extend the range of practices used in higher education to be more inclusive, welcoming and rooted in the lives of diverse groups.

The group explored whether there are contemplative practices that might have greater familiarity and resonance for those with African American background, and whether there was a difference between the needs of students at historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) and predominately white institutions (PWI).

The group noted that contemplative practices in African-American contexts have tended historically to be more collective than individual, and that the inward contemplative experience is often engendered through an outward, expressive practice (such as drumming, song, dance, or story). Practice tends to be shared, part of a ritual, and relational.

One participant remarked that inasmuch as the contemplation is deeply rooted in human experience, it may be helpful to consider that practices don’t need to be taught as much as they need to be found. African-American professors and students can connect to practices already in use, such as spoken word, storytelling, gospel, the blues, “sharing of heart” and “getting real.”

A contemplative approach can help to surface and raise up contemplative understanding that is already there.

The group generated a list of practices during the brainstorming session, but tempered it with the understanding that the successful teacher of contemplative practice is a practitioner first, and wondered whether “there can be a manual.” It’s the attitude, the process of teaching that’s important. Contemplative teaching creates relationships in the classroom and a community of support. While one can learn methods, and know theories and pedagogy, the important thing is for teachers and professors to be grounded in their own practice and open to the culture of the students: begin where you are—and honor the cultural context of the people you are with. One of the take-home lessons that emerged: “Start with listening and respect; there is an opening for each different group.”

The meeting at Howard was a first step in outreach to other racial, ethnic and religious groups, to inform future practices and programs of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society.

### **3. The Contemplative Practice Fellowships Evaluation**

After supporting the Contemplative Practice Fellowship Program for 12 years in which 158 fellowships were awarded to professors from over 100 universities and colleges, we have completed a comprehensive evaluation of this groundbreaking program. While we had previously carried out evaluations of various program components, including two independent assessments of the fellowship program, we felt the time was right to learn more about how we can support the development of contemplative higher education: what is and isn’t working and why.

As we approached designing this evaluation, based on conversations with evaluation experts, we realized that one of our challenges is that there has

been little, if any, research on evaluations of academic programs that have contemplative practice and perspective.

The 2010 evaluation of the Contemplative Practice Fellowship program used a mixed methods research design to elicit and document the experiences of 158 faculty fellows in the program over the 12-year period from 1997 to 2009. Data for the evaluation was gathered from a close reading and analysis of 12 years of Fellows’ reports; previous program evaluations completed in 2000 and 2003; in-depth interviews with a diverse sample of 10 Fellows from among the 45 who volunteered to be interviewed; and the responses of the 72 Fellows responding to a comprehensive online survey (47% response rate). A diverse and representative group of Fellows responded to the survey, in terms of academic discipline, gender, institution, and year of Fellowship.

Previous assessments of the Center’s academic program have demonstrated that it is having an impact at the individual and organizational levels in terms of perception and acceptance, curriculum development and teaching, research, and institutional development. We are very pleased to have completed this evaluation which we feel provides an even more rigorous analysis of the impact of the Contemplative Practice Fellowship Program and how we can better support the transformation of higher education.

Now that the evaluation is complete we expect that the results will be extremely useful to us in determining future directions and leading toward long term sustainability. The evaluation reflects the impact of the academic program to fellows/teachers who want to go deeper in applying contemplative practice in their classrooms and scholarship or who need to make the case for academic support for their contemplative work; to administrators who are interested in exploring how to create more contemplative institutions of higher education; and to funders who want to ensure their financial support achieves the desired impact and results.

## **Key Findings from the Evaluation**

### ***Impact of the Fellowships on the Fellows and their Teaching***

- For 82% of the Fellows, the most significant impact of the Fellowships has been the “deeper sense of personal and professional integration” gained by using contemplative practices (CP) in their academic work.
- Of those Fellows responding to the survey, about 65% still use contemplative approaches in their teaching. 30% of the Fellows responding to the survey have been teaching using CP for over 10 years.
- Nearly half of the Fellows using contemplative pedagogies teach at doctoral/research universities; the numbers of these Fellows teaching at public and private institutions were comparable. Survey and interview results indicated that doctoral/research institutions may be slightly more open to the use of CP in teaching and research than is true at other institutional levels (e.g., baccalaureate); Fellows reported a moderate number of faculty at research universities who appear to be interested in CP, but are cautious in embracing it.

