

*The First Annual Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education Conference*

## **The Contemplative Heart of Higher Education**

**April 24 – 26, 2009**

**Amherst College, Amherst, Massachusetts**

by Geri DeLuca, Professor of English, Brooklyn College

### **Friday Evening, April 24**



After registration and a welcoming reception in the Main Lobby of Converse Hall, Arthur Zajonc, Director of Academic Programs for the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society and Mellon Professor of Physics and Interdisciplinary Studies at Amherst College, opened the first conference of the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education at 8:00 pm in the Cole Assembly "Red Room." He welcomed members to this important occasion, which is the brain (and heart) child of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society. To illustrate how far we have come since the Center was established in 1996, he noted that Thursday, April 23, had been a Day of Mindfulness at Amherst College, during which students and faculty held contemplative classes and did yoga and meditation—an occasion that would have been unimaginable at Amherst 20 years ago.

Arthur then introduced Philip Snyder, who succeeded Mirabai Bush last year as the second Director of the Center. Philip also reflected on how far we have come, remembering the loneliness he felt years ago doing contemplative practices in his classrooms. Now we contemplative educators meet as an association, and we will continue networking to transform education so that in its pursuit of knowledge and preparation of students, it seeks not only to cultivate critical thinking but also to encourage contemplative knowing.

Philip thanked Carrie Bergman, Sunanda Markus, and Beth Wadham for their extraordinary work in putting the conference together.

Arthur now introduced the main speaker of the evening, Prof. David Levy, of the Information School, University of Washington. In the 60's and 70's, Arthur said, Prof. Levy was in the "vanguard of aspiring nerds," a young man who couldn't get enough of the computer. Prof. Levy attended Stuyvesant High School in New York City, then Dartmouth College, where he worked on time-sharing systems and computer languages. But as he studied artificial intelligence, he found himself disappointed at how narrowly it was being defined and applied. So he left his work in the U.S. and went to London for two years to do calligraphy and book binding, finding in the slow, embodied, contemplative work of these crafts a holistic way to experience his life. When he returned to the U.S., he began working at Xerox Park.



The title of his talk, “Head, Heart and Hand: Cultivating the Contemplative in Higher Education,” grows out of these early experiences, reflecting his felt need to integrate holistic ways of knowing and being in a world inexorably dominated by technology. He recalled Thomas Carlyle’s response to the Industrial Revolution in 1829. Worried about the degrading effect of the concern with product and profit, Carlyle observed, “Men are grown mechanical in head and heart as well as in hand.” John Ruskin and William Morris, two other influential thinkers of the Industrial Age, started the “Arts and Crafts” movement, which was both political and artistic, taking a stance about what constituted a fruitful way of being, and encouraging people to make objects through concentrated attention to material, to feel the head, heart, and hands in their work.

As this convocation of contemplative teachers and administrators suggests, we are at an extraordinary moment now, poised to bring the contemplative back into higher education, to recover the link between the two strands from which higher education was shaped: the ancient tradition of Greek and Roman civilization and the modern tradition of

the Industrial Revolution, each of which contains within itself a particular mindset.

In *What Is Ancient Philosophy*, Pierre Hadot maintains that Greek philosophy was not based solely on argument and logic, but also on spirituality. Socrates trained his students not just to argue but to live, to be human, not just to inform but to form, to pursue wisdom. He asked people to attend to the present moment, to meditate on nature and on death.

But in studying Greek and Roman civilizations, Levy says, scholars learned the seductive comfort of the Ivory Tower, of attending to texts, buildings, art for art’s sake, and in so doing turning away from suffering. Further, as the growth of Christianity made spiritual practices its own, the study of ancient philosophy became less occupied with spiritual concerns, leading to the systematizing and measuring that characterize medieval scholasticism.

The second tradition grew out of the Industrial Revolution of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries, with its goals of large scale manufacturing, bureaucratization, transportation, its emphasis on speed, measurement, productivity, efficiency. “More, faster, better” was and continues to be its mindset. A person doing his job in such a world became an interchangeable part in a machine. And out of this orientation, the modern university took shape. Efficiency expert Morris Llewellyn Cooke imagined the “college teacher as producer.” In response, Henry David Bushnell responded: “No right thinking person should buy into the efficiency model. . . . Better that waste and inefficiency should exist than that the producer model should prevail.”

And so, Prof. Levy asks us now: How should colleges teach? How should they be organized? In *The Last Professors*, Frank Donahue warns that we are coming to the end of liberal arts education. The university has become a place where specialists train other

specialists. Curriculum vitae are seen as measures of productivity, and there is little time for the growth of a spacious understanding of the life of the mind, let alone the heart.

