

MIND & LIFE
SPRING 2014

Care

Can we reinvent education
with this one word?

Mind and Life Can Support **Your** Work...

As a Visiting Scholar

Mind and Life provides a gracious setting at our **Visiting Scholars House** for intensive collaborative work between junior and senior scholars, Mind and Life staff, and the local academic community. Join us to advance your research, develop your ideas, work on your manuscript, and more!

As a Convener

Mind and Life will provide a venue and financial support for members of our wider community to host **research workshops** throughout the year at our Visiting Scholars House that deepen work on a particular project or idea.

As a Researcher

Mind and Life offers two research grant opportunities of \$15,000 each: the **Varela Awards**, which support research on the mechanisms and effects of contemplative practice, and the **1440 Awards**, which are geared towards the investigation of real-world (as opposed to lab-based) social and relational outcomes of contemplative practice.

At Our Summer Research Institute

Held each summer at the beautiful **Garrison Institute**, the Mind and Life Summer Research Institute (SRI) advances collaborative research among behavioral scientists, neuroscientists, and biomedical researchers, among others.

At Our International Symposium

Held biannually, Mind and Life's International Symposium for Contemplative Studies (ISCS) is the "summit" of the **contemplative science field**, bringing together more than 2,000 participants and major thought leaders. This year's ISCS will take place in Boston.

MIND & LIFE INSTITUTE

Contents

SPRING 2014

2 LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

4 RADAR



Four perspectives on Mind and Life's International Symposium for Contemplative Studies; a pictorial exploration of the Institute's "roadshow" throughout Asia last fall; and in "Grey Matters," Wendy Hasenkamp on the current thinking surrounding neurophenomenology. Plus, our Spaces series.

13 PERSPECTIVE

Can the struggle out of depression begin with a better understanding of the Buddhist concept of *anatta*?

| By Dana C. Jack



14 NETWORK NEWS

Dispatches from Mind and Life's circle of scientists, humanists, contemplatives, and more.

35 THE ALTRUIST



A Q&A with Roshi Joan Halifax on death, dying, and compassion in medicine.

40 R&D

Mind and Life's latest class of Visiting Scholars.

42 ANNUAL REPORT

A fiscal look at 2013.

44 MOMENT

18

The Dark Knight



The meditation community has often overlooked the troubling experience known as "dark night." Willoughby Britton wants to change that.

By Tomas Rocha



24

The Care Proposition

With education becoming ever more focused on skills, emotional regulation, and certain types of achievement, are we forgetting the more subtle but profound accomplishment of human compassion?

By Lynn Tryba

Plus, three meditations on cultivating compassion, the latest research on "theory of mind," and a look at the legal history of contemplative practice in the United States.

From the President



The Paradox of Passion

THE SIGN OF A SUCCESSFUL CARING ORGANIZATION MAY RESIDE IN HOW ITS IMPACT ULTIMATELY OVERSHADOWS ITS ORIGINS.

In 1981, my wife and I founded The Hartsbrook School not far from Mind and Life's offices here in Hadley, Massachusetts. At the time, Hartsbrook was merely an idea voiced among a few new friends in our living room. There were no students yet, no teachers, no facilities. There was only an idea, one that became our passionate aspiration. We longed to not only educate children intellectually (as important as that is), but also to cultivate their imagination by integrating the arts, music, theatre, and poetry throughout the curriculum. We wanted to teach environmental values through a program that included gardens, goats, chickens, sheep, and milk cows. And most importantly, we believed these bright young beings should experience the ever-present care and love of their teachers for all of who they were: body, mind, and spirit.

We opened in a single room with furniture I made in my wood shop, dolls made by our young kindergarten teacher, and five children. Now, 33 years later when I visit the school, it's clear to see what time has wrought: Today there are 260 students at Hartsbrook, 35 teachers, and 60 acres of buildings, playgrounds, fields, gardens, goats, and cows.

What is also clear to me when I visit is how few of those present know me or recall the fragile beginnings of Hartsbrook. My anonymity is fitting. The hundreds of children, parents, and friends that stream through the school each day needn't know the sacrifices and struggles that created the place they now enjoy. New challenges exist that require their full engagement. The passion and ideals of the founders remain even as the individuals fade from view. The original vision is made more vibrant by the fact that each child, parent, and teacher, year after year, internalizes the commitments, hopes, and beliefs of those who were there at the beginning.

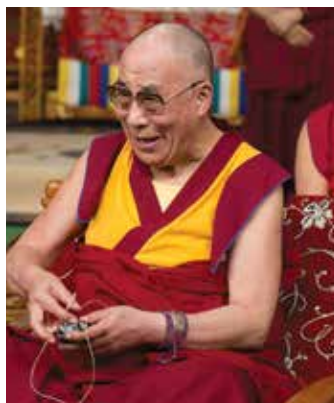
This is the paradox of passion and perhaps the strange, poignant path of all organizations that come to be because of passion, purpose, and self-sacrifice.

The organizations with which I've been affiliated usually begin with a small group that believes its convictions will catch on. They believe that there will be others who will come to cherish the mission and eventually make a community as large as that mission. And though it is bitter-sweet (and usually unsaid), those who establish organizations predicated on altruism understand and hope for this telltale sign of success: that their mission's expansion will mean their diminution.

Mind and Life is such an organization. Thirty years ago, it began as a dialogue between three people: the Dalai Lama, Adam Engle, and Francisco Varela. Consider that for a moment: not merely what three people can accomplish, but also how much deeper that impact has been because of the millions who have taken up what these three men championed—scholars, scientists, and contemplatives; members of the general public who hear about Mind and Life's mission through its writings, programs, events, even its social media

“THE FULFILLMENT OF SELF-INTEREST LIES IN HELPING OTHERS.”

—the Dalai Lama, cofounder and honorary chairman of the Mind & Life Institute



postings; not to mention those who have sat, and now sit, on Mind and Life's board of directors; and those who have worked, or work, on its staff.

Of course, there are many who still, and will always, remember the legacy of the three who began this Institute. But not all those who discover Mind and Life now will know its founders, nor the nature of its founding—just as they may not remember me or those who are now stewarding the mission. And yet who could fail to call this joint enterprise of ours—its

THOSE WHO ESTABLISH ORGANIZATIONS PREDICATED ON ALTRUISM UNDERSTAND THAT THEIR MISSION'S EXPANSION WILL MEAN THEIR DIMINUTION.

expansion across time and circumstance—a resounding success?

Strange as it may sound, I'm quite certain that those who were at Mind and Life's beginnings and wanted the Institute to succeed wished this moment for us now—unprecedented worldwide activity even in the face of inevitable individual anonymity.

I am proud to be leading the Institute during one of its most exciting phases. In this issue, you'll see the first articulation of "A Call to Care," our ambitious educational program to embed compassion and ethics deeply enough that it influences all human interactions. None of us at Mind and Life now may live to see the ultimate results of this work, but we take it up anyway because its beginnings depend upon those who are here at this moment. All of us know that if this work is a true success, we may not be remembered as its authors—but, in fact, what lasts beyond us is the very evidence of our triumph, and therefore more memorable than we could hope for.

ML



MIND & LIFE INSTITUTE

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama**
Honorary Chairman
- R. Adam Engle, JD, MBA**
Cofounder, Past Chair
- Francisco J. Varela, PhD**
Cofounder (1946-2001)
- Arthur Zajonc, PhD**
Amherst College
Mind and Life President
Board Member ex officio

- Richard J. Davidson, PhD**
University of Wisconsin, Madison
- Raymond J. Gellein, Jr., MBA**
Chairman and CEO, Strategic Hotels and Resorts, Inc.
Mind and Life Vice Chair, Treasurer

- Daniel Goleman, PhD**
Psychologist, Author
- Roshi Joan Halifax, PhD**
Upaya Zen Center
- Barry Hershey, MFA**
Filmmaker
- Carolyn Jacobs, PhD**
Smith College School for Social Work
- Jon Kabat-Zinn, PhD**
University of Massachusetts Medical School
- Thupten Jinpa Langri, PhD**
Institute for Tibetan Classics
Mind and Life Chair
- Bennett M. Shapiro, MD**
Merck Research Laboratories (retired)
- Tania Singer, PhD**
Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences
- Aaron Stern**
Academy for the Love of Learning
- Diana Chapman Walsh, PhD**
President Emerita, Wellesley College

STAFF

- Arthur Zajonc, PhD**
President
- Benjamin Babbott**
Operations Associate
- B. Grace Bullock, PhD**
Research Scientist
- Jacqui DeFelice**
Director of Advancement and Global Development
- Brooke Dodson-Lavelle**
Senior Program Officer
- Ned Dunn**
Webmaster
- Kaia Goleman**
Administrative Assistant
- Jensey Anjali Graham**
Executive Assistant to the President
- Wendy Hasenkamp, PhD**
Senior Scientific Officer
- Liza Katz**
Operations Manager
- Gretchen Laise**
Development Officer
- Lise Lawrence**
Operations Manager
- Heather Lee Lohr**
Director of Operations
- Lila Mereschuk**
Controller
- Andrew Olendzki, PhD**
Senior Scholar
- John Pearson, PhD**
Director of Research and Programming
- Tomas Rocha**
Research Associate
- Brendan Tapley**
Director of Communications

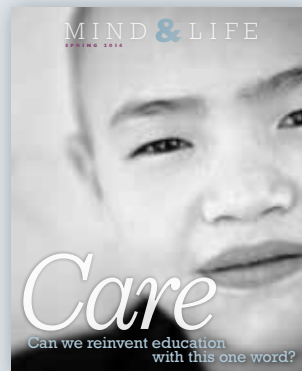
MIND & LIFE MAGAZINE

- Brendan Tapley**
Editor
- John Hall Design Group, Beverly, MA**
Design & Art Direction

This magazine is published twice a year for friends of Mind and Life. Correspondence may be directed to:

Mind & Life Institute
4 Bay Road, Suite 101
Hadley, Massachusetts 01035
413-387-0710
communications@mindandlife.org

ABOUT THE COVER



Cover image by visual artist Victoria Knobloch. To learn more about Knobloch, visit her website: www.victoria-knobloch.de

Rad ar

NEWS, IDEAS, AND EVENTS TO NOTE

Summit in the Field

FOUR SCHOLARS ON WHY MIND AND LIFE'S SYMPOSIUM FOR CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES HAS NEVER BEEN MORE TIMELY



Magic Forest (detail) by Andrew Carnie, 2002; courtesy of the artist and GV Art Gallery, London

This fall, Mind and Life will hold its International Symposium for Contemplative Studies—the biannual “summit” in the field. Over four days in Boston (from October 30th–November 2nd), the Institute will welcome seven extraordinary keynotes, including the Dalai Lama; feature more than 35 master lecturers; and present the work

of hundreds of scientists, scholars, and contemplatives. This convergence of minds and groundbreaking research will catalyze the next frontier in all of the fields contemplative studies touch: neuroscience, the humanities, clinical science, philosophy, psychology, ethics, →→

ISCS
Boston
2014

physics, economics, medicine, and more. In order to understand just how significant and resonant a gathering the Symposium has become, we asked four of our speakers a single question about the field we have long believed can produce the most profound insights into human flourishing.



