

CALENDAR of EVENTS
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1995-2010
Fifteen Years of
Inclusive Spirituality

Threads
On-Line Issue

To reduce our expenses and save precious resources, we will print and mail three issues of *Threads* this year rather than four. This April issue is available only on-line. We encourage you to pass this on to others for whom we may not have email addresses.

The next issue of *Threads* will be mailed in August.



The Center to BE, Inc. Newsletter • 1501 S. Layton Blvd, Milwaukee, WI 53215
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Volume 14, Issue 2

April, 2010

FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Readers,

Having extended family in Santiago, Chile, I followed news of their February earthquake with special interest. While the destruction there was not as horrific as in Haiti a month earlier, this second immense upheaval intensified global awareness of the tremendous power of nature. I was astonished to discover that on most days at least 25 earthquakes of magnitude 2.5 or greater are recorded on our planet, a shifting that is part of its on-going evolution. Despite their deep turmoil, mostly they go unnoticed on the surface unless, as we witnessed recently, a very large disturbance hits a heavily populated area and demands our attention.

On our life journeys, we are susceptible to spiritual earthquakes which can rattle and upend us but ultimately lead us to transformation. Some of these are low magnitude events, barely registering on our consciousness. For instance, a casual conversation with a friend suddenly gives way to sharing a tender confidence; a near miss on the highway snaps us out of absent-minded reverie; a majestic sunset presents itself out of an ordinary day. Each creates a stirring, a bit of movement in us.

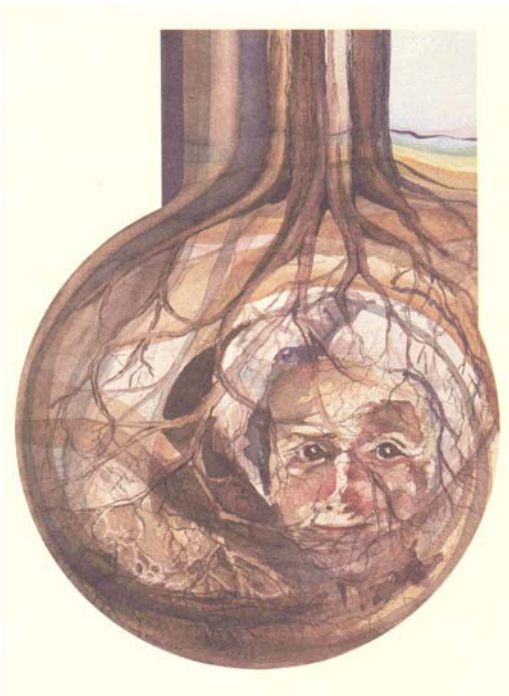
Others are momentous, rocking our foundations. They may be happy earthquakes—the birth of a child, the safe return of a soldier, the experience of new love, the fulfillment of a long-held dream. We also know the pain of sorrowful earthquakes—news of a serious illness, death of a loved one, loss of a job, betrayal by a friend. Each of these alters us profoundly, rearranging our inner landscapes. We may feel their spiritual aftershocks as well, ripples of continuing change that remind us that things will never be as before.

How we withstand these spiritual earthquakes can depend very much on our inner resiliency. When we are deeply centered we are able to absorb the energy of these shifts, whether slight or substantial, and allow them to lead us to wisdom. Those who live on the earth's physical fault lines are less vulnerable when they prepare for inevitable tremors and convulsions. In a similar way, we can diminish the damage of the spiritual earthquakes we will surely experience by consistently tending and strengthening our spirits.

The Center to BE can help you tend your spirit through our many program offerings and our presence. In 2010, our 15th anniversary year, we are especially mindful of *Nature and the Sacred* and the lessons of nature for our spiritual lives. Look inside this on-line issue and check out the rest of our website to learn more. We invite you to join us.

Peace to you,
Marjorie

Your reflections on this theme are welcome. Send them to The Center to BE and they will be included on our website.



Rooted in Wisdom—Sophia by Doris Klein, CSA

Rooted in BE-ing

A 15th Anniversary Celebration Event

Friday, April 30, 2010

Cedar Valley Retreat Center
5349 Highway D
West Bend

You are invited to this Sacred Celebration as The Center to BE celebrates 15 years of offering programs and presence to foster spiritual awareness and growth. Our year-long theme of *Nature and the Sacred* continues as we welcome **Jean Reddemann (Strong Walking Woman)** in guiding our reflections.

With their deep roots and soaring branches, trees are a powerful symbol of the spiritual life. In 2000, The Center to BE planted a tree on the Cedar Valley grounds as a sign of strength and hope. We will gather at the site of this tree for our opening ceremonies.

- | | |
|-----------------|--|
| 5:30 to 6:30 pm | Optional outdoor labyrinth walk |
| 6:30 to 7:00 pm | Sacred prayer and ritual at the site of the tree planted by The Center to BE (north of the Art Studio near the fenced pasture) |
| 7:00 to 7:45 pm | Reception and refreshments in the Assembly Room |
| 7:45 to 8:30 pm | Story-telling around the bonfire on the grounds |

Jean Reddemann is a recognized counselor, artist, lecturer, teacher and indigenous healer.