In his online essay “No Time to Think: Reflections on information technology and contemplative scholarship” (and his talk on the same topic available on YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KHGcvj3JiGA>), Prof. Levy argues that even as he worked at Xerox Park, which is a “think tank,” he discovered that he had less and less time to think, and that the shrinking of time to spend with each aspect of his work precluded a contemplative stance. How do we get to know our subjects deeply if we cannot reflect on them? It has taken us 100 years to see the flaw in this hard-driving machinery that has embedded itself in the university and now, he claims, that machinery is breaking down. Students, teachers, researchers, often caught in an isolating, instrumental universe that views them as purely competitive beings, need to recover the contemplative dimension of education, to restore the liberal arts in the spiritually-laden sense that Hadot describes. We need to transcend the vocational/professional versus the liberal arts divide, to intertwine the two. New technologies, as wonderful as they are, can also be distracting and disorienting. In the face of all this potential stimulation, we need to find a way to pay attention to what matters deeply to us, to maintain our fully human, embodied, spiritual nature.

In the question period that followed, one person asked how we keep this heart-centered movement away from being co-opted by the technological. Another reminded us to look also at the Asian stream with its rich tradition of spirituality, art and science.

Levy suggested that perhaps truly modern science—as some of the research at the conference will suggest—can lead naturally to a re-integration of inner and outer experiences.

## Saturday, April 25

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The day began at 8 am with two meditation groups, one led by Mirabai Bush, the other by Joel Upton.



At 9 am, Arthur Zajonc convened the conference by introducing Diana Chapman Walsh, former president of Wellesley College and a leader in the contemplative practice movement in higher education. Her talk was entitled “Higher Education in a Time of Stress: The Kingdom is Now or Never,” and she began by acknowledging this “gathering of the pioneers” in the field, describing this gathering as an “act of radical hopefulness” in a time of fear. The title is from a calligraphy that Thich Nhat Hanh painted at Wellesley. She hung it in her office where everyone who visited saw it. It reminded her to keep alive the question of how a liberal arts education can also be a spiritual journey, seeking knowledge in all its complexity? She said we must reawaken higher education to its highest calling, teaching our students how radically interdependent we are as an immature species on a fragile planet. We must inspire our students to choose lives that are more significant, not just more successful.

Like Levy, President Walsh sees us as being in a transitional moment in academia—which she defines as a moment when an institution

or situation goes from a state of freezing to unfreezing. Before long it will freeze again, so this is our opportunity to make change. The academy has, as Louis Menand observed in 1996, been tinkering with itself for decades, tightening and elaborating its rules, hewing close to conventional standards, shoring up against an influx of new and non-traditional students, but making no radical changes. But now we are unfreezing. The conventional financial supports for the university are diminishing and so perhaps the constraints on the university engendered by those supports are softening as well. Now something new might happen. Now a new field of scholarship and practice may emerge, new leaders may emerge. The practice of trustworthy leadership, President Walsh observes, begins and ends in self-inquiry, and this moment of unfreezing may allow fresh self-inquiry to occur.

“Arguing with the other,” she observes, “is rhetoric. Arguing with the self is poetry.” “The world needs presidents who are also poets,” says Parker Palmer. And being a president, like being a poet, requires a practice, clear-eyed attention; a spiritual mooring to which one looks for evidence that one’s leadership is ultimately healthy for the institution and the community.

How might an excellent education be poetry as well as logic? How might it be a spiritual as well as an intellectual journey? President Walsh, like David Levy, sees this gathering of teachers as part of a social movement to reawaken higher education to its highest calling, wherein it addresses globalization, mutual dependency, the fragility of the planet. Many commentators on the state of higher education see the staleness of our condition. Harry Lewis calls it “excellence without a soul.” Students need a new kind of learning, one that will allow them to make their lives not just more successful but more significant. How, Martha Nussbaum asks, do we move past the goal of personal achievement and reward and connect

education with citizenship? Prestige institutions are inward looking and they are using their resources to protect what they have. How can they begin to look outward? How can they provide the intellectual coherence that Vartan Gregorian says is lacking, as we move along our specialized tracks? Humans have a craving for wholeness. And as Parker Palmer puts it, they need to align who they are with what they do. We need, says George Kuhn, to meet students where they are and to help them find their talents so that they can find the connection between their small stories and the large issues of the world.

We have, to date, stated our goals in terms of the development of critical thinking. But the ability to think critically is only the midpoint of the student’s journey. One enters a problem from a personal point of view, using narrative, memory, metaphor. Then one may create distance and analyze critically. But then one needs to re-emerge from analysis and comes back to the self by testing one’s theories in the new world. One has a holistic encounter, one becomes contemplative. As Andrew Kahane puts it, one begins with experiential learning, moves through stages of practical reasoning, and comes to contemplative practice. If critical thinking is not the end point, then education must be grounded in “human purposes that are wider and deeper than criticism.” Students and teachers must value responsibility as well as academic performance; the student must be allowed to turn toward the formation of an identity and imaginative engagement in the needs of others.

While the erosion of endowments may free the university from their rules, it also has dire consequences for giving students access to education. The United States is tenth in the world in providing access (Andrew del Banco, *New York Review of Books*, May 14, 2009). So this moment of unfreezing, part and parcel of the financial crisis, is also dramatically complicated by it.