COURTESY PHOTO

Al Kaszniak

University of Arizona

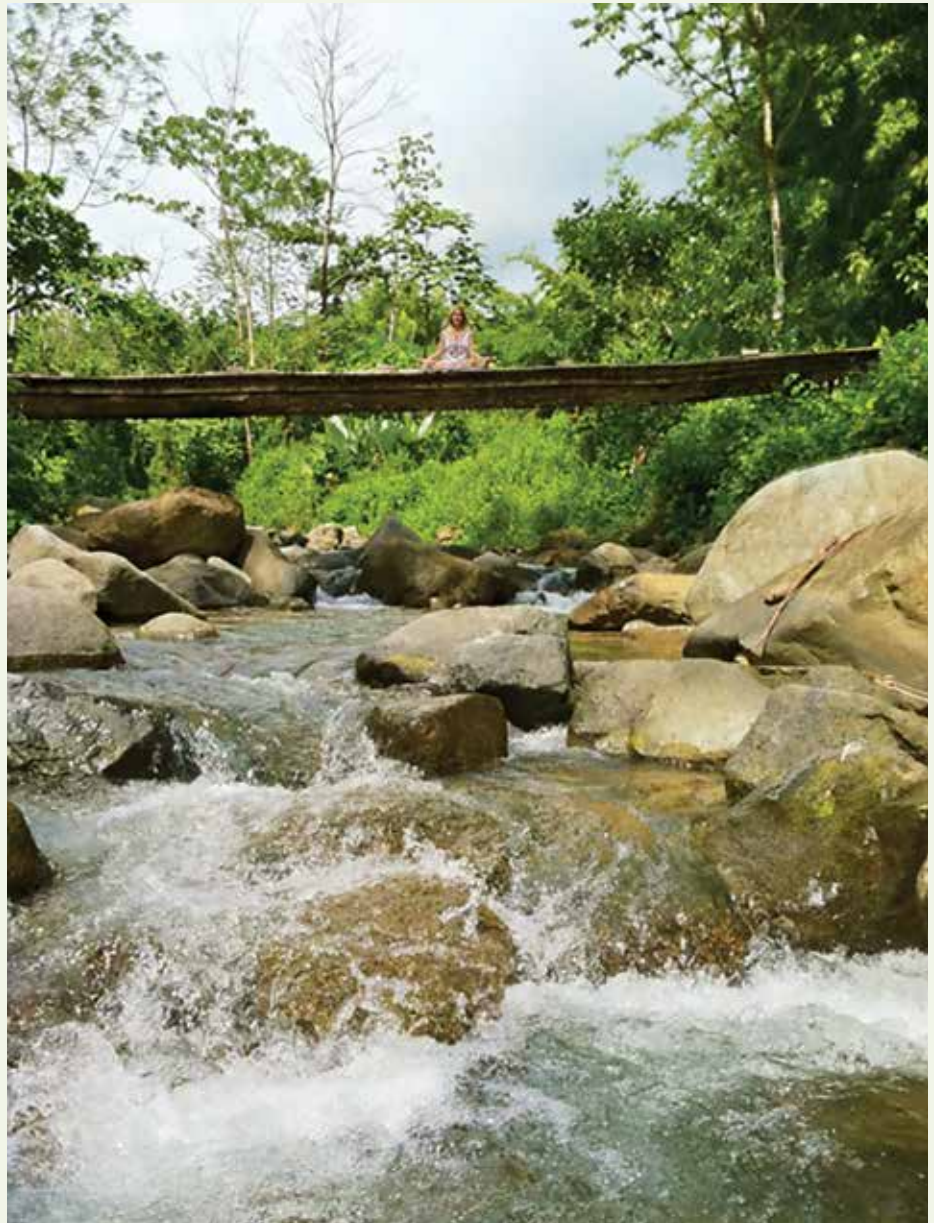
What in your opinion, is the most significant, or meaningful, breakthrough in contemplative science over the past 30 years?

I think that it is fair to say that we are presently in the “golden age” of contemplative science. Comparing the first to the second five years of this century, there has been a more than 300 percent increase in basic and clinical contemplative science publications. Given this explosion of published research, it is very difficult to single out any particular discovery as the most significant or meaningful breakthrough.

However, taking a step back and trying to see the forest rather than just the many trees, it seems clear to me that the two most important meta-trends in contemplative science have been: (1) the fruition of an approach that truly brings first-, second-, and third-person perspectives into collaborative interaction; and (2) the real beginnings of the sort of “neurophenomenology” that Mind & Life Institute cofounder Francisco Varela had envisioned. →→

Spaces

WHERE THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE TAKES PLACE



On a rural footbridge in Costa Rica, I am alone with only the sounds of nature and the rushing water floating in the center of my surroundings. I find solitude, energy, love, and the interconnectedness of all things and great peace. My mindful mantra is from the poetry of Walt Whitman:

*The soul is always beautiful,
The universe is duly in order, everything is in its place,
What has arrived is in its place and what awaits shall be in its place...*

—Lura Shopteau
Uvita de Osa, Costa Rica

From Dharamsala To Thanyapura

“ATTEMPTING TO CULTIVATE universal, human values rooted in the most rigorous science means thinking globally and multiculturally,” says Mind and Life President Arthur Zajonc. “It also means creating a coalition of institutional partners around the world in order to discover from each just how expansive and inclusive those human values are. And how they can be fostered appropriately in, by, and for those cultures.”

Ambitious? Absolutely, but that was the goal when Mind and Life conceived and launched its “roadshow” this past fall.

Beginning at the Kokoro Research Center in Kyoto, Japan and then the Gross National Happiness Centre in Bhutan, a Mind and Life team of scholars and scientists went onto Dharamsala, India for the enormously successful 27th Dialogue with the Dalai Lama—this year on the theme of craving, desire, and addiction. From there, they journeyed across Asia for a series of conferences and talks meant to elevate the field of contemplative studies: in Thailand at the Phuket International Academy and Day School (PIADS) and the Thanyapura Retreat and Mind Centre; in Singapore at the Tibetan Buddhist Center and Yale-National University of Singapore; in Hong Kong at the Centre for Buddhist Studies and the University of Hong Kong; and finally in Taiwan at Dharma Drum Buddhist College.

We are so grateful to our hosts and in particular to the Hershey Family Foundation for making this trip possible.



ALL PHOTOS BY BETSY HALEY HERSHEY



Clockwise from top: Participants at Mind and Life’s 27th Dialogue with the Dalai Lama in Dharamsala; a talk on mindfulness at Yale-National University of Singapore; Dharma Drum Buddhist College in Taiwan; MLI Fellow Matthieu Ricard speaks with Pierre Omidyar and Arianna Huffington in Dharamsala; “James Bond” island in Thailand; broadcasting the Dialogue on craving, desire, and addiction (Nora Volkow pictured on the monitors); Richard Davidson speaks at the University of Hong Kong; and an excursion to the Golden Temple in Amritsar.



→→ The first meta-trend is embodied by research teams in which highly experienced contemplative practitioners and teachers (“first-person” observers) are active co-investigators with scientists (“third-person” observers) and those humanities scholars (“second-person” observers/translators/systematizers) who study contemplative traditions. The transformative contribution of this trend is the great leap in sophistication of the scientific research questions that are being asked and empirically addressed. In many ways, for the first time there are now scientific studies that are beginning to capture with fidelity contemplative traditions as they are actually practiced in both historical and contemporary contexts.

ISCS
Boston
2014

The second meta-trend of neuropsychological research is exemplified by scientific studies in which highly experienced meditation practitioners, representing different practice traditions, serve as research participants instructed and trained to make discerning observations of their mental processes while various brain and other bodily physiological measures are taken. The transformative contribution of this trend is that questions can be asked regarding human mental experience and its biological correlates that simply cannot be addressed by studying research participants who do not have the stability of attention or accuracy of perceptual discernment that research has shown to be characteristic of long-term meditation practitioners. The promise this holds for the cognitive, affective, and neurosciences is one of more reliable and finer-grained reports of lived mental experience that can then be correlated with various biological observations. The resultant sophistication of such an approach to “mapping the mind” has the potential to radically shift and advance our foundational understanding of human nature.

Both of these meta-trends are amply represented in the keynote talks, master lectures, and submitted presentations and posters to be presented at the 2014 International Symposium for Contemplative Studies.

→→

Radar



COURTESY PHOTO

Tania Singer

Max Planck Institute

What in your view is the big breakthrough you most want to see emerge in the next 30 years in contemplative studies?

In the last decades, the social sciences have witnessed an explosion of peer-reviewed scientific papers from diverse fields such as psychology, neuroscience, and medicine focusing on the investigation of concepts such as mindfulness, empathy, or compassion. This research reflects the emerging field of contemplative science that aims at unifying wisdom from contemplative traditions with empirical Western scientific methods—that is, to bring together first- and third-person methods. Although this increasing interest in contemplative science is very promising, this field is still in its “*kinder shoes*” and much needs to be done in order for it to develop into a mature discipline that is fully unfolding its potential impact for society.

What is needed in the future? On the short term, more sophisticated methods for the reliable assessment of complex first-person subjective data and their integration with established objective measurements of brain, health, and body. The creation of the discipline of “neurophenomenology” is a first step in the right direction. This could help rehabilitate the integration of knowledge gained from interoception as a serious method into Western empirical sciences. Second, although recently several research centers have successfully developed several secular mental training programs to promote wholesome qualities such as mindfulness, emotion-regulation, or compassion, these programs have usually not been longer than eight to 12 weeks, and associated plasticity research has often lacked an active control group ultimately needed to test for specific effects of different mental training practices, as well as long-term effects on subjective well-being, brain plasticity, health, and behavior.

On the longer term, research efforts in contemplative science need to be translated into tools and new models that can serve society in a broader sense. For example, mental training programs should be trans-



lated into curricula that can be taught to children of different ages in different countries. These programs should optimally be scientifically validated first to assure that their modification is also beneficial to schools and educational settings. Such a procedure would be similar to what is already a requirement in translational medicine and would suggest the creation of a new subfield called “translational psychology” or “translational contemplative sciences.” Furthermore, the

bridge between contemplative sciences and economics is still very thin and fragile. This is astonishing given the huge impact our globalized cross-national economic systems have on society. Integrating new findings from contemplative sciences into economic models and policies could help replace old notions of a selfish and single-minded “*homo economicus*” and lead to new models of a more “*caring economy*” that promotes the well-being of all global citizens and the environment they are living in for future generations to come.



COURTESY PHOTO

Diana Chapman Walsh

President Emerita, Wellesley College

What are the implications for a Symposium like this that brings together individuals who might not ordinarily intersect?

Allow me to flash back for a moment: to April, 2012, in Denver, Colorado. This was the first Symposium the Mind & Life Institute held. For 700 people. I had agreed to speak with a vague impression of the world into which I had been invited.

Two years later, I'm writing this from Boston, Massachusetts, where we are six months away from the second Symposium—for 2,000 people.

That may say it all. About this world, this

INTEGRATING FINDINGS FROM CONTEMPLATIVE SCIENCES INTO ECONOMIC POLICIES COULD HELP REPLACE A SELFISH AND SINGLE-MINDED “HOMO ECONOMICUS.”

field, Mind and Life, and the growing aspirations in all of us for it.

