

Threads

Weaving Together The Stories Of Our Lives *The Center to BE, Inc. newsletter*

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April, 2004

. . . From the Director's Desk

Dear Readers,

One of my favorite tai chi movements is called Passing Clouds. Over the past weeks I have included it in my early morning reflection time, maybe because it doesn't demand distinguishing my right side from my left before I'm fully awake. In Passing Clouds, I stand centered and swaying gently as my arms and hands move past my face, circling effortlessly while my eyes follow. The meditation, which accompanies this movement, is: *Good things come into my life and they go. Difficult things come into my life and they go. It's all the same. It all moves, while I am centered and at peace.*

This meditation describes the "both/and" of our life journeys. When we are centered and at peace, it is possible *both* to experience great good fortune *and* to recognize that it is not a condition of our inherent self-worth. Similarly, it is possible *both* to suffer deep sorrow or anxiety *and* to retain a core sense of well-being.

This balanced place of both/and, though, is not a guaranteed destination on the journey nor does arrival assure a long and uninterrupted stay. When I find myself there, I recognize that it is only because I have been tending the inner place of true self-worth and well-being, the place where I connect with the Sacred. The tending itself is also a both/and: paying attention *both* to what I am called to DO *and* how I am called to BE.

We're all familiar with the fallout of DO-ing at the expense of BE-ing. We become so caught up in activity that we can't or don't have to focus on what's going on inside. But BE-ing at the expense of DO-ing also has a shadow. It may leave us insular

and a bit above it all. At The Center to BE, we offer opportunities *both* to slow down your DO-ing *and* to expand your BE-ing in the company of others like-spirited individuals. Please accept the invitations inside this edition of Threads to cultivate that calm and centered space of the Sacred within so the passing clouds of good things and difficult things can flow peacefully.

Peace to you, *Marjorie*

Compassionate Self-Care

by Alan Rommelfanger

President of the Board of Directors of The Center to BE

It was my privilege to be part of the faculty for the new program "*Awakening Compassion as a Spiritual Resource for Leaders*" co-sponsored by the Center to BE and the Institute for Spiritual Leadership at Cedar Valley Retreat Center the weekend of February 5 -8. My role was to share compassionate self-care practices for mind, body and spirit with the executive leaders who attended. The practices included tai chi movement, breathwork, fingerholds, visualizations, Pal Dan Gum and the Salute to the Sun.

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My wife, Leanore, and I completed the first Capacitar Training Program sponsored by the Center to BE in 2000 where Pat Cane, Ph.D., the executive director of Capacitar Inc., taught us these practices and empowered us to teach them to others. Having a daily practice which integrates and exercises the whole self, mind, body and spirit, helps us to maintain health and fosters continued growth. Sharing these practices with others has become second nature for both of us.

As I joined the Compassion team I viewed myself as the frosting on the cake. I thought of the other presenters as the meat and potatoes of the program. Rhea Emmer, CSA, D. Min., was speaking on compassion as a powerful resource for leaders in their personal and professional lives and in their organizations. Pat Bombard, BVM, D. Min., was presenting the new cosmology and Jim Stuart was going to share personal experiences of leadership as a vocation. I was very interested in each of their messages and was sure that their words would be the real substance of the program for all of the participants.

When participants approached me and thanked me for the self-care practices my first reaction was that they just were being polite; after all I was only doing what I do every day. I was somewhat amazed on our final morning when many of them shared that the most valuable part of the weekend was learning the importance of having self-compassion and experiencing the self-care practices.

This weekend experience once again awakened me to the importance of having a regular practice of self-care. A tree must be healthy before it can bear a crop of good fruit. Attending to the health of our own mind, body and spirit must be our first priority. It is not frosting on the cake.



 Visit our Website: www.centertobe.org

NEW!

AN INVITATION TO JOIN US FOR EXPLORING PATHWAYS:

The experience of exploring our personal spiritual pathways often is enriched when we travel with companions who are journeying too. Together we exchange our stories, share our wisdom and help one another to notice what we cannot see on our own.

The Center to BE will offer men and women, singles and couples, an opportunity in which to *Explore Pathways* together. We have some ideas about the direction this circle might take, for example: conversation on a particular topic; discussion of spirituality books; tapes and other material; or learning about new spiritual practices or ritual. That said, we also are eager to hear suggestions about what topics would be most appealing and helpful to YOU. We are holding this lightly in open hands.

Please plan to join with fellow spiritual explorers and we'll see where the Spirit may lead us together!

MILWAUKEE

Monday, May 10, 2004

6:30 – 8:00 pm

San Damiano Lounge

St. Joseph Center

1501 S. Layton Blvd.

No Fee

No Registration

FOND DU LAC

Monday, May 24, 2004

6:30 – 8:00 pm

Founder's Hall

St. Agnes Convent

320 County Road K

No Fee

No Registration



“When you get into a tight place and everything goes against you till it seems as though you could not hold on a minute longer, never give up then, for that is just the place and time that the tide will turn.”