### ***Effects of Contemplative Pedagogy on Students***

- More than 2,600 students studied in the 130 original courses taught by the Fellows during the year of their Fellowships. Considering that 30% of the Fellows have taught using CP for over 10 years, this number is only a fraction of the students reached by the program overall.
- Nearly 65% of the Fellows thought that greater student ease and focus in class, and more thoughtful class contributions, were ‘often’ or ‘regular and important effects’ of using CP.
- Survey results indicated that Fellows are unsure of the nature and extent of CP’s influence on student academic performance (e.g. effect on subject matter grades and achievement).

### ***The importance of community in contemplative education***

- Participating in a supportive community of practice around CP in teaching and seeking out collaborative research opportunities with other CP faculty appear to be significant factors in a faculty member’s probability of continuing this work. Connection and community with other Fellows were important benefits of the Fellowship experience, including decreasing the sense of isolation for some Fellows. The majority of those Fellows who continue to use CP in their research and teaching share CP teaching materials and experiences and engage in sustained collaboration with other Fellows or faculty using contemplative pedagogies.
- The Fellows’ meetings held for each year’s cohort were a significant positive influence for all Fellows, giving rise to their desire for more contact with the Fellows in their cohort. Over 80% thought that the Fellows’ meeting “was a personally and professionally significant experience” that was “extremely important” or “beneficial” in helping them enter and become part of the community of Contemplative Practice Fellows.

### ***Institutional Impact of the Contemplative Practice Fellowships***

One of the major objectives of the evaluation was to collect from the Fellows comparable data on institutional impact across a range of institutional types, academic disciplines, and Fellowship years. According to analyses of the survey results:

- Familiarity with contemplative practice, as well as the acceptance of its use in academic courses and research, is increasing across a variety of institutional types, sizes, and geographic locations. While there are larger social and cultural factors contributing to this climate change in academia, experiences of the Contemplative Practice Fellows reported on the survey serve as significant indicators of the direction and intensity of these changes.

- Based on the sample of faculty responding to the survey, it appears that there is no clear picture of the “ideal” institution whose climate is consistently open to the acceptance and incorporation of CP into the curriculum and campus life. The survey and interview results provide limited evidence that contemplative approaches can become established at baccalaureate colleges, doctoral research institutions, and professional schools, on public state-supported as well as private campuses, including faith-related institutions.
- Half of the survey respondents reported colleagues using CP in departments other than their own at their campuses, indicating that the “pockets of support” at these institutions are growing beyond one Fellow, one academic discipline, or one department or program.

#### *Institutional barriers to the adoption of CP on Fellows’ campuses*

- Survey and interview results confirmed that there is wide variability in the institutional response to faculty’s use of CP, that there is no one ideal situation or institutional profile for the establishment of CP, and that some of the apparent barriers to the acceptance of CP may in fact be apprehensions or misperceptions on the part of some Fellows themselves.
- Based on the Fellows’ comments on the survey, it appears that there is little overt or strong resistance on the part of faculty colleagues and administrators to the Fellows’ use of CP; predominant institutional attitudes toward contemplative pedagogy seem to be skepticism, lack of understanding, or disinterest.

#### *Changes and the Future of CP in Academia*

- The ten interviews provided a closer look at how circumstances have changed over the past decade in relation to the use of CP on these Fellows’ campuses. While no generalizations can be made concerning conditions across the larger group of the 107 Fellowship institutions, the progress in establishing CP at each of these diverse campuses is indicative of the growing acceptance of contemplative practice and pedagogy in academia.
- Fellows have been instrumental in introducing courses, establishing academic programs, and increasing the number of faculty using CP at their institutions (e.g. Honors Program at Marquette; ‘Difficult Dialogues’ courses at Clark; Contemplative Studies Initiative at Brown).
- Fellows have been using CP in credit-bearing courses within professional programs such as those in law, architecture, and business for over a decade, and interest in the use of CP is increasing among disciplinary organizations in these areas (e.g. the “Balance in Legal Education” division of the Association of American Law Schools; the “Management, Spirituality, and Religion” division of the Academy of Management).