What can leaders do in this time of unfreezing? President Walsh offers us an agenda:

1. Convene participants and their perspectives
2. Since each embodies pieces of the problem and solution, let them see how they interact.
3. Allow them to retreat into contemplation where they may ask what they need from the system and what the system needs from them.
4. Let them try out systemic innovations, create ecosystems of new practices.
5. Let them become, in their work together, an example of how to solve the problem. Let them do the inner work so that the outer work is worth passing on.

In *The Necessary Revolution*, Peter Senge says that we are facing the greatest learning challenge humans have ever faced: to live in the present in ways that do not jeopardize the future. This means to think with nature and not the machine as a model and to build a regenerative society that mirrors and protects nature. Now that we have hit a wall as far as endowments and tuition hikes go, we need to invest in social and natural capital rather than financial capital. We need to rebuild systems in ways that help people to connect to themselves and others. This requires a transformation of consciousness. Becoming aware of the longing, we need to be gentle emissaries to pull people together who recognize the need for inner work in order to do the outer work, which has to be done and soon. We need to move from ego-system to ecosystem. We need to find the humanity in our hearts.

### **Saturday Mid-morning:**

Parallel sessions on Contemplative Practice and Research

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The schedule of sessions may be found at the end of this report. Please see the conference program for complete information, including biographies and session descriptions.

### **Saturday afternoon, 1:30 pm:**

Inaugural Meeting of the Association of Contemplative Mind in Higher Education

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As the founder and first director of the Center for Contemplative Mind, Mirabai Bush spoke about the Center's history. Prefiguring things to come for her—the experience of an academic group being together in silence—she described her experience as a young teacher at the State University of New York at Buffalo in 1969. The class had watched *The Battle of Algiers* together and had found the film's impact so great that no one spoke: they just sat together in silence for an hour and a half. At that point, with her doctorate almost in hand, Mirabai left the university and traveled to India, where she lived and studied for several years. When she returned to the U.S., she taught at the Naropa Institute in Boulder, Colorado, founded by Chogyam Trungpa Rinpoche, and she continued her work in contemplative practices and studies.

Mirabai co-founded the Center for Contemplative Mind in 1996. Jon Kabat-Zinn and Dan Goleman worked with her then, both exploring contemplative modes of maintaining and restoring physical and psychological health. In 1996, The Fetzer Institute and the Nathan Cummings Foundation provided funds for a program of fellowships that the Center would grant to university teachers to establish courses and programs with contemplative components. Mirabai noted her own skepticism at the idea that the university might be a fruitful site for contemplative work, but she was happily surprised at the enthusiastic response of the academics who applied for the fellowships. The Center partnered with the American Council of Learned Societies in the selection of the fellows and the administration of the fellowships and for the past 13 years the Center has granted fellowships every year.

In conjunction with the fellowship program, the Center established summer seminars, held at Smith College, where faculty gather for five days to hear speakers in the field of contemplative practice, discuss shared concerns, and develop curricula that integrate contemplative practices into classes.

In 2006, the Center established a four-day retreat for academics. The first was held at Trinity Center in Connecticut, the second and third were held at Menla Mountain House in the Catskills, and, so that the Center can serve its western colleagues, the fourth will be held November 12 – 15, 2009 at the Marconi Center, just north of San Francisco.

In 2008, the Center established the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education to bring together a growing body of teachers, administrators and graduate students; to stimulate scholarship and research; to sponsor forums for presentation of research; to support the development of curricula; to help academics deepen their contemplative practice through retreats; to distribute information through a quarterly e-newsletter; and to provide online resources for

members to participate in forums and webinars and to share materials. The Association now has 300 members, including 140 fellows.

The plenary group made many suggestions for ways to develop the Association. These included:

1. Making the organization accessible to students, part-time faculty, the disabled, people of color, lesbians, gays, and others who may not be present now, and reaching out to those people.
2. Creating a speakers' bureau
3. Holding a summer training institute for administrators
4. Investigating the uses of contemplative practices in various disciplines and presenting such work at the annual conference and through software networking as well as providing space and time for disciplinary subgroups to meet at the ACMHE annual meeting.
5. Establishing interest groups on the environment
6. Exchanging models for integrating contemplative practices into curricula
7. Posting essays online at the website of the Center for Contemplative Mind
8. Encouraging presentations of contemplative practice-related work at the home organizations of disciplines across the curriculum; encouraging presentations of work involving contemplative practices at the American Association of Colleges and Universities, an organization which already supports work on social justice and political responsibility
9. Funding research projects
10. Establishing a journal
11. Forming mentoring relationships
12. Addressing the issue of our collective "ego" as an institution and likewise our "unconscious"—recognizing the importance of attending to the shadowed material that is always present at such gatherings and in such organizations.
13. Posting positions on the website

14. Writing up institutional case studies of contemplative practice programs in the schools.
15. Recognizing contemplative practice as a distinct field of study.
16. Urging members to invite friends and to renew their own memberships.
17. Finding new ways to raise money.

### **Saturday Mid-afternoon:**

Parallel sessions on Contemplative Practice and Research

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The schedule of sessions may be found at the end of this report. Please see the conference program for complete information, including biographies and session descriptions.