~ Harriet Beecher Stowe

Reminders:

- **Exploring Paradox As A Spiritual Pathway**

In this program we will explore the tension of paradox as a way to look more deeply into our own hearts and to open them to living with what cannot always be resolved. Applications for using the lessons of paradox in our personal and work lives will be shared. Nancy Anderson will present.

MILWAUKEE

Tuesday, April 20, 2004
7:00-9:00 pm

San Damiano Lounge
St. Joseph Center
1501 S. Layton Blvd.

Fee: \$12 Call for reservation. 414-672-5932

- **Integral Movement ~ For Bodymindspirit**
Attention "Weavers": A special presentation for the benefit of the Weaving Retreats

With Integral Movement, a "work-in" more than a work-out, meditation is a quieting of mind, an opening of heart and staying comfortable in the body ~ a centering. Our focus is integrating all aspects of self, while gently and heartfully moving to special music.

Jean Scott will guide us in this session. Note: Wear comfortable pants.

MADISON

Saturday, April 24
10- 11:30 am

Room 9 St. Bernard School
2438 Atwood Ave.

Fee: \$12 Call for reservation. 414-672-5932

LET US COME TO YOU.

Over the past year, The Center to BE has taken its programs to a variety of organizations including hospitals, churches, schools, residential communities, professional societies and other non-profit service agencies. Our most popular programs incorporate simple and effective practices of self-care to alleviate the symptoms of stress. These practices can also be adapted as a way of experiencing body prayer. If you are part of a group which might benefit from a customized presentation using these practices, please contact Marjorie Wilbur at 414-672-5932 to discuss opportunities to bring The Center to BE to you.



Enrichment day for spiritual directors

COMPASSION: TENDING THE MYSTIC HEART IN SPIRITUAL COMPANIONSHIP

Due to the overwhelming response to the First Annual Day of Enrichment for Spiritual Directors, we are offering a second session of the same program. **Rhea Emmer, CSA, D.Min.** will present her program, beautifully designed by Doris Klein, CSA, blending presentation, reflection, conversation and practices of compassionate self-care.

If you are a spiritual director/companion, join us as we explore Compassion as a spiritual energy that sustains our Mystic Hearts. Plan to meet, reflect and learn with other spiritual directors. If you have a spiritual director/companion, please pass on this information. This event is co-sponsored by Spiritual Directors International - Region 24 and the Center to BE.

MILWAUKEE

Tuesday, May 18, 2004
9:00 am Registration and Continental Breakfast
9:30 am to 4:00pm Program
St. Joseph Center
1501 S. Layton Blvd.

Fee (including Lunch):
\$55 for Members of Spiritual Directors Internatinal
\$65 for Non-members
Registrations due by Wednesday, May 12 and are limited to 35 participants.

OPEN LABYRINTH WALK IN MILWAUKEE

The Center to BE will provide an open labyrinth walk as part of a collaborative program with the School Sisters of St. Francis. The third in a series of lectures titled "*Peaceful We Come, Peaceful We Shall Stay: Living Peacefully in a Non-Peaceful Society*" will feature Milwaukee District Attorney, E. Michael McCann. The labyrinth will be available prior to his presentation which begins at 7:00 pm in the historic St. Joseph Chapel. An introduction to the labyrinth will be offered to those who have not walked before.

MILWAUKEE

Friday, May 21, 2004
4:00 pm until 7:00 pm

St. Joseph Center
1501 S. Layton Blvd.

No reservations necessary.
No Fee. A Free Will offering appreciated

Fall Program Preview

THE SPIRITUAL PRACTICE OF FORGIVING OURSELVES AND OTHERS

*Presented in collaboration with Mount Mary
College Alumnae Relations Office*

All of us struggle at some time in our lives with forgiving or seeking forgiveness. Although we may agree that forgiving is a virtuous spiritual practice, we know from experience that it does not always come easily, even when the lack of forgiveness prevents us from feeling at peace. Why is it so hard to forgive others—and sometimes harder to forgive ourselves?

During this engaging and interactive morning program we will explore the meaning of forgiveness through reflecting on and discussing questions such as: Does forgiveness really mean forgetting? Do forgiveness and reconciliation always go hand in hand? What happens when we don't forgive? The necessary steps in practicing forgiveness also will be examined.

Presenter **Sandra Christensen** is a Milwaukee-based speaker, trainer and teacher who has spent over 20 years in business, health care and human services. She speaks to a wide range of business, school, church and community organizations drawing on her personal and professional experiences.

MILWAUKEE

Saturday, October 9, 2004

8:30 am: Registration and Continental Breakfast

9:00 am – Noon: Presentation

Mount Mary College

Helpaer Hall in Caroline Hall

2900 N. Menomonee River Pkwy.

Fee: \$20

Registrations due by Monday, October 4

“Love and compassion are necessities, not luxuries. Without them, humanity cannot survive.”

~ The Dalai Lama

NATURE AND THE SACRED: AN EXPERIENCE OF CREATION SPIRITUALITY

Experience this day in the company of a spouse, partner, friend or come on your own.