*Left: Jon Kabat-Zinn, seated on floor. Faces showing around the circle from Jon's right: Tamar Miller, Ray Williams, Sandra Sucher, Ila Sarley, Maribeth Kaptchuk, Ron Heifetz, Arthur Zajonc, Rob Rodgers, William Torbert, and Diana Chapman Walsh.*

## 4. Contemplative Pedagogy in Leadership Education Meeting Series

### *Exploring the contemplative dimensions of leadership and leadership education*

- Harvard Graduate School of Education, January 11, 2011
- The Sackler Museum of Art, Harvard University, March 24, 2011
- Class of 1959 Chapel, Harvard Business School, May 23, 2011

### **Report on a Gathering of Leadership Educators at the Harvard Graduate School of Education**

*Report and photography by Richard Sclove*

The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (CCMS) invited a small group of Boston-area leadership educators to spend the afternoon of January 11, 2011 discussing the role of contemplative practice within the education of leaders. Those attending included, among others, professors from Harvard University's Business School, Graduate School of Education, and John F. Kennedy School of Government and from MIT's Sloan School of Management. Harvard Professor of Education Jerome Murphy co-hosted the meeting along with CCMS Director and Amherst College Physics Professor Arthur Zajonc.

The goals for the gathering were:

- To understand **the current situation concerning contemplative leadership**, including its place in leadership education. What is taking place? Is there a theory or understanding of leadership that includes the contemplative dimension? Do we have the theory and practices necessary for fruitful innovation?
- To discuss **the future place of contemplative theory and practice in leadership formation**. What steps are needed to bring the contemplative more fully into leadership education and research?

### **Themes**

Themes that emerged from the group's engaged conversation include:

- **Opportunity:** Mainstream institutions, including universities, corporations, and even the military, are becoming increasingly receptive to contemplative practice. Leadership educators at Harvard and MIT who have incorporated meditation or other contemplative practices within their graduate teaching for a decade or more have found their work quietly gaining in esteem and appreciation among students, other professors and administrators. While there is still resistance and pushback, the noticeable shift from fringe toward the center indicates that the possibilities for introducing contemplative practice into leadership education are expanding.
- **Individual Benefits:** Graduate students in training for leadership who have taken courses that include contemplative practice have reported various benefits, including reduced stress, enhanced empathy, less defensiveness when confronted with conflict, and greater attentiveness to their deepest aspirations. It is important to become more systematic in identifying and documenting such benefits, as well as in identifying prevalent deficits in leaders' capacities that contemplative practice might redress.
- **Concepts of Leadership:** A contemplative perspective on human potential can suggest that all people harbor latent capacities for leadership and greatness. In that respect, the integration of contemplative practice could conceivably inspire a broadening transformation in the conceptualization and institutionalization of leadership education.
- **Macro-Benefits:** The human capacity for destruction, as reflected in such societal and planetary threats as global warming, war and mass terrorism, can plausibly be interpreted as being, at least in part, symptoms of impaired human awareness and self-understanding. On the other hand, at their core contemplative practices are techniques that build awareness and self-

understanding. It was accordingly conjectured—qualified by a concern to appear neither grandiose nor Pollyannaish—that if such practices become more widely utilized, they have the potential to contribute vitally to addressing, or even averting, major societal crises. By enhancing moral development and creativity, contemplative practices can also conceivably unleash latent human potential, resulting in broad societal uplift.

- **Rationales and Research:** To build contemplative practice more systematically and effectively into leadership training, we need better articulated rationales or theory, supported by research.
- **Experience and Framework:** Effective contemplative pedagogy requires experiential methods as well as (a) supporting conceptual frameworks, articulated to students in accessible language, and/or (b) pedagogical settings that ensure that the experience is both effective and safe.
- **Context-Specific Best Practices:** It is important to identify best practices in contemplative pedagogy with respect to diverse contexts, both teaching contexts and subsequent leadership contexts.
- **Leadership-Specific Contemplative Pedagogies:** There is a need to distinguish generic contemplative pedagogies (e.g., pedagogies applicable within any educational setting) from those that are specifically adapted to the training of leaders.
- **Complementary and Synthetic Approaches:** Books about contemplative practice often dwell on individual practice and experience. However partnered and group contemplative practices issue in their own distinctive benefits. Group practice can, for example, build trust, commonality of purpose, and nourish shared creativity. It can also be valuable to integrate contemplation with other methods of interpersonal inquiry, such as dialogue and group reflection, and with conventional scientific research methods.