### **Plenary Session, 5 pm**

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To introduce the session, Ed Sarath, a fellow of CCM, a Professor of Music, and Director of the Program in Creativity and Consciousness Studies at the University of Michigan, took the group through a call and response session. On his flugelhorn, he played line after line of music and the group imitated each line until we ended in a prolonged repetition of the sound of Om—which astonished us all in its beauty.

Arthur asked for responses to the day's work, and many in the audience said that they were informed, inspired, and moved. This conference was unlike any other they had attended. "I'm with my tribe," said one,

exhilarated to be among so many accomplished people who admitted to being on a contemplative path.

Others wondered how we will handle disagreements that will inevitably arise both in and out of our organization. What will we say to those who tell us not to do this work? And should we invite those unsympathetic to our work to speak at our events?

The persistent question, "Who is not here?" was voiced again.

All day long there had been talk of subversiveness. How do we change the agenda in education? How do we answer the questions that our institutions ask about our work?

How do we address assessment? Since assessment-driven models of education dominate academia in many places, can we find modes of research that address and measure the kinds of work we do? How do we engage the instrumental in ways that mesh with the contemplative? How do we engage the students, respect their native interests, and teach them what we value without imposing an agenda on them?

Arthur Zajonc responded to some of these questions with summary questions of his own:

1. How do we make our own contributions? How do we "hold" the crisis? How do we hold each other in the crisis? How do we address our own ego, division, fear?
2. Regarding data: we value it as part of our narrative. There is a quality of the way we engage with each other that can be taken as data.
3. We ask the question: How can I step into that space of awareness more fully? This is the contemplative person's challenge.

## Sunday Morning, April 26



The day began at 8 am with two meditation groups, one led by Mirabai Bush, the other by Joel Upton.

### Panel Presentations:

#### 1. "Cultivating Compassion: Views from Contemplative Practice and Neuroscience"

Alfred Kaszniak, Professor and Head of Psychology, and Director of Alzheimer's Disease Center Education and Information Core, University of Arizona

Is compassion natural to all people? Is it easily evoked as we observe and interact with others? Can we learn to be more compassionate? Contemplative traditions have assumed for millennia that compassion is a significant part of human nature and that the state can be nurtured by contemplative practices. His Holiness the Dalai Lama states, "An important support for my thesis that human beings are fundamentally compassionate is our natural ability to connect spontaneously and deeply with the suffering of others." Science historian Anne Harrington, however, notes the doubts of many scientists. "Altruism and self-sacrifice," she writes, "are fragile, even slightly puzzling human qualities."

But recent social neuroscience studies of empathy have begun to narrow the distance between contemplatives and scientists. Scientists are learning about empathy (the ability to respond to another's pain) and compassion (the desire to help) by observing the brain activity of research participants under various conditions of responding to the pain of others. They have discovered that human and other higher primates tend to spontaneously mimic the facial expressions of others that they observe in pain; that those who are less capable of differentiating between the self and the other are often more easily agitated and that those who are most advanced in their compassionate responses are more emotionally stable and less likely to demonstrate agitation in response to the pain of others. These findings are summarized in Jean Decety's "Social Cognitive Neuroscience Model of Human Empathy" which states that:

Four functional components dynamically interact to produce the experience of empathy:

- 1) Affective sharing between self and other;
- 2) Self awareness and self-other differentiation;
- 3) Mental flexibility to adopt a subjective perspective of the other;
- 4) Regulatory processes, including emotion regulation.

1. Affective sharing: Numerous studies now map the functioning of our brains as we react to the emotional states of others. Studies reviewed by Preston and de Waal demonstrate that "humans and other primates tend to automatically mimic and synchronize emotional expression with others." Electrophysiologic recordings and fMRI studies have shown that the same "areas of the human brain activate when both performing and observing an action." In their study "The neural substrate of human empathy," Lamm,

Batson, and Decety (2007) demonstrate that “observing facial expression of another in pain activates areas involved in one’s own affective response to pain; and “perspective (imagine self vs. other) and appraisal (imagine treatment effective vs. unsuccessful) modulates brain response.”

Turning to studies of Vajrayana Buddhist monks meditating, Prof. Kaszniak explained that nonreferential compassion meditation alters activity in empathy-related areas of the brain. Moreover, expert meditators show greater activation than non-experts, and the strength of insula activation correlated with the self-reported intensity of the meditation.

## 2. Self-Awareness & Self-Other Differentiation:

In order to experience compassion, people need to be able to distinguish between self and other. Prof. Kaszniak noted that “automatic activation of shared experience alone would likely lead to responses oriented toward the self (i.e., empathic over-arousal and distress). Without processes by which self and other are differentiated, and emotion is regulated, moving from empathy to true compassion would not be possible.”

3. Mental flexibility, the ability to shift between self- and other- perspectives is necessary for compassionate responses to the other. Activity in the dorsomedial frontal regions has been demonstrated to play a role in this capacity to be flexible.

4. Emotional regulation. Long-term meditators can “bear witness” to the condition of the other with less emotional arousal. They can open to the unknown without preconceived notions of what is happening (B. Glassman, *Bearing Witness*, 1998). They are

less reactive, but more expressive in subtle ways to the emotions of others.