Really, the Denver meeting was a moment of convergence—a kind of *sangha* of scientists exploring the human mind from a range of disciplines and perspectives, asking how training the mind through contemplative practice reduces suffering and enhances well-being, happiness, and social harmony in an era marked by nothing if not disorienting change.

What the Denver meeting affirmed for me, a new “convert,” was the value of encounters

among those whose work intersects in the emerging contemplative fields. It has been said that any social system is strengthened by denser and more durable connections. Denver was a junction for connecting minds and hearts. And as important as the fact that we came together was *how* we did, with open-heartedness and a sense of playfulness, mutual appreciation, and joy in shared learning.

These are the qualities embodied by the Dalai Lama, who will be with us six months from now. I have learned much from His

Holiness since that Denver meeting. I have witnessed him hosting dialogues between the two great intellectual traditions: the first-person, phenomenological perspective of the world’s contemplative traditions (with their two millennia of serious scholarship), and the third-person, objectivist perspective of Western science (with its increasingly refined methods and tools for probing the mind).

In January of 2013, in South India, I watched His Holiness demonstrate to thousands of Tibetan monastics how →→

Spaces

WHERE THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE TAKES PLACE



I like this place because it’s a good reflection of my spirit. It’s up and down. It’s linear and intricate. It’s fluid, but it’s deeply rooted. It’s apparently focused, but it expands. It’s always here, but it’s never the same. It’s familiar, but it stays unpredictable. It’s healing and invigorating. It’s here and there. It’s me, it’s you. It’s spirit.

—Martine Roy
Annecy, France

Rad ar

→→ they can open themselves to the other (“the new materialists” he called his MLI colleagues with a chuckle), expecting and preparing to be transformed by the encounter, and yet confident at the same time that it won’t distort or extinguish what distinguishes them and the gifts they have to offer. To use his words, I saw how this kind of “warm-hearted” exchange across difference can sharpen and deepen our understanding (rather than dilute or diminish it).

These are the implications I think of most. Of course, there are the new books and studies since 2012, the new findings and insights, the new collaborations among long-established organizations, groups, multiple generations. But when a Symposium like this happens, what we can honestly report is so much bigger: We can say that scientific dialogues between Western scientists and the Dalai Lama advance an important scientific field, but also an ethical foundation of new norms and possibilities.

If we are mindful, vigilant, and respectful, conscious of how little we know, how little we can know, open to our uncertainties and yet unrelenting in our pursuit of solid evidence, then we may create receptive spaces in which to bridge our disagreements and hold our tensions in the service of mutual discernment and enlightenment. If we can bring profound listening and deep presence to all our encounters, then we may hope to unleash the energy in the differences among us and channel it toward collective insights as yet unimaginable.

If we can sustain these disciplines, then Denver, Boston, South India—place does not matter. Because what we are in fact doing is sculpting a scientific field unlike any other, one that unites students of the mind in a warm and welcoming community around the world and dedicated to addressing the most serious immediate problems we humans confront—always in the wider frame of what makes life worth living.



MARTIN DEE

Edward Slingerland University of British Columbia

What are the rewards and opportunities when science engages the contemplative traditions?

So-called “first generation”

cognitive science was very much influenced by rationalist, disembodied models inherited from the past few hundred years of Western philosophy. According to thinkers like Descartes or Kant, human cognition is primarily concerned with abstract, amodal concepts, which are manipulated by conscious algorithms and then correlated in some way with sets of objects in the world. This view shaped the early cognitive scientific models that focused on “brains in a vat,” or cognition as platform-independent information processing.

The nice thing about scientists is that, although they are often saddled with incorrect or misleading initial assumptions, eventually an accumulation of empirical evidence can force them to change their views. Cognitive scientists fairly quickly began to realize that the disembodied, representation-only model of cognition didn’t make much evolutionary or neuroscientific sense, and they began casting around for other models. Interestingly, one source of inspiration they alighted upon was →→

Grey Matters

BY WENDY HASENKAMP

Mind and Life’s resident neuroscientist on the past, present, and future of neurophenomenology.

WHAT IS THE HUMAN MIND, and how can we develop it to its greatest potential?

There are many ways of trying to answer this age-old question. As a neuroscientist, I



COURTESY PHOTO

was trained within a theoretical system that largely equates the mind with the physical structure of the brain. Operating from this perspective, science has made incredible

strides, giving us insights ranging from the molecular array of genes and proteins to the electrical firing patterns of individual neurons and neuronal assemblies. Yet, until recently, a central element of the human mind was largely missing from neuroscientific investigations: lived experience.

However much neuroscience can tell us about the brain, if we are to have a complete picture of the mind, conscious experience must ultimately be incorporated into our investigations. As a way to illustrate this, imagine reading a detailed description of the neural circuitry that underlies vision—the many processes that result in detecting color, contrast, shape, and motion. While such a description could provide a thorough account of the biological substrates involved in, say, observing a sunset, it is a different thing entirely to gaze at the sun dipping below the horizon and experience its gradations, beauty, stillness, as well as the emotions or memories that arise. A similar case can be made for the majority of mental processes since most have an experiential component.

To access lived experience in scientific studies, researchers must take into account what

ISCS
Boston
2014

is referred to as the “subjective perspective”—the participant’s first-person point of view on their own experience, usually reported through narrative, questionnaires, scales, or novel interfaces with measurement instruments. For many decades, however, the use of subjective report in psychological and cognitive research was considered unreliable, in part due to studies showing that memories can be inaccurate, and that introspection can be influenced by factors such as expectation or denial. As a result, subjective data was largely abandoned in favor of more “objective,” third-person measures such as behavior or physiological data. Experience was thus relegated to a black box, inaccessible to science.

Fortunately, cognitive science has begun to return to first-person approaches with renewed interest. Concerns about the reliability of subjective report remain important; at the same time, recent research continues to prove the value of subjective information. The National Research Council, for example, just released a report formally urging researchers to seek information on subjective well-being, which they describe as “the self-reported levels of contentment, stress, frustration, and other feelings people experience throughout the day and while performing different activities.”

Mind and Life’s own history is related to this shift in thinking, and an emphasis on subjective experience remains central to our mission. In the 1990s, Francisco Varela, cognitive neuroscientist and one of Mind and Life’s cofounders, proposed the scientific approach known as neurophenomenology, which seeks to integrate valid first-person subjective information with third-person objective measures. Varela,

along with Mind and Life Fellow **Evan Thompson**, believed that relating moment-to-moment subjective experiences to dynamic activity in neural networks represents an enormous opportunity for cognitive research, and will yield a more comprehensive understanding of the human mind. Areas where this approach is highly relevant include investigations into perception, attention, memory, the self, motivation, volition, emotion, spontaneous cognition, mind wandering, and craving and addiction—all fields in which Mind and Life has sponsored research.



Of course, as cognitive neuroscience continues to advance as a discipline, the development of rigorous methods to probe the subjective contents of the mind will be increasingly essential. Standard questionnaires, for example, often do not offer enough opportunity for individualized answers, and responses are framed within a priori assumptions. Interviews are more detailed, but the resultant information is qualitative in nature and complicated to code and score in a systematic way.

Further, untrained participants may be unable to introspect at a high level of detail about their internal experiences, making their reports unreliable or unclear.

To encourage exploration of both the challenges and potential of neurophenomenology, I recently joined with Evan Thompson to host a special issue in the journal *Human Frontiers in Neuroscience* devoted to the theme of “examining subjective experience.” This issue, now complete and available online for free, contains 18 innovative articles furthering the goals of neurophenomenology. Both primary research reports as well as theoretical and methodological papers are featured, highlighting creative new approaches for probing subjective experience in real-world and laboratory settings, and for eliciting more refined and informative first-person reports. Topics include investigating the experience and neural correlates of selflessness, detailed interview methods that can be used with untrained participants, perspectives on dreaming and hypnosis, and studies of real-time biofeedback in meditators using fMRI.

In the quest to understand the mind—and in so doing, discover ways to alleviate suffering and promote flourishing—subjective experience can serve as a guiding beacon, illuminating scientific findings in a new and meaningful light. Editing this collection of articles, I have been pleased and encouraged to see the high quality of cutting-edge research that also embraces the richness of subjective experience. It is our hope that this issue will help advance the field of neurophenomenology, and serve as a resource as we continue to study the complexities of human experience in an integrative way.

Wendy Hasenkamp, PhD, serves as senior scientific officer at the Mind & Life Institute. As a neuroscientist and a contemplative practitioner, she is interested in understanding how subjective experience is represented in the brain, and how the mind and brain can be transformed through experience and practice to enhance flourishing. Her research examines the neural correlates of meditation, with a focus on the shifts between mind wandering and attention. She has also contributed to neuroscience curriculum development, teaching, and textbook creation for the Emory-Tibet Science Initiative, which aims to integrate science into the Tibetan monastic education system in India.

Radar

→→ Asian thought, particularly Asian contemplative traditions. These traditions never went down the weird rabbit hole of disembodied thought and have always been about using embodied techniques to train the body, the emotions, and the imagination. In many respects, their views of the embodied mind anticipated the relatively recent embodied or enactive movement in cognitive science.

The “embodied cognition” movement is now firmly entrenched in contemporary cognitive science. Since a few thousand years of very bright people focusing on a problem or set of problems can often produce interesting and useful results, cognitive scientists are becoming increasingly aware that the techniques for

self-cultivation, meditation, mindfulness, imagination extension, and ritual practice developed in Asian contemplative traditions have much to teach us about the integrated body-mind, the inextricable connection between emotion and reason, and the ways in which cultural training interacts

ISCS
Boston
2014

with the embodied mind. Cognitive science stands to gain many powerful and unexpected insights, and the contemplative traditions themselves can only be enriched by being regrounded in a contemporary naturalistic framework. This sort of conversation strikes me as one of the more promising and exciting ways forward in the various fields of which I'm a part.

ML

About the Scholars

Al Kaszniak, PhD, is currently director of clinical neuropsychology, director of the Arizona Alzheimer's Consortium Education Core, and a professor in the departments of psychology, neurology, and psychiatry at the University of Arizona. His research has been published in more than 150 journal articles, chapters, and books, and has been supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH). His work has focused on the neuropsychology of Alzheimer's disease and other age-related neurological disorders.

Tania Singer, PhD, has been the director of the department of social neuroscience at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig since 2010. Her research focuses on the foundations of human social behavior and the neuronal, developmental, and hormonal mechanisms underlying social cognition and emotions (e. g, empathy, compassion, and fairness). She is the principal investigator of the ReSource project, a one-year longitudinal mental training study.

Edward Slingerland is a professor of Asian studies and the Canada research chair in Chinese thought and embodied cognition at the University of British Columbia. His research specialties include “warring states,” cognitive linguistics, and the relationship between the humanities and the natural sciences. His publications include *Effortless Action: Wu-wei as Conceptual Metaphor and Spiritual Ideal in Early China* (Oxford, 2003), *What Science Offers the Humanities: Integrating Body & Culture* (Cambridge, 2008), and *Trying Not To Try: The Art and Science of Spontaneity*, which was published in March, 2014.