## Next Steps

The group expressed enthusiasm for the afternoon's discussion, and agreed that they would like to continue in some fashion. As a next step, CCMS will plan and convene several follow-up gatherings. Invited participants will be those who attended this meeting, as well as those who expressed interest but were unable to attend. To keep the group manageable in size and convivial, for the time being additional members will be invited very selectively.

The group asked that the next few meetings be structured as a faculty seminar, in which each time a single experienced group member or invited guest will lead based on her or his own work in teaching contemplative practice. There was a feeling that the next meetings should be experiential, and possibly experimental, rather than didactic. A few members would also like to include discussion of the understanding or emerging theory that informs and guides practice.

The group responded warmly when Ray Williams offered the Harvard Art Museum as a possible venue for the next gathering. Ray would gladly design or co-design a group contemplative exercise involving interaction with works of art.

It was agreed that initially the group will continue to meet informally under CCMS sponsorship, but that at some point it will likely prove useful to seek formal co-sponsorship by one or more of Harvard University's professional schools and/or MIT Sloan's school. Participating faculty from each institution will decide when it is appropriate to approach their respective Dean in either a preliminary or more formal way.



## Report on a 2nd Gathering of Leadership Educators at Sackler Museum of Art Harvard University, March 24, 2011

*Report and photography by Richard Sclove*

As follow-up to a prior gathering at Harvard University in January 2011, the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society (CCMS) invited a small group of Boston-area leadership educators to spend the afternoon of March 24th undertaking further explorations of the role that contemplative practice can play in educating effective leaders. Those attending included, among others, professors from Harvard University's Business School, Graduate School of Education, and John F. Kennedy School of Government and from MIT's Sloan School of Management. Ray Williams, Director of Education at the Harvard University Art Museums, co-hosted the meeting along with CCMS Director and Amherst College Physics Professor Arthur Zajonc.

*Meeting attendees: Front row seated: Daniel Goleman, Metta McGarvey, Jerome Murphy, Saki Santorelli. Back row seated: Otto Scharmer, Grady McGonagill, William Torbert, Deborah Ancona, Rebecca Henderson. Standing, left to right: Ronald Heifetz, Ray Williams, Arthur Zajonc, Janice Marturano, Tamar Miller, Jon Kabat Zinn, Mirabai Bush, Elinor Pierce. Implicit: Richard Sclove (photographer).*

### Contemplating Works of Art

The first half of the meeting took place at Harvard's Sackler Art Museum, where Ray Williams led the group in contemplative practices involving observation of works of art.

First, each participant chose a piece of work in the Asian art gallery and spent 5 - 10 minutes sketching it, thus being drawn into careful observation. Next, Ray sat the group in front of a large statue of the Buddha, and related a legend about the Buddha's upbringing. The story can be interpreted as a parable about leadership education.

Finally, each group member chose at random a question pre-printed on a card. Sample questions included: "Find and contemplate a work of art that you find confusing" or "Find a work of art that reminds you of an event in your past." Each participant spent 15 minutes walking through the museum's Western art gallery, selected and reflected upon a single art work, and then took 2 - 3 minutes answering his or her respective question in front of the group. In this way the group experienced another form of contemplative observation, while also becoming better acquainted with one another.

### Contemplative Leadership Training in a Corporate Setting

Janice Marturano, a General Mills vice president from corporate headquarters in Minneapolis, led the second half of the meeting. In the past five years she and Saki Santorelli (Center for Mindfulness at UMass Medical School)

have developed a series of retreats, workshops and on-site courses in mindful corporate leadership. Several hundred General Mills leaders have participated, as have roughly 100 leaders from 30 other organizations and corporations around the world.

Among the reported benefits of these trainings: Corporate meetings have leveled out, so that more people speak and more ideas are generated. There is less reactivity and greater openness to suggestions. Leaders say that they now operate less on auto-pilot, and make time to be more reflective.