Those with greater capacities for empathy, such as experienced meditators, report higher emotional clarity and “those with higher clarity show lower physiological and experienced arousal, and greater subtle positive facial expression in response to masked emotional pictures, consistent with regulation of emotion early in the emotion process.” They are better readers of others’ states of minds, and can at the same time maintain greater equanimity.

David Loy notes that people not only notice what we do but why we do it. “The more my actions are motivated by generosity,

lovingkindness, and the wisdom of interdependence, the more I can relax and open up to the world . . . the less I will be inclined to use others and consequently the more inclined they will be to trust and open up to me. In such ways, transforming my own motivations not only

transforms my own life; it also affects those around me, since what I am is not separate from what they are” (David Loy (2008). “Rethinking Karma,” *Tricycle* 17 (3), 81-85).

Given what scientists are learning about the ways that compassion works in us and the implication that compassion can be nurtured through meditation, Prof. Kaszniak ended with the question about the benefits of nurturing this state for our future: can this heightened empathy be linked to greater compassionate action in the world?

## 2. “Contemplation without Context”

Renee Hill, Associate Professor of Philosophy and co-Director of the Institute for the Study of Race Relations, Virginia State University



Contemplation without context doesn't really exist, Prof. Hill noted at the outset of this lyrical, moving, and often hilarious talk about teaching a contemplation-based course in philosophy to students who had no prior knowledge of or orientation toward the contemplative practices she was introducing and who had not signed on to the experience. Most of her students were the first in their families to attend college; many had significant personal and financial problems; and as Prof. Hill put it, they were "drowning in stress."

What would she teach these exhausted students? She decided that this was to be a course in practices that promote contemplative experience. The course included meditation and mindfulness training, massage, journaling, listening to music, tai-chi, and yoga. Her basic method of introducing a practice, she said, was to "throw it against the wall to see if it stuck." Often, it didn't. Her assumptions that students would catch on were frequently disappointed. Working with music, for example, as an experience that would be familiar to all, she asked students to bring in their own favorite songs. Their choices were often hip-hop with lyrics she summarized as: "Why did my baby leave me. . . . Death, death, death." They wouldn't have been her choices, but there they were. She introduced them to her own selections but had to be content with the fact that their taste was far from her own and was unlikely to change overnight.

She asked students to pick a daily activity that could be done mindfully; she asked them to maintain a day of silence (which "bombed," she said, because she had not adequately prepared them for it). They practiced sitting meditation and chanting, but some students insisted that chanting was "of the devil" and were extremely uncomfortable doing it. Their favorite activity, she said, was the final relaxation pose of yoga, *savasana*, or corpse pose. Given the stresses of their life, how could it be otherwise?

It was in their journals that students were most forthcoming about their experience of this course and it was where she learned about the pressures of their lives. But she had doubts about the rightness of her other choices. She reflected at the end of the course that she should have provided theoretical readings to support students' practices, and she recognized how hard it is for students outside a tradition to have it imposed on them by someone else. But finally, she realized that her expectations may have been too high. Recognizing the usefulness and depth of a practice can take years. And as all teachers discover, we cannot know what our students take away from a course. She did learn that her students were, in various ways, using the practices, so maybe the class, in all its imperfections, may have helped them after all. The strangeness of the contemplative was now less strange. It had become, even if only in small ways, a part of the context of their lives.

### **3. "Students as Sources: Contemplative Practices in a Course on Consumption and Happiness"**

Daniel Barbezat, Professor of Economics,  
Amherst College

Prof. Barbezat's course asked the question, Does money make people happy? Underneath that question was another, which was to discern how students' attitudes toward the acquisition of money would change as he complicated their responses to it by asking them to think compassionately about others. As part of the class, students learned Open Awareness from a Buddhist meditation teacher, and apparently they were less discomfited by the experience than were Renee Hill's students.

Prof. Barbezat observed in his introduction that higher income does not necessarily lead to greater happiness. This doesn't mean that people with high incomes are not generally more content than people who are struggling to pay their bills, but if a person's rising income remains or becomes less than that of his peers,

and if he is thus compelled to measure his financial well-being against those who are wealthier, he may still be unhappy. If everyone in a neighborhood has a house of the same size, all are likely to be content; but if someone builds a bigger house next door, then the people on either side are likely to feel diminished.

To investigate the relationship between money and happiness, and between the desire for money and the capacity to share it once a person's perspective on his own relation to others is awakened, Prof. Barbezat did several studies with his students. Among a number of scenarios that he has used with his class, he presented the following:

Scenario 4: Suppose that:

A: The class is randomly divided into two groups, 1 & 2. You are a member of group "1." All members of 1 & 2 get \$100 each.

B: Two groups are selected at random, 1 & 2. You are in "1." Members of 1 get \$100 and members of 2 get \$200.

Which do you choose? \_\_\_\_\_

What % of the class selects A?