Diana Chapman Walsh, PhD, currently serves on the governing boards of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, the Broad Institute of MIT and Harvard, the Kaiser Family Foundation, the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, and the Mind & Life Institute, among others. She was a director of the State Street Corporation and a trustee of Amherst College. Her term as president of Wellesley College (1993–2007) was marked by educational innovation, including a revision of the curriculum and expanded programs in global education, the humanities, internships and service learning, interdisciplinary teaching and learning, and religious and spiritual life.

Spaces

WHERE THE CONTEMPLATIVE LIFE TAKES PLACE



This is the Buddha statue at Eiheiji. On a lecture tour in 2005, I was able to visit Eiheiji, the temple founded by Dogen in 1244. An extraordinary atmosphere pervaded the whole place, and only deepened when we sat a sesshin in one of their meditation halls. On the grounds, I became transfixed by this statue.

—Susan Blackmore
Devon, England

Perspective

BY DANA C. JACK

The Peril and Promise of Selflessness

A PSYCHOLOGIST EXPLORES THE PATH INTO DEPRESSION OR *ANATTA*



BETSY HALEY HERSHEY

As a psychologist for 30 years, my focus has been on understanding the factors that lead women to depression, always with the goal of helping to prevent and treat the suffering it causes. From listening to interviews over time and across a variety of cultures, I have heard a core theme that puts women at risk: a specific understanding of selflessness. As depressed women have described it, selflessness means caring for others first and silencing their voices in order to preserve their relationships or their safety. “Silencing the self,” as I have called it, blends the genuine wish to be morally good and loving with cultural prescriptions about women’s roles, namely how they should consistently place their needs second to those of others, especially their partners.

For the past 13 years, however, I have deeply challenged my own notions about “self” by immersing myself in Buddhist teachings and meditation practice. In 2001, as a Fulbright scholar to Nepal teaching at Tribhuvan University and conducting research on gender and depression in government outpatient clinics, I began meditating. Through these and other experiences, I became familiar with a different, positive, and aspirational kind of selflessness, one that functions to alleviate suffering, not cause it. These two very different understandings have led me to puzzle over the relationship between self-silencing from a psychological perspective, and selflessness from a Buddhist perspective.

How do the Buddhist and Western concepts of selflessness differ? How do women (and many men

Dana C. Jack is a psychologist and professor who teaches at Fairhaven College of Interdisciplinary Studies at Western Washington University. She formulated the “Silencing the Self” theory and the Silencing the Self Scale, now used in 21 countries, to explore the relationship of self-silencing to depression, gender, and social context. She is the author of four books and numerous other publications. In 2012, she received the Ursula Gielen Book Award from the International Division of the American Psychological Association for *Silencing the Self Across Cultures: Depression and Gender in the Social World* (co-editor, Alisha Ali), which praised the book as “the most significant and fundamental contribution to psychology as a global discipline.”



COURTESY PHOTO

Network News

DISPATCHES FROM MLI'S
VARELA AWARDEES, FELLOWS,
BOARD MEMBERS, AND FRIENDS

PAIVI AHONEN is continuing her research related to Bhutan's Gross National Happiness initiative and finalizing an article on the topic entitled, "Bhutanese Teachers' Perceptions about Gross National Happiness in Education for Sustainable Development."

NAVA LEVIT BINNUN reports that, for the fifth time, a daylong symposium inspired by Mind and Life took place in Israel on the question of interfacing meditation and neuroscience for the study of consciousness. The main panel included senior faculty of various disciplines—philosophy of science, neuroscience, and meditation—giving talks on different aspects of the question. The symposium was convened by the Muda Center for Mind, Science and Society at the Sagol Institute for Applied Neuroscience School and featured speakers from Hebrew University, the Weizmann Institute of Science, Psycho-Dharma Institute, and Tel-Aviv University, among others. Nava Levit Binnun, who chairs the Muda Center, as well as participants **AVIVA BERKOVITCH-OHANA**

and **ASAF FEDERMAN** have all attended Mind and Life's Summer Research Institute in previous years.

In February, **MICHEL BITBOL** published *La conscience a-t-elle une origine?* with Flammarion. The book renews the classical debate about the possibility of reducing consciousness to a neuronal process. It gives the reader the role of a final judge in this contest, not only as a rational spectator, but also as an actor able to realize his/her own state of consciousness at certain turning points of the argumentation. "The key to the riddle might well lie in the obvious fact that any question about the origin of consciousness itself originates in consciousness," says Bitbol. The inquiry uses various approaches, such as phenomenology, metaphysics, contemplative disciplines, neuroscience, and evolution theory. Each position about consciousness is then evaluated according to the following criterion: Which existential stance should one adopt in order to make full sense of such theses?

KAREN BLUTH reports that her collection for her Varela study was completed in December. At this point in time, she is in the process of analyzing the data, including physiological markers of stress (cortisol, heart-rate variability, blood pressure) that had been collected before and after adolescents participated in a six-week mindfulness class. These data were collected at baseline, while the teens were exposed to the Trier Social Stress test, and during a recovery period. Some of the data from this study will be presented at two separate national conferences this spring. She is also working on several new projects, including a multisite project that involves developing and piloting a self-compassion program for teens.

JUDSON BREWER's lab produced eight papers in 2013, most related to neuroimaging of meditative states. Several of these have been using real-time neurofeedback to more closely correlate subjective experience with brain activity. The lab's most recent paper is the first to characterize the neural activity of loving-kindness meditation. Also of note, the lab's clinical studies of mindfulness training for smoking cessation were highlighted in the "100 best new health discoveries" of 2013 in *TIME*.

AMANDA BROWN is a graduate student in clinical psychology interested in the role of contemplative practices in promoting well-being and alleviating psychological distress. She is particularly interested in studying the mechanisms through which mindfulness- and compassion-based interventions affect change. She is currently working on a project related to the treatment of body image disturbance, a problem that is prevalent in both clinical and non-clinical samples, with a focus on self-compassion training as a potential new direction for addressing the current gap in theory and treatment. She is involved with

for that matter) encounter the Buddhist understanding of expansive, compassionate selflessness without confusing it with the smaller, constricted view of selflessness that leads to depression? Can the Buddhist understanding of *anatta*, or selflessness with compassion and insight at its core, provide guidance for how to balance one's needs with the needs of others?

These are ongoing explorations in my own life as a wife, mother, grandmother, professor, and committed meditator, but the questions they present are also relevant for many women for whom selflessness acts as a way into depression and, with greater understanding of *anatta*, possibly a way out.

SILENCING THE SELF

What is self-silencing from a psychological perspective? In order to silence herself, a woman must divide her mind. One aspect of a woman's mind directs her to be selfless; that is, outwardly compliant to what she thinks others want/expect. She does so for the sake of intimacy or safety, while the other aspect of her mind experiences feelings of resentment about forsaking the self. In effect, she creates an idealized "good" self that opposes what she perceives as a dangerous "bad" self.

Because the cognitive activity required to turn against one's own thoughts and feelings is invisible to others, such a woman may come across as hyper-responsive and caring about others' needs—even "virtuous" for having such generosity. Images of how to relate, such as "pleasing," "harmonizing," "self-sacrificing"—all of which seem morally good—direct women's actions in relationships and foster divisions of their minds/selves. Depressed women are aware that they silence the "bad" self that threatens their relationships or their safety, as revealed in a representative statement from a 30-year-old married woman below:

"And so when he speaks to me in a harsh tone, or criticizes me for something that I have done wrong or haven't done or whatever, I've tended to think to myself, '... just ignore him.' Just, just, you know, don't confront the issue sort of thing. And so inside I've been building up a lot of resentment and a lot of anger."

For many women, these behaviors solve the puzzle of how to create intimacy within unequal relationships. In striving to be "good" and loving, they follow this flawed understanding of selflessness, which leads them to mute their voices in relationships and experience what they describe as a "loss of self" and despair.



Karen Bluth at work on her Varela study.





The phenomenology of depression sketched here has been measured by the Silencing the Self Scale (STSS), which I designed to test the theory. More than 100 published studies across numerous countries by researchers using the STSS find that when women silence the self, they are at high risk for depression and other problems. Consistently putting others first can result, for example, in neglecting self-care during treatment for cancer; or increasing HIV/AIDS vulnerability by not requiring partner condom use; or developing eating disorders by communicating emotions through the body rather than words. Silencing the self during marital arguments has been found, over a 10-year prospective study, to result in a fourfold risk of mortality among women. And of course, wider societies often foster women's self-silencing through inequality, lowering their self-esteem, and keeping many in damaging relationships.

THE BUDDHIST VIEW OF SELFLESSNESS

How does this destructive kind of selflessness compare with the Mahayana Buddhist concept of *anatta*, or nonself? Unfortunately, the teachings on *anatta* are among the most misunderstood by Westerners, probably because our culture celebrates individualism and "I-dolatry."

Briefly, the Buddhist teachings about *anatta* and other essential insights into the nature of mind lie at the heart of liberation from suffering. *Anatta* comes from an experiential realization of the impermanence of all things, including ourselves; of understanding that what we call a self is neither solid nor

unchanging; and of knowing that suffering comes from defending, enhancing, and grasping after this illusory sense of self.

As a practitioner's understanding of the nature of reality deepens and obscurations and afflicted mind states begin to dissolve, feelings of love, caring, and compassion for others arise spontaneously, flowing naturally from the wish to alleviate suffering. This kind of selfless care for others does not result from external role pressures, relational demands, or fears, and does not lead to the suffering of depression. Rather, it is the source of a deep sense of well-being and joy.

In Buddhist writer Kimberley Snow's words, *anatta*:

“. . . doesn't mean that you don't have a self, but that it isn't separate and isolated. Nor is it solid and immutable as we like to think. Nor is it always right. Nor the center of the known universe. The self is an ever-changing, moving collection of aggregates of physical sensations, emotions, thoughts, and consciousness. It is made up of a collage of images concerning our name, gender, nationality, profession, likes, dislikes, relationships, which are updated from time to time. Nonetheless, in the end, what we call the self is as cobbled together and transient as everything else. Not to know and realize this is a cause of endless suffering. . . .”

As the Dalai Lama has explained, “Selflessness is not a case of something that existed in the past becoming nonexistent. Rather, this sort of ‘self’ is something that never did exist. What is needed is to identify as nonexistent something that always was nonexistent.”

NN→ the Cognitive-Based Compassion Training

(CBCT) Program at Emory. This spring, she is teaching a 10-week CBCT course to a group of Emory undergraduate students. In the past she has co-taught CBCT for female prisoners and adolescents in the Atlanta foster care system.

Varela awardee **RYAN T. CANOLTY** will join the University of Houston in the fall of 2014 as an assistant professor of cognitive neuroengineering in the department of electrical and computer engineering. In collaboration with surgeons and patients at the University of Texas Health Science Center, he plans to focus on investigating the functional role of neuronal oscillations, the dynamic coordination of distributed brain networks, and the potential of electrical stimulation for influencing cognitive faculties such as access consciousness, attention, and memory.