Grounded in creation spirituality, this program will help us remember, reclaim and celebrate our interconnectedness and harmony with the earth and with the Sacred in all of creation. We will explore how nature enriches and deepens our spirituality; how and where we are connected with nature; and how we can live graciously with nature and return care to the earth. The day will combine presentation, time for being outdoors, reflection/meditation and group interaction. Cedar Valley is located in the Kettle Moraine on 100 rural acres of beautiful grounds including woods, pond, stream, walking trails and sculptures. **Please dress for the day's weather.**

Judith Christopher is an ordained United Methodist clergywoman and mystic grounded in creation spirituality from Kenosha. She is a Reiki Teacher and Master, founder of *Beyond the Walls Ministry*, an associate of Healing Arts Institute, a partner in Healing Earth Wellness Center, a certified Spiritual Director, a staff member of Siena Center's Spiritual Guidance program and a student herbalist. She has led retreats and workshops nationally and internationally on this topic.

WEST BEND

Saturday, October 23, 2004

8:45 am: Registration

9:00 am – 4:00 pm Program

Cedar Valley Retreat Center

5349 Hwy D

Fee: \$50 includes lunch and break refreshments

Attendance is limited

Registrations due by Friday, October 15

◆◆◆ **"THE CENTER TO BE READS"** ◆◆◆
◆BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

Read these books and come for interactive discussions led by a facilitator. Free. No registration required.

All session held in Fond du Lac at the Fond du Lac Center for Spirituality and Healing, 74 S. Main Street

(Books are available for purchase there.)

Wednesday, May 12
7:00 – 8:30 pm



HEART: A NATURAL HISTORY OF THE HEART-FILLED LIFE

by Gail Godwin

This book is a journey that spans the history of human civilization, combining myth, art and religion to understand how humans have conceived of the heart through time. The author weaves her own stories of heartbreak and hope throughout and leads us to an understanding that we cannot let the head alone rule our lives.

Wednesday, July 28
7:00 – 8:30 pm



THE POWER OF YOUR OTHER HAND : A COURSE IN CHANNELING THE INNER WISDOM OF THE RIGHT BRAIN

by Lucia Capacchione, Ph.D.

Through various drawing and writing exercises with your non-dominant hand you will explore and understand your thoughts and feelings on a completely different level, finding out things about yourself that have been buried or concealed including the

wisdom of your true self, how to heal your body and your relationships and changing negative self-concepts.

Wednesday, September 29
7:00 – 8:30 pm



IN SWEET COMPANY: CONVERSATIONS WITH EXTRA-ORDINARY WOMEN ABOUT LIVING A SPIRITUAL LIFE

by Margaret Wolff

Enjoy conversations with 14 women, including Olympia Dukakis, Sister Helen Prejean, Riane Eisler and Reverend Dr. Lauren Artriss. Each woman shares her thoughts on the spiritual life and relates her own personal journey.



Consider Sharing Your Talents!

The Center to BE is looking for volunteers to assist our Board of Directors on several standing committees including Marketing/Communications, Programming, Fund Raising and Special Events. The extent of your commitment can be tailored to your talents and availability. Please join us!

Contact Marjorie Wilbur to learn more at 414-672-5932 or mwctobe@execpc.com

✂ REGISTRATION FORM

Please mark each program for which you are registering. Return this form with your check made payable to The Center to BE and mail to: The Center to BE, 1501 S. Layton Blvd. Milwaukee, WI 53215.

Milwaukee:

CALL Exploring Paradox, Apr 20 \$ 12
_____ Enrichment Day for Spiritual Directors, May 18
\$55 for members of SDI
\$65 for non-members

Name: _____

Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Evening Phone: _____

Note: Registration deadlines and locations for individual programs differ. Not all programs require registration. Refer to the program descriptions carefully. Form may be duplicated.

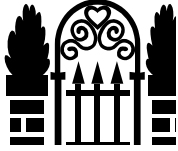
Madison:

CALL Integral Movement, Apr 24 \$ 12

Day Phone: _____

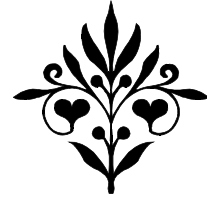
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REFLECTIONS



“People are like stained-glass windows. They sparkle and shine when the sun is out, but when the darkness sets in, their true beauty is revealed only if there is a light within.” ~ Elizabeth Kubler-Ross

“The marvelous richness of human experience would lose something of rewarding joy if there were no limitations to overcome. The hilltop hour would not be half so wonderful if there were no dark valleys to traverse.” ~ Helen Keller



“...and then the day came when the risk to remain tight in a bud was more painful than the risk it took to blossom.” ~ Anais Nin

Mission Statement

The Center To BE, Inc. is committed to fostering spiritual awareness and growth as catalysts for personal empowerment and transformation of self, society and the world. The Center to BE welcomes all who seek a deeper relationship with the Mystery we name God. In diverse settings, the Center to BE offers a spiritual presence and programs which promote reflection, healing of body, mind and spirit and community building.