Reflecting on this experience, Janice has distilled a number of lessons, including:

- Mindfulness training and excellence in leadership share four qualities: focus, creativity, clarity and compassion.
- It is crucial to present contemplative practice in a language that leaders find comfortable and accessible.
- Mindfulness training cannot be rushed. It requires adequate time and follow-up support to integrate the practices and results into daily life.
- Participation must spread virally and be voluntary, it cannot be mandated.

Saki added that, while not necessarily using this language, these corporate trainings incorporate the four pillars of mindfulness: attention to sensations in the body, to feelings, to thoughts, and to choiceless awareness.

### Next Steps

The group agreed that they would like to meet again, and the afternoon of May 23rd emerged as a date when all present would be able to attend. There was interest in organizing gatherings that are highly experiential, perhaps even a half-day contemplative retreat together.

## Report on a 3rd Gathering of Leadership Educators Harvard University, May 23, 2011

On May 23rd the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society convened the third in an ongoing series of gatherings at Harvard University to explore ways in which contemplative practice can improve the education of leaders. Responding to the group's previously expressed wish to prioritize experiential practice over discussion or theory, Dr. Jon Kabat-Zinn, founder of the Center for Mindfulness at UMass Medical School, volunteered to lead a three-hour mini-retreat in mindfulness meditation. The 22 participants included, among others, faculty from Harvard University's Business School, Graduate School of Education, John F. Kennedy School of Government, and Divinity School, as well as MIT's Sloan School of Management, the Smith College School of Social Work, and staff from the Kriens Family Foundation. The group met in the serenely beautiful Class of 1959 Chapel at Harvard Business School.



Jon Kabat-Zinn observed that as a society, and especially in academia, we devote enormous effort to developing our capacity for intellectual reasoning, but in the process we frequently neglect other capabilities that are at least as valuable. In particular, we normally slight development of our capacity to exist and function in full awareness, thereby forfeiting existential and practical benefits that accrue with deepening mindfulness.

Jon proceeded to guide the group through several practices intended to build awareness, including awareness of what we are doing and awareness that we are aware. These practices included unstructured movement, walking meditation, and guided and unguided sitting meditation.

Afterwards participants broke into small groups to reflect on what such experiences can contribute to leadership or to educating leaders.

The opportunity to step out of ordinary intellect-dominated, work activities and instead share a set of quieting inward experiences was widely appreciated. Reporting out afterwards to the full group, people commented on ways in which contemplative practice can contribute to effective leadership by creating inner spaciousness and a broadened sense of possibility, reducing reactivity, or deepening abilities to integrate and respond to complexity. Others found humor or humility in the simple challenge of maintaining awareness, or spoke of the difficulty of holding awareness as we shift from formal inward practice to discussion or action.

*(All L-R) Clockwise from upper left: Jon Kabat-Zinn, Rob Rodgers, and Otto Scharmer engage in mindful walking; Jerry Murphy and Otto Scharmer listening to Carolyn Jacobs; Grady McGonagill, Catherine Kerr, Pamela Seigle, Deborah Ancona, and Diana Chapman Walsh.*



## Reflections on Contemplative Leadership

*A letter from Arthur Zajonc to participants on the morning of their third meeting.*

Dear Friends,

I woke up this morning thinking of our gathering concerning contemplative dimensions of leadership, grateful for Jon's willingness to lead our afternoon session, and also pleased that many of you are able to participate. Several of you sent regrets, and we hope you will be able to come to the next session.

If I might presume on your patience, I would like to share a few thoughts concerning the contemplative dimensions of leadership drawn from my own experience. Many of you are far more expert in this area than I, but I write as much as a stimulus to others as to voice my own perspective.

This afternoon Jon will lead us in mindfulness practice that will focus on "the primacy of awareness and the quality of one's attending." In my own experience, the quality of attention we are able to bring to a given situation allows the present moment to open up and enfold into itself the possible future as well as the trajectory of the past. Perhaps it is the special characteristic of contemplation that it allows us to suspend and sustain complex and even contradictory elements which makes it so valuable. The difficult situation, or even a crisis, is met with poise and clarity if we have again and again found our way to stillness and attention. Complexity is not prematurely reduced, and a way forward that might have been unnoticed or unimagined emerges. Of silence Thomas Carlyle wrote, "Silence is the element in which great things fashion themselves together, that at length they may emerge, full-formed and majestic, into the daylight of life, which they are thenceforth to rule" (Sartor Resartus Bk III, Ch. III). Repeatedly I experience the fecundity of silence, of sustained stillness. It is not inaction, but an inward extension of the self, done in mindful awareness, whose fruits are the insights of science and the creative inflorescence of the arts, as well as leadership in society and business.