Two publications emerging from randomized controlled trials of Mindfulness-Based Cancer Recovery (MBCR) from **LINDA CARLSON**'s group were recently published in the *Journal of Clinical Oncology*. The MINDSET study, the largest of its kind, was a multisite, randomized controlled trial that assigned 271 distressed breast cancer survivors to MBCR, supportive expressive group therapy (SET), or a one-day stress management control condition, and then measured psychological and biological outcomes. Psychological outcomes favored MBCR, with greater improvements over time on stress symptoms compared with both other groups; on quality of life compared with the control group; and in social support compared with the SET group. This study is the first to demonstrate superiority of MBCR over other active interventions in this population. The second trial used a noninferiority design to compare MBCR to the gold standard treatment of Cognitive Behavioral Therapy (CBT) for

NN→

insomnia in 111 cancer survivors with clinical insomnia. Effects of MBCR were not as good as CBT for improving insomnia severity immediately after program completion, but noninferior three months later. Time to fall asleep, awakenings after sleep onset, and total sleep time as well as stress and mood disturbance improved in both groups. This is the first study to directly compare a mindfulness-based intervention to CBT.

STUART EISENDRATH is the principal investigator of a randomized controlled trial investigating mindfulness-based cognitive therapy as an augmentation to medications for treatment-resistant depression. The study is exploring both depression and functional outcomes as well as fMRI changes associated with the intervention; it should be completed by the end of 2014.

THEODORE FALLON has just published a book entitled *Thought Disorder and Development: Chaos to Organization in the Moment* that investigates the moment during which the mind hovers on the edge of chaos before it completes the work that will take it to the next level of organization and maturation. This occurs during normal development, and goes awry during episodes of trauma and psychosis. What is necessary for the process to resolve is cultivated in the moment in meditation; some refer to this as mindfulness. The Summer Research Institute 2013 was instrumental in helping Fallon to complete this book.

NATHAN FISHER will continue to manage the Varieties of Contemplative Experience project at Brown University, and is looking forward to interviews with Zen Buddhist, Tibetan Buddhist, and Christian contemplative practitioners and teachers. He will also be continuing his work at the Mind and Life Visiting Scholars House on two papers **NN**→

The experience of selflessness occurs in glimpses, over time, through meditation and teachings. It is developed as part of the Eightfold Path and Six Paramitas, cultivating compassion for self and others with the motivation to transform the self and the world through that compassion.

But this presents a problem, since the two perspectives describe radically different realities and motivations while using the same term of “selflessness.” For example, consider this quote from Chögyam Trungpa Rinpoche, an early, well-known teacher of Buddhist thought in the West: “The bodhisattva vow is the commitment to put others before oneself. It is a statement of willingness to give up one’s own well-being, even one’s own enlightenment, for the sake of others.”

This sounds similar to representative sentences from the 31-item Silencing the Self Scale, such as:

- “Caring means putting the other person’s needs in front of my own.”
- “Considering my needs to be as important as those of the people I love is selfish.”
- “When it looks as though certain of my needs can’t be met in a relationship, I usually realize that they weren’t very important anyway.”
- “I rarely express my anger at those close to me.”

Compare those sentences that measure a destructive selflessness next to the Bodhisattva ideal described by the great Tibetan Bodhisattva Langri Tangpa in *Eight Verses of Training the Mind*:

Whenever I associate with others,
May I view myself as the lowest of all;
And with a perfect intention, May I cherish
others as supreme.

Though these words about selflessness may sound alike on the surface, they are worlds apart in terms of motivation, meanings, and context. However, if a woman who already feels the “lowest of all” on the Silencing the Self Scale encounters these concepts without knowing their spiritual motivation, she can easily incorporate teachings about the Bodhisattva ideal into her already existing self-neglect. This danger increases as Buddhist teachings are often cherry-picked out of their deeper context (as I am doing here).

Of course, one could ask: Does an examination of selflessness and self-silencing from Buddhist and psychological perspectives matter? Is it simply the case that the great wisdom teachings of Buddhism hold the possibility for misinterpretation, as do all

complex teachings? Perhaps, but I think we need to take gender into account.

One in three women in our world will experience some form of serious abuse during her lifetime; women’s rates of depression are at least two times higher than men’s across the globe, and rates of depression are rising. Women’s social inequality exposes them to the factors known to precipitate depression: violence, trafficking, poverty, economic dependence, and lack of freedom. In these ways (and many others), gender and inequality condition the development of the ego and the experience of self. Clearly, our world must address women’s pervasive inequality and the violence against them, which the United Nations has labeled “the number one human rights abuse.”

Silencing the self calls attention to the social, interpersonal context of mental distress, and points to how social inequality and gender live in one’s mind to affect everyday interactions and the experience of the reified self. On the other hand, Buddhism places great value on a different kind of silence, a silence of the quieted mind. This silence allows us to experience a deeper understanding of the nature of mind, self, and reality.

Each of us enters the teachings and practices of Buddhism from different standpoints, lived realities, and positions of power. But if a woman takes on the teachings of *anatta* at face value, without first deconstructing her own selflessness and how it has led to resentment and depression, then she may easily succumb to what seems like a new admonition to erase herself. She first needs to experience, through meditation/mindfulness, that the self-silencing leading to depression is motivated by fear of loss, which is a kind of grasping after permanence. Though it feels focused on the other, this kind of self-sacrifice is not concentrated on the well-being of another. One who self-silences is trying to protect the (illusory) self, reacting to others’ needs out of a deep sense of insecurity, looking to the other for safety and/or approval. Such a sensitivity to another’s needs or wishes does not genuinely pertain to others and what they need, but ultimately pertains to self-clinging.

In this context, a glimpse of the inherent emptiness of a subjugated self can be experienced as a great liberation. Buddhist teachings and practice lead not so much to a freedom of the self, but to a freedom *from* the self. All forms of self are constructed, and when a person is oppressed some very unhealthy forms of self are created. Meditation, by its very engagement in moment-by-moment awareness, can be an act of “self” that helps dissolve the reified, false self. Meditation also means quieting

the mind so that we can detect when clinging to something like a person, a self-image, or an addiction has hijacked our minds and led us down destructive paths. Paradoxically, meditation—an act undertaken by one’s mind/self—may become a gateway toward freedom from the self.

Long ago, the Buddha detailed what findings from anthropology, neuroscience, biology, and psychology now affirm: the self is relational, that is, utterly interdependent and co-arising with others. Likewise, depression is relational, conditioned, and interdependent with one’s world: It is a psychological response to social events that results in biological disruptions. As Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and Mindfulness-Based Cognitive Therapy (MBCT) have demonstrated, mindfulness practices creatively adapted to the West are effective in treating a range of conditions, including depression. Even so, when participants commit to mindfulness practice in such interventions, it may be useful to be aware that some bring an imperative that others’ needs come first.

AS BUDDHISM SPREADS IN THE WEST, ITS GREAT PROMISE OF TRANSFORMATION MAY BE COMPLICATED BY THE MEANINGS THAT SWIRL AROUND THE TERM “SELFLESSNESS.”

As Buddhism spreads in the West, its great promise of social and personal transformation may be complicated by the myriad of meanings that swirl around the term “selflessness.” The more carefully we look at the complexities of selflessness, the more apparent it becomes that there is a potential danger for the depressed person who turns to Buddhism for solace and hopefully recovery. The Buddhist path, including ethics and community, is not a quick fix. It has different phases leading to shifts in realizations, and it takes time and discipline. Without adequate teachings on *anatta*, it would be easy for a person to continue a destructive pattern of subordinated selflessness, while trying to embody “good bodhichitta.” Thus, a continuing conversation between Buddhist thought and Western psychological findings about women’s depression may further clarify the peril and promise of selflessness.

ML

NN→ that he hopes to submit for publication later this year. The first is a sociocultural study exploring the diffusion of meditative practices in the workplace and corporate cultures, and the reaction to this development by various contemplative communities. The second paper is investigating nonlinear contemplative trajectories found in contemporary Theravada Buddhist and Jewish mystical traditions.

LONE FJORBACK has initiated an MBSR teacher training education at the Aarhus University hospital in Denmark in collaboration with the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts. The training includes Danish veterans in an MBSR trial where subjects will undergo MEG scanning and heart-rate variability measures.

LAURA GAMBREL completed her dissertation research entitled “The Mindful Transition to Parenthood Program: Developing and Evaluating a Psychoeducational-Experiential Intervention for Couples Expecting Their First Child.” For this research on a relational mindfulness intervention Gambrel developed, she received the 2011 Family Process Institute Dissertation Grant and two awards: the 2013 Dissertation Award from the American Association for Marriage and Family Therapy, and the Virginia Tech 2012 Outstanding Dissertation Award in social sciences, business, education, and humanities. She has had two articles based on this research

recently accepted in the *Journal of Marital and Family Therapy*. She is currently an assistant professor in the counseling and family therapy master’s programs at La Salle University in Philadelphia. She is continuing her research and facilitating groups for couples and parents-to-be on the topics of relational mindfulness and mindful parenting.

ERIC GARLAND has recently produced some significant findings from a NIH-funded study of a Mindfulness-Oriented Recovery Enhancement intervention for chronic pain and opioid misuse published in the *Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology*. He first developed this treatment with a Varela award. You can learn more about Garland and his work on his website: www.dreericgarland.com.

At Stanford University, **PHILIPPE RAYMOND GOLDIN** is currently conducting two NIH-funded randomized clinical trials investigating the differential impact of cognitive-behavioral therapy versus mindfulness-based stress reduction versus waitlist control on the neural bases of emotional reactivity, attention regulation, and cognitive reappraisal in patients with, respectively, social anxiety disorder and chronic back pain. He is also beginning as an associate professor at University of California–Davis School of Nursing Science & Healthcare Leadership, where he intends to expand the scope and impact of his clinical research.

MADHAV GOYLE recently finished a systematic review and meta-analysis of meditation programs, which was published in *Science Daily*.

In November of 2013, **LINDA HEUMAN** published an interview with Buddhist scholar **DAVID MCMAHAN** in *Tricycle* magazine. She focused this interview on a question at the forefront of both the scientific study of the mind and the transmission of Buddhism to the West: Is truth ahistorical and transcultural or does context matter? *Tricycle* magazine chose this article—“Context Matters”—as one of its top 13 features of 2013. It will be reprinted in *German* later this year in the *German Buddhist magazine Buddhismus aktuell*.

MICHAEL HOVE is a research fellow at Mass General Hospital and Harvard Medical School. His research focuses on rhythm, timing, and the perception-action interface. Recent and ongoing projects include using auditory rhythms in Parkinson’s gait rehabilitation, assessing timing and attention problems in ADHD, examining how “groove” music induces movement, synchronizing with others to promote social cohesion, and examining the brain networks of shamans during trance. His research uses multiple methods including response timing, motion capture, TMS, EEG, and fMRI.

TONYA L. JACOBS recently published a paper on her study concerning the stress hormone cortisol and how mindful focus may help lower it.