Please dress for the weather.

Fee: \$15 Or free with your registration for *Nature's Way* with Philip Chard on May 1.

Registrations due by Monday, April 26. See page 5 for registration form or register on-line at The Center to BE website: www.centertobe.org/shortprog.php

Please consider giving a special, additional financial gift to The Center to BE in honor of our 15th Anniversary. Make checks payable to The Center to BE and send to The Center to BE, 1501 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53215. Or donate on-line at our website www.centertobe.org/donating.php Thank You!

Trees are the earth's endless effort to speak to the listening heaven. Rabindranath Tagore

The Center to BE, Inc. is as a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt organization, registered as a Charitable Organization in Wisconsin, and governed by a volunteer Board of Directors, whose members are:

M. Lynn Connolly, President
Julia Danaher
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Ellen Swan
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Marjorie Wilbur,
Executive Director

Nature's Way Emotional Healing and Spiritual Growth Through Nature Interaction With Philip Chard



The power of nature to heal the heart and grow the human spirit was recognized and honored by earlier cultures, but is largely forgotten in our own. The expanding field of EcoPsychology is advancing the application of "nature interaction" to the modern practices of self-help, education, counseling and spiritual development. **Philip Chard** is a leader in this field, having written one of the first books (*The Healing Earth*, 1994) to apply the principles of what he calls "Nature's Way" to personal and spiritual development.

This workshop will provide participants with an experiential immersion in the ideas and methods of Nature's Way. We will explore how contact with nature can help people overcome debilitating emotions, make difficult choices, heal loss and grief, gain self-understanding, nurture creativity, promote personal development and find spiritual "bedrock".

The beautiful and spacious grounds of The Cedar Valley Retreat Center in the Kettle Moraine will be an integral part of the program. **We will spend time outdoors; please wear clothing appropriate to the day's weather.**

Philip Chard is a nature therapist (a psychotherapist who uses nature interaction to foster emotional healing), a newspaper columnist, book author, nature photographer, nationally acclaimed speaker and trainer. Visit his website at www.philipchard.com

Philip's new book, *Nature's Way: Experiencing the Sacred in the Natural World*, will be published in spring, 2010. We will take pre-orders for autographed copies at this event.

For driving directions, contact The Center to BE or go to the Cedar Valley website at www.cedarvalleycenter.org

Fee also includes a \$15 anniversary donation and free registration for Rooted in BE-ing, a sacred celebration and reception on April 30. (See page 2 for details.) On-line registrations are available at www.centertobe.org/shortprog.php

Nature's Way

Saturday, May 1

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

Cedar Valley
Retreat Center
5349 Highway D
West Bend

Fee: \$75 including lunch

Registrations due by
Monday, April 26

My profession is always to be alert, to find God in nature, to know God's lurking places, to attend to all the oratorios and the operas in nature. Henry David Thoreau

Image as a Spiritual Language

Images, those messages of inner vision, often bring clarity to situations we struggle to convey and comprehend through writing or speech. Images are a first language, a language of imagination.

In this engaging workshop we will learn to befriend images which come as messages from the Divine. We will practice meditation, body-centered awareness and visual journaling, a tool that can help us express feelings and make more conscious choices. When we become conscious of the power of imagery, we can begin to glimpse insights that can lead us to our deepest desires and ultimate purpose.

All materials will be provided for exploring image as a spiritual language in a safe and non-judging way.

Elizabeth Lewis is an artist, writer, arts educator and certified stress-management consultant. She travels widely presenting lectures and workshops on the healing power of art and writing.

Image
Saturday, April 10
9:00 am to Noon

Founder's Hall in
St. Agnes Convent
320 County Road K
Fond du Lac

Fee: \$20
Registrations due by
Monday, April 5

In the Eye of the Storm

The eye of the hurricane is the place at the center where all is calm despite the great movement, force and power that is stirring around it. In the midst of this turbulence when all seems to be falling apart and breaking down, how can we use this center to become a calm, non-anxious presence in a very chaotic world. This is the spiritual challenge of our times.

This day long, interactive workshop will help us explore the possibilities for cultivating presence in our world. We will use guided imagery, symbols, creative exercises and reflective time to open our imaginations, develop our intuition and expand our awareness. Learn how chaos can lead to serenity and offer a perfect opportunity for spiritual growth.

Donna Bartolone is a retired educator with 27 years of experience teaching adult learners. She gives presentations and conducts workshops on spiritual topics. She is a graduate of CAPACITAR Training in Healing and Transformation, at The Center to BE.

Eye of the Storm
Saturday,
October 23

9:00 am to 3:00 pm

St. Joseph Center
1501 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee

Fee: \$45 including lunch

Registrations due by
Friday, October 15

**God is the friend of silence. Trees, flowers, grass grow in silence.
See the stars, moon, and sun, how they move in silence. Mother Teresa**

Simple Practices to Alleviate the Symptoms of Stress



Stress and its symptoms can affect us physically, emotionally and spiritually. Although we can't eliminate stress from our lives, there are easy and effective ways to alleviate its symptoms and live more at ease with it. This program teaches a number of the self-care practices featured in **Training in Healing and Transformation**, the workshop we present with CAPACITAR.