**41% chose A**

Then he asks them to meditate:

1. What are you grateful for?
2. Someone gives you something. Send them good wishes.
3. Return to the above scenario: Now imagine the people in group 2 and each has someone they're grateful for. Now what is your choice?

**14% chose A**

So the heightening of the awareness of others makes them more generous.

(The scenario is used with permission from Daniel Barbezat, [dpbarbezat@amherst.edu](mailto:dpbarbezat@amherst.edu))

The implications of such studies are that as we enlarge our capacity to see the other compassionately, we will be more comfortable sharing what we have. The promise of this finding is clearly important to us in considering the values that we bring to our teaching.

### **Sunday Mid-morning:**

Parallel sessions on Contemplative Practice and Research

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The schedule of sessions may be found at the end of this report. Please see the conference program for complete information, including biographies and session descriptions.

### **Sunday Noon:**

Poetry by Marilyn Nelson

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Marilyn Nelson is a poet, author, and Professor Emerita of English at the University of Connecticut and founder and director of Soul Mountain Retreat. She was Poet Laureate of the State of Connecticut from 2001 to 2006.

Ms. Nelson began by mentioning her paper "Aborigine in the Citadel," published in *Hudson Review*, Winter 2001, and available on her website. The essay, which she read at an earlier conference of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, chronicled her

semester teaching poetry at West Point as a Center fellow. In her presentation, she described the dedication of the cadets to fitting meditation into their tightly programmed days, the moving poems they wrote, and the choices that some of them made in their lives as a result of being exposed to meditation and to poetry. Out of that experience, she has become responsible for a program for returning veterans sponsored by the National Endowment for the Arts.

She recommended that we read Craig M. Mullaney's memoir *The Unforgiving Minute: A Soldier's Education*, which describes the author's four years at West Point, then Ranger School, then on to England for a Rhodes scholarship, and then to Afghanistan, where he was a platoon leader. Mullaney was also a national security adviser to Barack Obama during his presidential campaign.

Ms. Nelson read from *Fortune's Bones: The Manumission Requiem*, her story in poems about a slave named Fortune whose body was dissected by his owner. "I am not my bones," the spirit of Fortune says. Her newest text, from which she also read, is *International Sweethearts of Rhythm*, a book of poems with vibrant illustrations about African American women in jazz.

**Sunday 12:30:**  
Conference Closing

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Mirabai Bush offered thanks again to Arthur Zajonc, Carrie Bergman, Sunanda Markus and Beth Wadham for their excellent, devoted work in organizing the conference. She asked members to consult the social networking space on the website to keep the conversation going. And she reminded members of the following upcoming events:

Summer Session for Contemplative Curriculum Development, August 9 – 14, 2009, Smith College, Northampton, MA.

Retreat for Academics, November 12 – 15, 2009, Marconi Conference Center, Marshall, California.

Webinars with Hal Roth and Daniel Goleman on the Center's website, <http://www.acmhe.org/webinars.html>

Conference at Lesley College, Cambridge, Massachusetts, March 19, 2010, cosponsored by the Center

CUNY Contemplative Group conference in New York City, April 2, 2010

A draft of the *Handbook of Contemplative Practices in Higher Education* is available from the Center. For a copy, please e-mail Beth Wadham at [beth@contemplativemind.org](mailto:beth@contemplativemind.org).

Finally, Mirabai called upon Arthur to say a few final words, and he offered a tribute to Mirabai for her pioneering work with the Center. She received a standing ovation—a small token of how we love you, Mirabai!

Among some final comments by members, Joel Upton of Amherst offered the cautionary observation that we be wary of complacency in the wake of our three exhilarating days. We need to temper with humility our belief that we can conquer the demons that confront us and our world. Echoing others, he asked us to attend to the shadow side of our work even as we go back into our classrooms and institutions with renewed passion for our work.

## 2009 ACMHE Conference Presentation Schedule

### **Session A: Saturday April 25, 2009 10:30 am**

#### **1. Room 207**

##### **a. How Poems Teach Our Hearts to Think**

Gertrude Reif Hughes, Professor Emerita of English and Women's Studies, Wesleyan University

##### **b. Arguing as an Art of Peace: A Contemplative Practice Seminar for Freshmen**

Barry Kroll, Professor of English, Lehigh University

##### **c. Self-Writing and Correspondence: Contemplative Waves in the Writing Classroom**

Carmella Braniger, Creative Writing, Millikin University

#### **2. Room 208 (Fitch)**

##### **a. From Boomers to Elders: A Contemplative Curriculum for Aging Wisely**

David Chernikoff, M. Div, L.C.S.W, Transpersonal Psychology, Naropa University

##### **b. Mindfulness and Professional Practice**

Nancy Waring, Professor, Lesley University

##### **c. Creating Spaces and Practices for Unpacking Cultural Inheritance and Plotting Cultural Change**

Deborah Downing Wilson, Ph.D. Candidate, University of California, San Diego

#### **3. Room 209**

##### **a. Contemplative Epistemology and Practice: Transforming Politics, Lives, Pedagogies**

Gurleen Grewal, Ph.D., Associate Professor of English and Women's Studies, The University of South Florida.