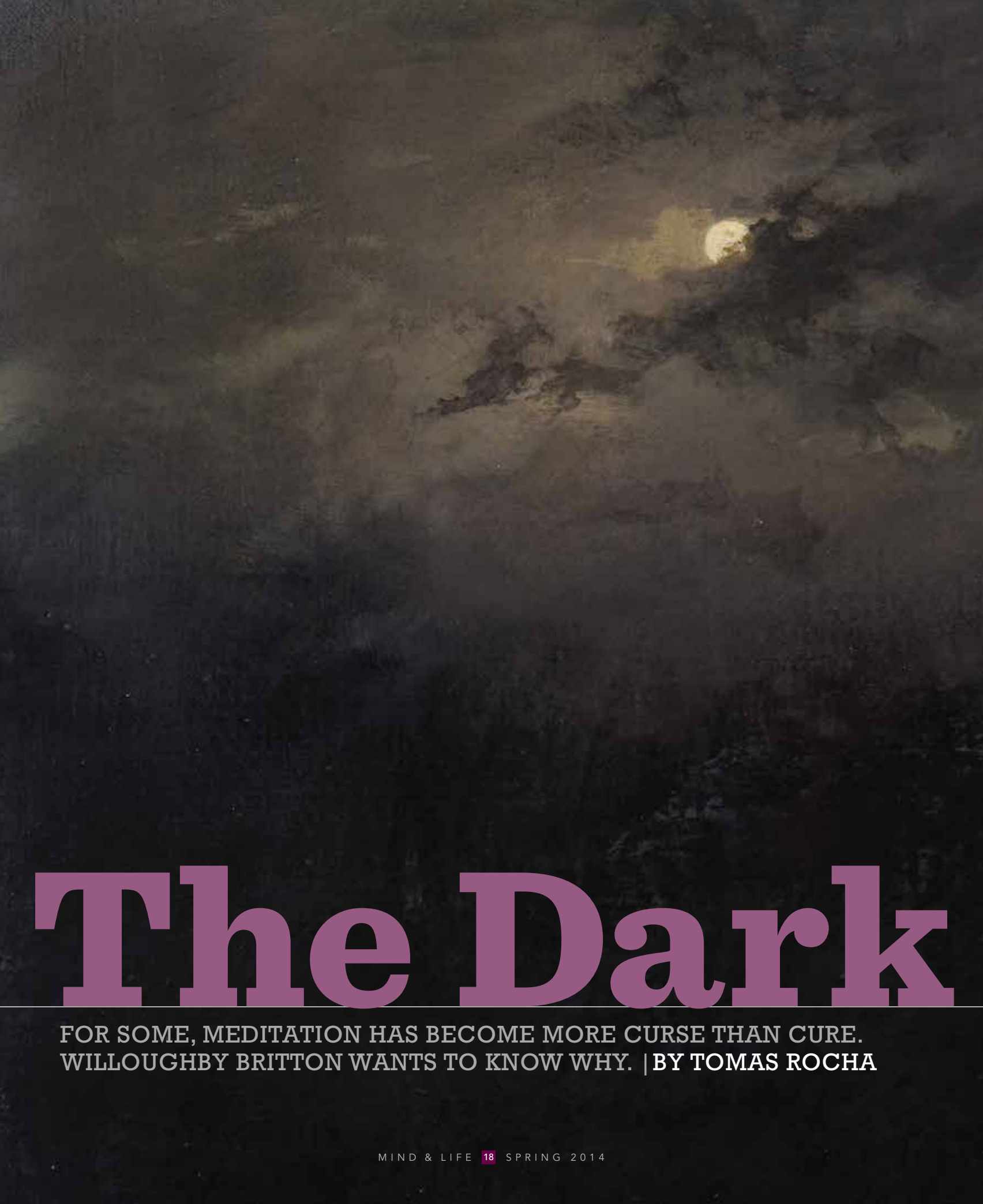
ZORAN JOSIPOVIC is currently researching the neural correlates of nondual awareness with minimized phenomenal content. Other collaborative projects explore the effects of compassion meditation in clinical populations, and the effects of prayer on addiction. Josipovic is the founding director of Nonduality Institute, a non-profit organization for research



Zoran Josipovic researching the neural correlates of nondual awareness.

COURTESY PHOTO

SEE PAGE 36 **NN**→



The Dark

FOR SOME, MEDITATION HAS BECOME MORE CURSE THAN CURE.
WILLOUGHBY BRITTON WANTS TO KNOW WHY. | BY TOMAS ROCHA

Set back on quiet College Hill in Providence, Rhode Island, sits a dignified, four-story 19th century house that belongs to Dr. Willoughby Britton. Inside, it's warm, spacious, and organized. The shelves are stocked with organic foods; a solid wood dining room table seats up to 12. Plants are ubiquitous. Comfortable pillows are never far from reach. The basement—with its own bed, living space, and private bathroom—often hosts a rotating cast of yogis and meditation teachers. Britton's own living space and office are on the second floor. The real sanctuary, however, is one floor up, where people come from all over to rent rooms, work with Britton, and recover from meditation. ● “I started having thoughts like, ‘Let me take over you,’ combined with confusion and tons of terror,” says David, a polite, articulate 27-year-old who arrived at Britton's Cheetah House in 2013. “I had a vision of death with a scythe and a hood, and the thought ‘Kill yourself’ over and over again.” ● Michael, 25, was a certified yoga teacher when he made his way to Cheetah House. He explains that during the course of his meditation practice his “body stopped digesting food. I had no idea what was happening.” For three years he believed he was “permanently ruined” by meditation. (David and Michael are not real names.) ● “Recovery,” “permanently ruined”—these are not words one typically encounters when discussing a contemplative practice. ● On a cold November night last fall, I drove to Cheetah House. A former student of Britton's at Brown University, I joined the group in time for a Shabbat dinner. We blessed the challah, then the wine; recited prayers in English and Hebrew; and began eating. ● Britton, an assistant professor of psychiatry and human behavior, works at the Brown University Medical School. She receives regular phone calls, emails, and letters from people around the world who contact her in various states of impairment. Most of them worry

Knighth



Willoughby Britton in Cheetah House in Rhode Island.

no one will believe—let alone understand—their stories of meditation-induced affliction. Her investigation of this phenomenon, called “The Dark Night Project,” is an effort to document, analyze, and publicize accounts of the adverse effects of contemplative practices.

The following morning, in Britton’s kitchen, David gives me a practiced yet sincere history of his own contemplative path and the variation it took.

His first retreat was “very non-normal,” he says, “and very good . . . divine.” His body shook, his sense of self began to dissolve, and the layers of his internal world began to peel away like the layers of an onion. “There was stuff dropping away . . . [and] electric shocks through my body. [My] core sense of self, a persistent consciousness, the thoughts and stuff, were not me.” He tells me it was the best thing that had ever happened to him, an “orgasm of the soul, felt throughout my internal world, infinitely more pleasant than an orgasm.”

David explains that he finally felt awake. But it didn’t last.

Still high off his retreat, he declined an offer to attend law school, aggravating his parents. His best friends didn’t understand him, or his “insane” stories of life on retreat. “I had a fear of being thought of as crazy,” he says, “I felt extremely sensitive, vulnerable, and naked.” Not knowing what to do with himself, David moved to Korea to teach English, got bored, dropped out of the program, and moved back in with his parents.

Eventually, life lost its meaning. Colors began to fade. Spiritually dry, David didn’t care about anything anymore. Everything he had found pleasurable before the retreat—hanging out with friends, playing music, drinking—all of that “turned to dirt,” he says, “a plate of beautiful food turned to dirt.”

David tried moving to Asia once more but hated it. “I felt sad all the time.” He traveled back and forth from Asia to home seeking guidance, but finding only a deep, persistent dissatisfaction in himself. After “bumming around Thailand for a bit,” he moved to San Francisco, got a job, and sat through several more two- and 10-week meditation retreats. Then, in 2012, David sold his car to pay for the retreat that torments him still.

“Psychological hell,” is how he describes it. “It would come and go in waves. I’d be in the middle of practice and what would come to mind was everything I didn’t want to think about, every feeling I didn’t want to feel.” David felt “pebble-sized” spasms emerge from inside a “dense knot” in his belly.

He panicked. There seemed to be no escape from the constant feelings of terror that engulfed him. Increasingly vivid pornographic fantasies and repressed memories from his childhood began to surface. “I just started freaking out,” he says, “and at some point, I just surrendered to the onslaught of unwanted sexual thoughts . . . a sexual Rolodex of every taboo.” As soon as he did, however, “there was some goodness to it.” After years of pushing away his emotional, instinctual drives, something inside David was “reattached.”

Artwork throughout this feature by Dozier Bell. Bell is a Maine native and full-time artist, represented by Danese Corey Gallery in New York. Among awards she has received are fellowships from the National Endowment for the Arts, the Rockefeller Foundation, the Adolph and Esther Gottlieb Foundation, and a yearlong Fulbright fellowship as an artist-in-residence at Bauhaus University in Germany.

David panicked.
There seemed to be
no escape from
the constant feelings
of terror that
engulfed him.
Increasingly vivid
pornographic
fantasies and
repressed
memories
from his childhood
began to
surface.

This part of David's story calls to mind *The Temptation of St. Anthony*, a Salvador Dalí painting portraying the supernatural temptations of the fourth-century Christian saint. In it, Saint Anthony kneels before a parade of massive, grotesque creatures transporting various representations of sexual organs and erotic desires. For some, the story of Saint Anthony celebrates his ability to renounce sin with an unyielding determination, but others argue that such a reading masks a reality of human nature. In the alternative interpretation, Anthony isn't a spiritual figure purged of temptation altogether, but rather the archetype of one who attains—after a great deal of trial by fire—some mastery over the inner trajectory of his craving and desire.

Toward the end of his time at the Cloud Mountain Center, David shared his ongoing experiences with the retreat leaders, who assured him it was probably just his “ego's defenses” acting up. “They were really comforting,” he says, “even though I thought I was going to become schizophrenic.”

According to a survey by the National Institutes of Health, 10 percent of respondents—representing more than 20 million adult Americans—tried meditating between 2006 and 2007, a 1.8 percent increase from a similar survey in 2002. At that rate, by 2017, there may be more than 27 million American adults with a recent meditation experience.

In late January this year, *TIME* magazine featured a cover story on “the mindful revolution,” an account of the extent to which mindfulness meditation has diffused into the largest sectors of modern society. Used by “Silicon Valley entrepreneurs, Fortune 500 titans, Pentagon chiefs, and more,” mindfulness meditation is promoted as a means to help Americans work mindfully, eat mindfully, parent mindfully, teach mindfully, take standardized tests mindfully, spend money mindfully, and go to war mindfully. What the cover story did not address are what might be called the revolution's “dirty laundry.”

“We're not being thorough or honest in our study of contemplative practice,” says Britton, a critique she extends to the entire field of researchers studying meditation, including herself. I'm sitting on a pillow in

Britton's meditation room. She tells me that the National Center for Complementary and Alternative Medicine's website includes an interesting choice of words in its entry on meditation. Under “side effects and risks,” it reads:

“Meditation is considered to be safe for healthy people. There have been rare reports that meditation could cause or worsen symptoms in people who have certain psychiatric problems, but this question has not been fully researched.”

By modern scientific standards such research may not yet be comprehensive—a fact Britton wants to change—but according to Britton and her colleagues, descriptions of potential adverse effects have been collecting dust on bookshelves for centuries.