Contemplation is also traditionally the place of self-knowledge; yet ironically the repeated practice of self-discovery encourages us to look beyond ourselves. We learn to value more highly the remarkable capacities of our colleagues at the hand of self-knowledge, and we vividly experience that every enterprise is made up of the astounding, sustained, and competent co-working of many, many others for a common purpose. Mindful awareness can help me locate myself within that larger whole, and aid me in contributing according to my talents, skills, and understandings.

Finally, contemplation is a means of awakening. Profound change seldom happens through a centrally driven strategic planning process. The truly great societal and economic transformations occurred because someone was awake, profoundly awake. I think of it as peripheral planning, in which one needs to be truly aware of the time in which one lives, moment by moment, and the opportunity each moment affords. Each encounter, every conversation, can be the occasion for a teaching or learning, for an initiative or collaboration. Leading, therefore, is also about being awake. And so we must, as Thoreau said, "learn to reawaken ourselves and keep ourselves awake, not by mechanical aids, but by an infinite expectation of the dawn, which does not forsake us in our soundest sleep." The new, that is to say the dawn, is to be expected, it will appear. New insights and profound change will arise, if we are awake to what approaches from the periphery.

I will see many of you this afternoon.

Arthur Zajonc

Director, Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

Professor of Physics, Amherst College

## **Contemplative Leadership Gathering Participants**

**Deborah Ancona**, Director of the MIT Center for Leadership

**Mirabai Bush**, Founding Director, The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

**Daniel Goleman**, Psychologist and Author of *Emotional Intelligence*

**Ronald Heifetz**, Senior Lecturer and Founder of the Center for Public Leadership, Harvard Kennedy School of Government

**Rebecca Henderson**, Professor of Environmental Management, Harvard Business School

**Carolyn Jacobs**, Dean of the Smith College School of Social Work

**Mark Jordan**, Professor of Divinity, Harvard Divinity School

**Jon Kabat-Zinn**, Founder of the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School

**Maribeth Kaptchuk**, Licensed Acupuncturist, Cambridge

**Catherine Kerr**, Assistant Professor, Department of Family Medicine, Brown University Medical School

**Janice Marturano**, Vice President for Public Responsibility and Deputy General Counsel at General Mills and Executive Director of the Institute for Mindful Leadership

**Metta McGarvey, Ph.D.**, Harvard Graduate School of Education

**Grady McGonagill**, President of McGonagill and Associates

**Tamar Miller**, Consultant to the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

**Jerome T. Murphy**, Professor and former Dean, Harvard Graduate School of Education

**Robert B. Rodgers**, Business leader, and MA candidate in Theological Studies at Harvard Divinity School with Faith and Leadership focus

**Ila Sarley**, Program Officer, Kriens Foundation

**Patton Sarley**, Program Officer, Kriens Foundation

**Saki Santorelli**, Director, Center for Mindfulness, University of Massachusetts Medical School

**Claus Otto Scharmer**, Senior Lecturer at MIT and founding chair of the Presencing Institute

**Richard Sclove**, Teaching & Learning Centers Project Director, Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

**Pamela Seigle**, Executive Director, Courage & Renewal Northeast

**Sandra Sucher**, Professor of Management Practice, Harvard Business School

**Ray Williams**, Director of Education, Harvard Art Museums

**William R. Torbert**, Professor of Management Emeritus at the Carroll School of Management, Boston College

**Diana Chapman Walsh**, MIT Board of Directors and President Emerita of Wellesley College

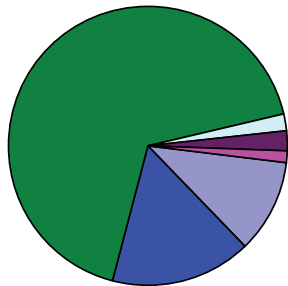
**Arthur Zajonc**, Professor of Physics at Amherst College, and Director of Center for Contemplative Mind in Society