##### **b. Toward a Contemplative Feminist Pedagogy**

Nicole Lohrbeer, Women's Studies, Mesa Community College (AZ)

##### **c. Teaching "Not-Knowing"**

Patricia Gorman, Professor of Counseling and Family Therapy, Saint Joseph College

#### **4. Room 302**

##### **a. The Mindful Teacher**

Steven Emmanuel, Professor of Philosophy, Virginia Wesleyan College

##### **b. Opening to Other Ways of Knowing and Being**

Dr. Tom Bassarear, Professor of Education, Keene State College

##### **c. Phenomenology as a Contemplative Practice**

James Morley, Professor of Clinical Psychology, Ramapo College (NJ)

#### **5. Porter Lounge (Third floor)**

##### **a. Bringing Contemplative Practices into the Classroom**

Richard Brady, Writer and Educational Consultant, Mindfulness in Education Network

##### **b. Cultivating Wisdom: Contemplative Pedagogy as a Living Practice**

Sandra Wilde, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Calgary

Jackie Seidel, Assistant Professor, Faculty of Education, University of Calgary

##### **c. The Joy Inherent: Rediscovering Education through Mindful Teaching**

David Lee Keiser, Associate Professor of Teacher Education at Montclair State University

#### **6. Red Room (Cole Assembly)**

##### **a. What do you see now?: Awakening Ethical Consciousness**

Melissa A Goldthwaite, Associate Professor of English, Saint Joseph's University

Joanna E. Ziegler, Edward O'Roarke Professor in the Liberal Arts and Department Chair of Visual Arts at Holy Cross College

##### **b. Using Information Technology Mindfully: Pedagogy and Practice**

David M. Levy, Professor, The Information School, University of Washington

##### **c. Academic Love Stories**

Susan Burggraf, Associate Professor of Contemplative Psychology and Associate Dean for Undergraduate Education, Naropa University

**Session B: Saturday, April 25, 2009 3:00 pm**

**1. Room 207**

**a/b. Panel Presentation: Freewriting and Beyond: Contemplative Pedagogy in the Writing Classroom**

Panelists:

Michelle Albert, Instructor, Program for Writing and Rhetoric, University of Colorado-Boulder

Irene Papoulis, Lecturer, AK Center for Writing and Rhetoric, Trinity College

Donna Strickland, Assistant Professor of English and Associate Director of Composition, University of Missouri-Columbia

**c. Sketch of a Contemplative Approach to Virginia Woolf**

Elizabeth Hirsh, English and Women's Studies, University of South Florida

**2. Room 208 (Fitch)**

**a. The Benefits of Embodied Contemplative Learning: Aikido as a Case Study**

Michelle LeWica, Associate Professor of Religion, Concordia College

**b. Using Yoga to Enhance Reflection in a Women's Studies Classroom**

Rebecca Ossorio, Ph.D. Candidate, Curriculum and Instruction, University of Albany, and Adjunct Instructor, Women's Studies, Vassar College

**c. The development of "witness-consciousness" in the practice of Authentic Movement and its relevance to contemplative approaches in education**

Paula Sager, Co-founder and President, Mariposa Center

**3. Room 209**

**a/b. Panel Presentation: Why Isn't This Normal? Issues of and Strategies for Overcoming Resistance Toward Contemplative Pedagogies**

Panelists:

Maureen Hall, Assistant Professor of Education, School of Education, Public Policy and Civic Engagement, University of Massachusetts, Dartmouth.

Bal Ram Singh, Ph.D., Director of the Center for Indic Studies and Professor of Biophysical Chemistry at the University of Massachusetts Dartmouth.

Daryl Nardick, Ph.D., Director of Strategic Projects Integration and Senior Project Consultant, Center for New Designs in Learning and Scholarship, Georgetown University.

Heather M. Voke, Ph.D., Director, Program in Education, Inquiry and Justice and Visiting Assistant Professor of Philosophy, Georgetown University.

**c. Pedagogy and Public Relations: “Selling” Contemplative Studies Across the Curriculum**

Karen M. Cardozo, Assistant Professor of Commonwealth (Honors) College, UMass, Amherst

**4. Room 302**

**a. Passing , Transfiguration, Transit**

Sr. Linda Susan Beard, Associate Professor of English, Bryn Mawr College and founding member of The Emmaus Community

**b. The uses of meditation and contemplative techniques in the performing arts and the art of writing**

Joe Martin (Yousef Daoud), Senior Lecturer, Theater Arts and Studies Program, Johns Hopkins University

**c. Transforming the Classroom in Just One Minute: Using “Arrival Moments” in American History Courses**

Margaret Lowe, Associate Professor of History at Bridgewater State College

**5. Porter Lounge (Third floor)**

**a/b. Panel Presentation: Personal Leadership: Contemplative Practice in Action**

Panelists:

Aaron Stern, Executive Director, Academy for the Love of Learning

Marianne Murray, Program Director, Academy for the Love of Learning

Robin Weeks, Teacher Renewal Program Coordinator, Academy for the Love of Learning

**c. Contemplative Pedagogy and Compassionate Presence**

Joanne Gozawa, Assistant Professor of Transformative Inquiry, School of Consciousness and Transformation, California Institute of Integral Studies

**6. Red Room**

**a. Visualizing Contemplation**

Joel Upton, Professor of Art and the History of Art, Amherst College

**b. Invoking the Spiritual Aspects of Color with Student-Artists**

Shalom Gorewitz, Professor of Visual Arts, Ramapo College

**c. Presentation of Research: "Beholding" Practice with Icons and Thangkas**

Deborah J. Haynes, Professor of Art and Art History, University of Colorado at Boulder.