The phrase itself, “dark night of the soul,” can be traced back to a 16th-century Spanish poem by the Roman Catholic mystic San Juan de la Cruz, or Saint John of the Cross. It is most commonly used within certain Christian traditions to refer to an individual's spiritual crisis in the course of their union with God.

The numinous experiences reported by Saint John describe a method, or protocol, “followed by the soul in its journey upon the spiritual road to the attainment of the perfect union of love with God, to the extent that it is possible in this life.” The poem, however, is linked to a much longer text also written by Saint John, which describes the hardships faced by those who seek to purify the senses—and the spirit—in their quest for mystical love.

According to Britton, the texts of many major contemplative traditions offer similar maps, blueprints, or outlines of spiritual development. One of her team's preliminary tasks—a sort of archeological literature review—was to pore through the written canons of Theravadin, Tibetan, and Zen Buddhism, as well as texts within Christianity, Judaism, and Sufism. “Not every text makes clear reference to a period of difficulty on the contemplative path,” says Britton, “but many did.”

“There is a *sutta* where monks go crazy and commit suicide after doing contemplation on death,” says Chris Kaplan, a Mind and Life Visiting Scholar who also works with Britton on the Dark Night project.

Nathan Fisher, another Visiting Scholar in charge of managing the study, condenses a famous parable by the founder of the Jewish Hasidic movement, the holy Baal Shem Tov. Says Fisher, “[the story] is about how the oscillations of spiritual life parallel the experience of learning to walk, very similar to the metaphor Saint John of the Cross uses in terms of a mother weaning a child . . . first you are held up by a parent and it is exhilarating and wonderful, and then they take their hands away and it is terrifying and the child feels abandoned.”

Kaplan and Fisher dislike the term “dark night” because, in their view, it can imply that difficult contemplative experiences are “one and the same thing” across different religions and contemplative traditions.

Fisher also emphasizes a critical distinction between the two categories that may cause dark nights to surface. The first results from “incorrect or misguided practice that could be avoided,” while the second includes “those [experiences] which were necessary and expected stages of practices.” In other words, while meditators can better avoid difficult experiences under the guidance of seasoned teachers, there are cases where such experiences are in fact useful signs of progress in contemplative development. Many admit that distinguishing between the two, however, remains a challenge and also a reason for this new field of study.

Britton shows me a 2010 paper written by Mind and Life Fellow **Sona Dimidjian** that was published in *American Psychologist*, the official journal of the American Psychological Association. The study examines some dramatic instances where psychotherapy has caused serious harm to a patient. It also highlights the value of creating standards for defining and identifying when and how harm can occur at different points in the psychotherapeutic process.

One of the central questions of Dimidjian’s article is this: After 100 years of research



Britton presented her research on “dark night” to the Dalai Lama at Mind and Life’s 24th Dialogue in 2012.

into psychotherapy, it’s obvious that scientists and clinicians have learned a lot about the benefits of therapy, but what do we know about the harms? What do we really know about which therapies are good for which people? According to Britton, a parallel process is happening in the field of meditation research. “We have a lot of positive data [on meditation],” she says, “but no one has been asking if there are any potential difficulties or adverse effects, and whether there are some practices that may be better or worse-suited [for] some people over others.”

“Ironically,” says Britton, “the main delivery system for Buddhist meditation in America is actually medicine and science, not Buddhism.” As a result of how such practices are packaged, many people think of meditation only from the perspective of stress reduction and the enhancement of executive skills such as emotion regulation, attention, and so on. For Britton, this widespread assumption—that meditation exists only for such things as stress reduction and labor productivity, “because that’s what Americans value”—narrows the scope of the scientific lens.

Predetermining the purpose of a contemplative practice, she explains, creates “ar-

tificial limits on the possible set of relevant research questions.” The consequence of this is that when the time comes to develop hypotheses around the effects of meditation, the only acceptable—and fundable—research questions are the ones that promise to deliver the answers we want to hear.

“Does it promote good relationships? Does it reduce cortisol? Does it help me work harder?” asks Britton, referencing these more lucrative questions. Because studies have shown that meditation does satisfy such interests, the results, she says, are vigorously reported to the public. “But,” she cautions, “what about when meditation plays a role in creating an experience that then leads to a breakup, a psychotic break, or an inability to focus at work?”

Given the juggernaut—economic and otherwise—behind the mindfulness movement, there is a lot at stake in exploring a shadow side of meditation. Upton Sinclair once observed how difficult it is to get a man to understand something when his salary depends on his not understanding it. Britton has experienced that difficulty herself. In part because university administrators and research funders prefer simple and less

Given the **juggernaut**—economic and otherwise— behind the

controversial titles, she has chosen to rename the Dark Night project the “Varieties of Contemplative Experience.”

Another consequence of funder-driven research relates to scientific integrity itself. “If people are only funding [studies of] benefits, then that’s all you’re going to find,” says Britton. “Our theories are driving the results. It’s not good science.”

Britton also questions what might be considered the mindfulness movement’s limited scope. She explains that the Theravadin Buddhist tradition influences how a large portion of Americans practice meditation, but in it, mindfulness is “about vipassana, a specific type of insight . . . into the three characteristics of experience.” These are also known as the three marks of existence: *anicca*, or impermanence; *dukkha*, or dissatisfaction; and *anatta*, or no-self.

In this context, mindfulness is not about being able to stare comfortably at your computer for hours on end, or get “in the zone” to climb the corporate ladder. Rather, says Britton, it’s about the often painstaking process of “realizing and processing those three specific insights.”

Shinzen Young, a Buddhist meditation teacher popular with young scientists, has summarized his familiarity with dark night experiences. In a 2011 email exchange between himself and a student, which he then posted on his blog, Young presents an explanation of what he means by a “dark night” within the context of Buddhist experience.

“Almost everyone who gets anywhere with meditation will pass through periods of negative emotion, confusion, [and] disorientation . . . The same can happen in psychotherapy and other growth modalities. I would not refer to these types of experiences as ‘dark night.’ I would reserve the term for a somewhat rarer phenomenon. Within the Buddhist tradition, [this] is sometimes referred to as ‘falling into the Pit of the Void.’ It

entails an authentic and irreversible insight into Emptiness and No Self. Instead of being empowering and fulfilling . . . it turns into the opposite. In a sense, it’s Enlightenment’s Evil Twin. This is serious but still manageable through intensive . . . guidance under a competent teacher. In some cases, it takes months or even years to fully metabolize, but in my experience the results are almost always highly positive.”

Britton’s findings corroborate many of Young’s claims. Among the nearly 40 dark night subjects her team has formally interviewed over the past few years, she says most were “fairly out of commission, fairly impaired for between six months [and] more than 20 years.”

The identities of Britton’s subjects are kept secret and coded anonymously. To find interviewees, however, her team contacted well-known and highly esteemed teachers at some of the most prominent retreat centers. Jack Kornfield at California’s Spirit Rock and Joseph Goldstein at the Insight Meditation Center in Massachusetts are just two examples. Like many other experienced teachers they spoke to, Goldstein and Kornfield recalled instances during past meditation retreats where students became psychologically incapacitated, some forced to undergo hospitalization. Says Britton, “there was one person Jack told me about [who] never recovered.”

The Dark Night project is young, and still very much in progress. Researchers in the field are just beginning to absorb the knowledge that could be gained from carefully collecting and sorting through the narratives of difficult meditation-related experiences. Britton has presented her findings at major Buddhist and scientific conferences, prominent retreat centers, and even to the Dalai Lama at the 24th Mind and Life Dialogue in 2012.

“Many people in our study were lost and confused and could not find help,” says Britton. “They had been through so many doctors, therapists, and dharma teachers. Given that we had so much information about these effects, we realized that we were it.”

In response, Britton conceived of Cheetah House as a public resource. “We’re still in the process of developing our services,” she says, “lots of people just come live here, and work on the study. Because they’re part of the research team, they get to stay here and listen to other people’s experiences, and that’s been incredibly healing.”

As a trained clinician, it can be hard for Britton to reconcile the visible benefits of contemplative practices with data unearched through the Dark Night project. More than half of her patients reported positive “life-altering experiences” after a recent eight-week meditation program, for example. But, she says, “while I have appreciation and love for the practices, and for my patients . . . I have all of these other people that have struggled, who are struggling.”

“I understand the resistance,” says Britton, in response to critics who have attempted to silence or dismiss her work. “There are parts of me that just want meditation to be all good. I find myself in denial sometimes, where I just want to forget all that I’ve learned and go back to being happy about mindfulness and promoting it, but then I get another phone call and meet someone who’s in distress, and I see the devastation in their eyes, and I can’t deny that this is happening. Someone has to do something, someone has to speak up and help them. As much as I want to investigate and promote contemplative practices and contribute to the well-being of humanity through that, I feel a deeper commitment to what’s actually true.” **ML**

Tomas Rocha completed his bachelor’s degree from Brown University and his master’s from the University of Cambridge. In the fall, he will become a doctoral candidate studying philosophy at Columbia University.

mindfulness movement,

there is a lot at stake in exploring a shadow side of meditation.

the Call to care proposition

HOW MIGHT A CURRICULUM ON COMPASSION CHANGE EDUCATION ?

ASK MOST PEOPLE, AND THEY CAN RECOUNT A PIVOTAL MOMENT in their early lives when a teacher, coach, relative, or even someone unexpected, affirmed them at a time when they were in need. Science tells us this experience imprints onto our brain what it feels like to be cared for and valued. At that moment we felt safe in the world, and for the rest of our lives our brains—and we—remember that moment.

For the past year, the Mind & Life Institute (MLI) has been exploring how to facilitate more of these moments. The Institute believes that compassion and altruism “are already present in early childhood as capacities that require cultiva-

tion,” says President Arthur Zajonc, and that “the cultivation of compassion is the root and source of a true moral life.”

The Institute’s Call to Care initiative is part of the organization’s three-pronged global program





THE BEST WAY TO REASSERT ETHICS IS BY PLANTING THEM AT THEIR ROOT, IN THE FORMATIVE YEARS OF EDUCATION.

called Ethics, Education, and Human Development (EEHD). The overarching EEHD program—designed to address ethics across the life span—is a response to a specific call, that of the Dalai Lama, who argued in his 2011 book, *Beyond Religion: Ethics for a Whole World*, for a new approach to teaching what he calls “secular ethics.”

In the book, he describes the need for an ethical system that can speak to people of many different religions—or no religion at all. Many believe that with rising global agnosticism and many people no longer identifying as strongly with religious institutions as authoritative forces in their lives, the question of responsibility for ethical development looms.

The development of an ethical life “doesn’t mean you can’t say strong things,” cautions Zajonc. “It doesn’t mean you can’t speak truth to power. But you can do so from a place of humanity and generosity. I think this is a characteristic of some of the great souls, the Nelson Mandelas and Desmond Tutus. They are filled with life and generosity, even when they’re sitting before arch criminals who committed abuses. They’re listening to the issues and

asking some really hard questions.”

After a year of exploring current educational programs, MLI determined that the best way to reassert ethics was by planting them at their root, which for most is in the formative years of education. The Call to Care project is therefore school-based, in particular developing an initial curriculum for grades 2 and 3 along with an accompanying teacher training program (the full curriculum will be for K-12).