## 2010 Revenue

Conference	\$118,079
Fee for service	\$177,607
Foundations	\$727,694
Individuals	\$21,350
Interest/Other	\$24,027
Membership	\$14,120

**Total Income \$1,082,877**

*\* \$218,490 of the 2010  
Foundation revenue is  
for use in 2011*

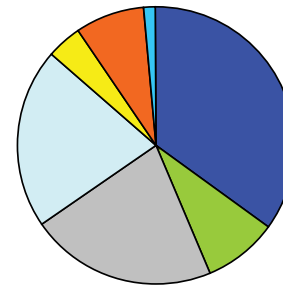


- Conference
- Fee for service
- Foundations
- Individuals
- Interest and other income
- Membership

## 2010 Expenses

Academic	\$266,125
Administration	\$64,095
Fee for service	\$165,830
Film project	\$160,398
Fundraising	\$31,701
Law	\$60,342
Website	\$10,480

**Total Expenses \$758,971**

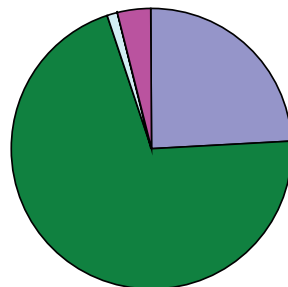


- Academic
- Administration
- Fee for service
- Film project
- Fundraising
- Law
- Website

## 2011 Budget Revenue

Conference	\$123,875
Foundations	\$365,490
Individuals	\$5,000
Interest/Other	\$500
Membership	\$20,000

**Total Income \$514,865**

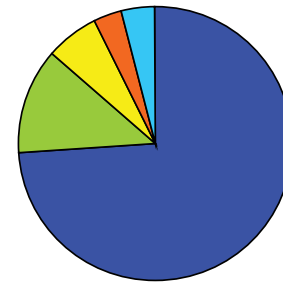


- Conference
- Foundations
- Individuals
- Interest and other income
- Membership

## 2011 Budget Expenses

Academic	\$375,301
Administration	\$62,192
Fundraising	\$32,856
Law	\$16,650
Website	\$20,000

**Total Expenses \$506,999**



- Academic
- Administration
- Fundraising
- Law
- Website

*Mirabai Bush leading meditation practice at the 2010 Academic Retreat*

**We would like to thank the following foundations for their support during the year 2010:**

**Clements Foundation**

**Fetzer Institute**

**Hershey Family Foundation**

**Kalliopeia Foundation**

**Kriens Family Foundation**

**M&T Weiner Foundation**

**Robert H. N. Ho Family Foundation**

We are grateful to the many individuals who helped make our work in 2010 possible.