Learn gentle tai chi movement, calming breath work, simple finger holds and much more. All the practices are flexible enough to accommodate teens and men and women of all ages and physical abilities.

Marjorie Wilbur is the Executive Director of The Center to BE and a spiritual companion.

Simple Practices
Saturday, May 15

9:30 to 11:30 am

Founder's Hall in
St. Agnes Convent
320 County Road K
Fond du Lac

Fee: \$15
Registrations due by
Wednesday, May 12



The Beguines: Daring, Dissident Soul Sisters

A Retreat

Co-Sponsored with the Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes Associates

Eight hundred years ago, the creative mysticism, courage, and passion of women known as "Beguines" changed the Christian church. From about 1210 to 1310, thousands of women were Beguines – not members of religious congregations but dedicated to spiritual life, gathering together while supporting themselves with a variety of skills. Some took private vows, some did not. Some lived in community, others lived alone.

This retreat is an invitation to explore in depth the spiritual wisdom of the Beguines for today with

- Presentations and discussion of the works of Marguerite Porete, Mechtild of Madgeburg, and Hedwich of Brabant
• Meditations and dialogue to apply Beguine spirituality to our lives
• Rituals to celebrate the power and creativity of women's souls
• Investigations of ways the Beguines prepared the way for Christian-Buddhist interspirituality.

Nature and Spirituality, the 15th anniversary theme of The Center to BE also is celebrated in this experience.

Paula Hirschboeck, Ph.D. is Professor of Philosophy at Edgewood College, Madison, Wisconsin, co-director of Wisdom's Well Interfaith Spirituality Center, a Zen Buddhist priest and chaplain, and a spiritual director. She has given a variety of retreats and programs on the divine feminine, women's spirituality and interfaith spiritual practice, particularly Zen and Christian mysticism.

For more information contact:

The Center to BE at 414-672-5932 or mwilbur.centertobe@sbcglobal.net or Ellen Swan, Congregation of Sisters of St. Agnes at 920-907-2318 or eswan@csasisters.org

The Beguines

October 30 – 31, 2010

Saturday – 9 am to 8 pm
Sunday – 9 am to noon

Founder's Hall in
St. Agnes Convent
320 County Road K
Fond du Lac

Fee: \$100 including lunch on Saturday and Sunday, supper on Saturday, all beverages and break refreshments.

Registrations due by Wednesday, October 20.

REGISTRATION FORM

Please mark each program for which you are registering. Return this form with your check made payable to:

The Center to BE, 1501 S. Layton Blvd., Milwaukee, WI 53215

Or register on-line at www.centertobe.org/shortprog.php

Note: Registration deadlines and locations differ for individual programs.

West Bend

- ___ Rooted in BE-ing April 30 \$15
___ Nature's Way May 1 \$75

Fond du Lac

- ___ Image April 10 \$20
___ Simple Practices May 15 \$15
___ The Beguines Oct. 30-31 \$100

Milwaukee

- ___ Staying Alive Oct. 21 \$35
___ Eye of the Storm Oct. 23 \$45

Name: _____

Evening Phone: _____

Address: _____

Day Phone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

E-mail: _____

**Staying Alive Spiritually:
The Spiritual Life of the
Spiritual Director**

**Seventh Annual Fall
Workshop for Spiritual Directors**

As a spiritual director you are expected to live a life of authenticity, integrity, and groundedness. How can you live prayerfully and joyfully? What does balance, self-care, and spiritual practice look like for you? Let's explore together.

Rev. Holly Whitcomb has been a pastor and clergywoman in the United Church of Christ for over 30 years. She is also a spiritual director in the Milwaukee area and the author of four books including *Seven Spiritual Gifts of Waiting*.

**Staying Alive Spiritually
Thursday, October 21**

Socializing 9:30 to 10 am
Program 10 am to 2:30 pm

St. Joseph Center
1501 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee

Fee: \$35 including lunch

Registrations due by
Monday, October 18

Wisdom of Nature and the Sacred

There is a way that nature speaks, that land speaks. Most of the time we are simply not patient enough, quiet enough, to pay attention to the story.

Linda Hogan

The best remedy for those who are afraid, lonely or unhappy is to go outside, somewhere where they can be quiet, alone with the heavens, nature and God. Because only then does one feel that all is as it should be and that God wishes to see people happy, amidst the simple beauty of nature.

Anne Frank

Knowing trees, I understand the meaning of patience. Knowing grass, I can appreciate persistence.

Hal Borland

To pay homage to beauty is to admire Nature; to admire Nature is to worship God.

Anonymous

Nature is too thin a screen; the glory of the omnipresent God bursts through everywhere.

Ralph Waldo Emerson

Watch for The Center to BE 2009 Annual Report. Coming on-line soon.

MISSION STATEMENT OF THE CENTER TO BE

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.



**The Center to BE, Inc.
1501 S. Layton Blvd.
Milwaukee, WI 53215**

**Come...Explore
Pathways
to the Sacred at the
Center of your BE-ing**