**Session C: Sunday, April 26, 2009 10:30 am**

**1. Room 207**

**a. Taking Students to the Places that Scare Them: Teaching Sociology as Compassionate Warriorship**

John Eric Baugher, Department of Sociology, University of Southern Maine

**b. Seeing and Knowing the Mind through Contemplative Approaches to Art**

Michael Franklin, Ph.D. Candidate, Lesley University; Director of Graduate Art Therapy Program, Naropa University

**c. Mindfulness-Based Coping with University Life (MBCUL): A Randomized Wait-List Controlled Study**

Siobhan Lynch, Ph.D. Student in Psychology, University of Northampton, UK

**2. Room 208 (Fitch)**

**a. Critical Pedagogy, the Sociological Imagination and the Contemplative Heart of Higher Education**

Penelope Herideen, Professor of Sociology, Holyoke Community College

**b. Sitting with Confusion at the Keyboard: The Integration of Student with Text in Online Distance Education Classes**

Robert-Louis Abrahamson, Collegiate Professor of English, University of Maryland University College

**c. Mindfulness Practice in the University Classroom: Developing Curriculum and Assessing Efficacy in a Program for Under-Represented Populations**

Sharon G. Solloway, Associate Professor of Education, Bloomsburg University

**3. Room 209**

**a. Practices from World Wisdom Traditions in Foreign Language Education**

Tori Smith, Senior Lecturer, Hispanic Studies, Brown University

**b. Self-Awareness and Creativity through Imagery Practice**

Eugenio Giusti, Associate Professor of Italian Language and Literature, Vassar College

**c. Maitri: Working with Emotions**

Jane Carpenter, Chair and Founding Faculty of Undergraduate Contemplative Psychology Program, Naropa University

**4. Room 302**

**a. Cultivating Clarity: Integrating Contemplative Practices into Curriculum for Future Health Care Professionals at Northeastern University**

Shelli Jankowski-Smith, Director of Spiritual Life, Northeastern University, and Dorett “Pinky” Hope, Associate Professor of Nursing, Bouve College of Health Sciences, Northeastern University

**b. Inviting Therapeutic Presence: The Use of Mindfulness Meditation in the Training of Family Therapists: Findings from a Qualitative Study**

Eric E. McCollum, Professor and Director of Marriage and Family Therapy Program, Virginia Tech University

**c. Integrating Contemplative Practices within a Nursing Pedagogy**

Jane McCool, Assistant Professor, School of Nursing, Northeastern University, and Dorett “Pinky” Hope, Associate Professor, School of Nursing, Northeastern University

**5. Porter Lounge (Third floor)**

**a. From Contemplative Mindfulness to Energy Awareness**

F. Emmanuel Chaulet, Adjunct Theater Faculty/ Artist in Residence, University of Southern Maine

**b. Dance, Contemplation and Embodiment**

Barbara Sellers-Young, Dean of the Faculty of Fine Arts at York University

**c. Take (Keep) the Body (Yourself) With You: Ya Gotta Love It! Or Embodied Knowing in the Face of the Powers of Fear, Control and Neglect**

Daphne Lowell, Professor of Dance and Movement Studies, Hampshire College, and Chair of the Five-College Dance Department

**6. Red Room**

**a. Taoist Healing Sounds in the Body**

Bob Weiner, percussionist and performer, Drummer’s Collective (NYC), New England Conservatory of Music and Berklee College of Music

**b. Improvisation and Contemplation: Complementary Interior Gateways**

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

**c. Improvisation and Mindfulness-Awareness Practice in the classroom: A lecture demonstration on movement practice and artistic process**

Joan D. Bruemmer, Co-Director BFA Program, Undergraduate Performing Arts, Naropa University and  
Damaris Webb, actor, director and teaching artist, MFA in Contemporary Performance from Naropa University

**Panel Presentation, Sunday, April 26, 2009 9:00 am Red Room**

**Facilitated by Arthur Zajonc**

**1. Cultivating Compassion: Views from Contemplative Practice and Neuroscience**

Alfred Kaszniak, Professor and Head of Psychology, and Director of Alzheimer's Disease Center Education and Information Core, University of Arizona

**2. Contemplation Without Context**

Renée A. Hill, Associate Professor of Philosophy and Co-Director of the Institute for the Study of Race Relations, Virginia State University

**3. Students as Sources: Contemplative Practices in a course on Consumption and Happiness**

Daniel Barbezat, Professor of Economics, Amherst College