## **Our Staff**

**Arthur Zajonc**  
Director

**Daniel Barbezat**  
Associate Director

**Mirabai Bush**  
Associate Director

**Carrie Bergman**  
Program Associate

**Sunanda Markus**  
Program Associate

**Lila Mereschuk**  
Director of Administration

**Richard Sclove**  
Teaching & Learning Centers Project Director

**Beth Wadham**  
Academic Program Associate

# 2011 Calendar of Events

<b>January 11</b>	<b>Contemplative Leadership Meeting</b> Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA (co-hosted by Jerry Murphy, Professor of Education, Harvard)	<b>March 30</b>	<b>The Contemplative Spirituality of Toni Morrison</b> A webinar with Linda-Susan Beard, Associate Professor of English, Bryn Mawr College
<b>January 16</b>	<b>Meditation for Lawyers CLE</b> At the Law Offices of Goldstein, Demchak, Ballar, Borgen & Dardarian, Oakland, CA	<b>April 15</b>	<b>Contemplative Pedagogy in Schools of Education</b> A planning meeting at Garrison Institute, Garrison, NY (Mirabai Bush)
<b>February 10</b>	<b>Meditation for Academic Excellence—and Beyond</b> Middlebury College, VT (Arthur Zajonc)	<b>May 23</b>	<b>Contemplative Leadership Meeting</b> Class of 1959 Chapel at Harvard Business School (mini-retreat with Jon Kabat-Zinn)
<b>February 11</b>	<b>Interactive Workshop for Faculty</b> Middlebury College, VT (Arthur Zajonc)	<b>May 25</b>	<b>Integrating Trial Advocacy and Mindfulness Theory &amp; Practice</b> A webinar with David Zlotnick, Professor of Law, Roger Williams University School of Law
<b>February 23</b>	<b>Contemplative Activism: Meditations Adapted from Tibet to Empower Service and Action</b> A webinar with John Makransky, Associate Professor of Buddhism and Comparative Theology, Boston College	<b>June 5-10</b>	<b>Buddhist Teachers Council</b> Garrison Institute (Mirabai Bush)
<b>March 18-19</b>	<b>Mindfulness: A Foundation for Teaching and Learning</b> American University, Washington, DC (co- hosted by the Mindfulness in Education Network)	<b>June 18</b>	<b>Contemplative Pedagogy and the African-American Higher Education Community</b> Howard University, Washington, DC
<b>March 24</b>	<b>Contemplative Leadership Meeting</b> Sackler Museum of Art, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA (co-hosted by Ray Williams, Director of Education at the Harvard University Art Museums)	<b>July 1-3</b>	<b>Regional ACMHE Conference</b> Whidbey Institute, Clinton, WA
<b>March 25-27</b>	<b>Throughout the Curriculum: Contemplative Practices in Higher Education</b> Amherst College, Amherst, MA (symposium co-hosted by Amherst College)	<b>July 12-14</b>	<b>Contemplative Pedagogy workshops</b> Through the School of Education at the University of Haifa, Israel (Tobin Hart and Rona Wilensky)
		<b>August 7-12</b>	<b>7th Annual Summer Session on Contemplative Curriculum Development</b> Smith College, Northampton, MA

- August 22**      **Contemplative Pedagogy presentation** at the Summer Institute at Bridgewater State University (Dan Barbezat)
- September 8-11**      **Meditation Retreat for Law Professionals**  
Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Woodacre, CA (Douglas Chermak, Norman Fischer, Charlie Halpern, Rhonda Magee, Mary Morgan, Wes Nisker, and Edith Politis)
- September 10-11**      **Contemplative Pedagogy and Teaching and Learning Centers**  
A planning meeting at Amherst College
- September 28**      **Cultivating the Executive Mind: Is Mindfulness the Key to 21st Century Economic Survival?**  
A webinar with Jeremy Hunter, Assistant Professor, The Peter F. Drucker and Masatoshi Ito Graduate School of Management
- September 29**      **Contemplation and Teaching the Economics of Desire**  
presented by the Brown University Contemplative Studies Initiative (Dan Barbezat)
- October 1**      **Creating a Mindful Society Conference**  
New York Society for Ethical Culture  
“Beyond Stress Reduction,” from Rhonda Magee, and Breakout Session, “Mindfulness and Contemplative Education,” from Dan Barbezat, with Tish Jennings
- October 4- 5**      **“Search Inside Yourself” teacher training program for Google and other companies**  
Google University (Mirabai Bush)
- October 10-11**      **Lecture and workshop on Contemplative Pedagogy**  
Phillips Exeter Academy (Arthur Zajonc)
- October 10-12**      **Fetzer Institute’s “Conversations on Awareness”**  
Mill Valley, CA (Mirabai Bush)
- October 12**      **Lecture and workshop on Contemplative Pedagogy**  
Colby College (Arthur Zajonc)
- October 14-16**      **Mindfulness in Education: A Foundation for Teaching and Learning**  
A conference co-sponsored by the Association for Mindfulness in Education, the Stanford School of Education and the Stanford Department of Child and Adolescent Psychiatry, Atherton, CA (keynote address by Mirabai Bush)
- October 29-30**      **Panel Presentations**  
Annual POD (Professional and Organizational Development Network) Conference, Atlanta, GA
- November 11-13**      **3rd Annual ACMHE Conference: The Contemplative Campus**  
Amherst College, Amherst, MA
- November 17-20**      **Retreat for Academics**  
Garrison Institute, Garrison, NY
- November 22**      **Contemplative Leadership Session**  
with Ron Heifetz at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government
- December 16**      **Contemplative Leadership Session**  
with Otto Scharmer, location TBA



## **The Center for Contemplative Mind in Society**

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