“If people placed care for young children at the center of education, this would be a radically different world, not just a radically different classroom,” says Brooke Dodson-Lavelle, MLI’s senior program officer leading the initiative.

As part of the pre-pilot effort, a small group of teachers from area schools has been meeting with Dodson-Lavelle for weekly trainings since last fall. The group will continue to meet with her this spring to test and provide feedback on the proposed curriculum. A weeklong teacher development program will occur this summer. The ultimate goal is to create an approach to education that has, at its heart, a call to care for students and teachers, one that is adaptive enough to be offered globally and multiculturally.

ROOTS OF A CALL TO CARE

When considering the Dalai Lama’s prompt to action, MLI—aided by a nine-member core group of experts in the fields of education, contemplative practice, and developmental science—devoted six months to investigating existing Social and Emotional Learning (SEL) programs, including RULER (developed by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence), PATHs (Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies), and Open Circle. SEL programs have been around for about a decade, and certain school districts are now mandated to include components of them in their curriculum—affirming the growing belief that a child’s emotional development affects learning.

While SEL programs have made headway at the policy level, “there was a resistance amongst some of these programs to include any kind of contemplative practice,” says Dodson-Lavelle. “In part because I think there’s been fear, and there’s still fear, about what that is and how [one] can bring that into a school system. There are all kinds of questions. Is it religious, is it flaky, are we going to be run out the door? All of these concerns limited these programs.”

Church, State, and the Mindfulness Movement

Many countries value public education systems that are free of religious influence, partly in order to accommodate religious pluralism but also to curb the manipulation of educational processes by religion. In the United States, the First Amendment prohibits government from establishing any official religion, impeding the free exercise of religion, or from privileging one view of religion over another. But does the use of contemplative practices in public schools violate the First Amendment?

Recently, a California judge rejected a claim that teaching yoga in a public school district represented a violation of the constitutional principle of separating church and state. Some parents were not convinced, however, and an appeal is underway.

The timeline here introduces a short history of some relevant legal opinions.



After immersing itself in these and other curricula, MLI decided to create its own program, one that builds off the best of SEL and mindfulness offerings but also aims to lead the way toward the next evolution of education. Despite the value of existing programs in helping children better understand their emotions and behavior, MLI believes a new framework is needed to promote the development of care and truly ethical people and communities.

“There have been a lot of *adult* programs focused on helping people cultivate compassion. And that’s where we’re headed,” says Dodson-Lavelle. “These programs incorporate mindfulness, but they also include strategies for helping people cultivate compassion: insight into our own suffering, habits of mind, working to develop stronger relationships, building our empathic capacities, building our facility for affection and care for other people. These are drawn from serious contemplative practices that have been around for some time. But no one until very recently has tried to adapt those programs for children.”

THE MLI CONTRIBUTION

“You have the traditional dyad in Mind and Life’s work between, on the one side, science,” says Zajonc, “and the dialogue partner has been contemplative tradition, often Buddhist, but also Christian contemplative traditions or secular traditions where scholars come together with scientists, exploring themes like destructive emotions and the like. What we’ve done is to join a third domain—education—into this pairing, so now it’s science, contemplation, and education. And how those three can work together to learn from each other. The combination is really the recipe.”

Melding together contemplative practice, social and emotional learning, and developmental psychology and neuroscience is a new

Embodying Care

THREE PRACTICES THAT HELP US RECEIVE, DEVELOP, AND EXTEND CARE

BY JOHN MAKRANSKY AND BROOKE DODSON-LAVELLE



VICTORIA KNOBLOCH

WE COME INTO THIS WORLD dependent upon the care of others, and the ways in which our caregivers have seen, loved, and welcomed us empower us to see, connect with, and care for others. Although our capacity for care is shaped by these formative relationships, it is also deeply shaped by the moments of care that permeate our lives. These moments—gestures of kindness, offers of sympathy or support, experiences of being fully present with another—often go unnoticed. Yet we can learn to tune in to them more, thereby enabling ourselves to deepen our own caring resources for others.

As part of Mind and Life’s Ethics, Education, and Human Development (EEHD) initiative, we have developed a model for using contemplative techniques to help students and teachers learn to recognize and nurture their deep capacities for care. This model is based largely on the Innate Compassion Training program developed by John Makransky. Though this program draws from contemplative patterns of Tibetan Buddhism, it has analogues in other contemplative traditions. Such practices are also amenable to secular contexts because they draw directly from the life experiences and worldviews of those who engage them. These particular methods for cultivating compassion have been tested in diverse secular and multifaith settings and are informed by insights from education and developmental psychology.

The EEHD program is structured by three modes of care: **receiving care**, **developing self-care**, and **extending care**. Each of these modes empowers the others. Though



1961 | McGowan v. Maryland

Margaret M. McGowan sues the State of Maryland because of state “closing laws,” which require most large-scale businesses to remain closed on Sundays to promote church attendance. McGowan argues that this violates the First Amendment. Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren argues that even though many laws have “their genesis in religion,” repealing them would “give a constitutional interpretation of hostility to the public welfare rather than one of mere separation of church and state.” The Warren ruling establishes that at least some programs, laws, or institutions derived from religious traditions predominantly tend to promote the public good, and thus serve “a secular purpose.” Some in the contemplative education movement have relied on this case when challenged in court.

BY TOMAS ROCHA

Earl Warren



MELDING TOGETHER CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE, SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL LEARNING, AND NEUROSCIENCE IS A NEW IDEA IN EDUCATION.

idea in education. “There seems to be a separation between SEL and contemplative practice and they’re starting to come together, but we’re just at the nascent stage of that,” explains core group member Vicki Zakrzewski, education director of the Greater Good Science Center at UC Berkeley.

Part of the idea behind A Call to Care is to help people—both students and teachers—“feel that they have the capacity to act on their compassion,” says Tom Rocha, MLI research associate for the initiative.

Rocha believes a curriculum in care will raise the “average” competency for compassion. “I always think of this analogy. Hungary is a relatively underdeveloped country economically. And yet, over the last 50 years, they’ve produced some of the greatest mathematicians in the world. If you go to a math class in Hungary, the math education is just far beyond anything that exists anywhere else in the world. There’s this national pride in their math. It doesn’t matter if you’re a poor person or a rich person in Hungary, you’re going to get a great math education. And so the average math capacity in Hungary is just higher. If you create a similar culture around care, you’ll

see that not everybody becomes incredibly compassionate, but the norm, the average, for everybody goes up a little bit. You have to see it that way. As a kind of skill set. It’s not some kind of ethereal ideal.”

For Mind and Life, it’s also not just about creating a curriculum for kids. Training teachers in the stages of childhood development will be a key feature of the Call to Care program.

“Having come from the field of education, I realized what a massive gap a program like this would fill in education,” says Zakrzewski. “First, I think, just coming at it from a human development standpoint. Teachers and school administrators—they’ve all been through teacher education programs, [but] they don’t get a good grounding in child development, let alone human development. The idea that social or emotional development has anything to do with cognitive development—our ability to learn—is such a new concept in education. So this program will definitely help fill that gap in teachers’ and administrators’ understanding of how we learn, how we grow and develop.”

SEL, which aims at creating caring and supportive classroom environments, has been criticized for seeming to favor the advancement of the individual over a focus on relationships. “I’m not saying it’s a fair critique,” says core group member Robert Roeser, a professor of psychology at Portland State University, who also holds master’s degrees in religion, developmental psychology, and clinical social work. “But the critique has been, is SEL about ethics and our relationships with other people, the natural world, and the animal world, or is it more about developing personal skill sets? And I think it’s intentioning toward both. I think what’s unique about the MLI project is that we’re saying we’re going to put the relational at the center from the beginning.”

Another traditional obstacle limiting the effectiveness of many SEL programs is minimal teacher training and insufficient administrative involvement and training.

“The quality of the implementation of programs like Open Circle depends on the self-awareness, presence, and open heart of the teacher and her capacity to create a safe and trustworthy classroom environment,” says core group member Pamela

1979 | *Malnak v. Yogi*

A federal appeals court rules that a transcendental meditation course cannot be taught in New Jersey public schools because it has a “primary effect of advancing religion and religious concepts.” The focal point of the litigation is the use of “incense, candles, the bestowing of mantras,” and a short initiation ritual conducted in Sanskrit, the primary liturgical language of Buddhism and Hinduism.



1985 | *Wallace v. Jaffree*

The Supreme Court invalidates an Alabama statute requiring “a moment of silence at the beginning of each school day” that students and teachers can use for “prayer and meditation.” The majority opinion finds that Alabama’s legislature “enacted the statute with the specific purpose of furthering religion” because it authorized teachers who “recognize that the Lord God is one” to lead students in a prayer that acknowledged “Almighty God . . . as the Creator and Supreme Judge of the world.”

Seigle, founder of Open Circle, a nationally recognized elementary school SEL program. “In the current environment in schools, with an overemphasis on discrete academic outcomes and testing, that’s a challenge. The pace of the school day is another challenge. The level of stress that teachers and administrators experience is higher than I’ve ever seen it. The Call to Care initiative is developing both curriculum and, perhaps even more importantly, a teacher development program that will more deeply support and develop the inner dimensions of what it means to teach—and support teachers in understanding how caring for themselves is in service of caring for their students.”

Ultimately, A Call to Care is not just about strengthening relationships between teacher and child, it’s also about improving the teacher’s relationship with him or herself. It builds off the idea that love creates the ideal environment for learning and the cultivation of an ethical life.

“The foundation of ethical life, and we might even say *all* of human life, is relationships, love, and self-security,” says Roeser. “As soon as you make that move, that ethics and human development is relational . . . the fundamental unit that we need to be working on is the relationship, both social relationships and also [the] personal, private relationship with our own selves. I think for about 200 years we’ve suffered under a framing of Darwin . . . and thought about humans as competitive, selfish, survival of the fittest—these kinds of ideas got heavily ingrained in us. I think more and more we’re going back to the idea that human beings are social animals. We’re mammals. We don’t survive or thrive without the long-term affection and care of other human beings.”

Mind and Life’s core group believes that to cultivate ethical development in young

we developed this program with teachers and students in mind, these practices have application in all our lives.

RECEIVING CARE

We are introduced to our unconditional worth and potential by others who see it in us, take joy in it, wish us well, and thereby help us to recognize and actualize our potential. This empowers us to recognize and respond to the same human potential in others. In short, to receive care deeply enables us to care deeply and well for others. Coming to sense our own needs, struggles, pains, and stressors also enables us to sense these in others, and to respond in compassionate and effective ways.

Even if we grasp this need for care intuitively, however, imagining ourselves as the object of care can be difficult. We may feel that receiving care makes us selfish or weak. It may also make us feel vulnerable to being hurt, especially if we’ve been let down before. We might also feel deep down that we are unworthy or undeserving of care. But without a fundamental sense of self-respect and appreciation of our own worth, our ability to recognize a similar worth in others and extend care to them—including our children, families, patients, students, and so on—is built on a fragile base. The following practice helps us to embed “receiving care” more deeply:

Recall an experience in which you felt valued, cared for, even loved. This image of care may be a memory of someone from childhood whom you loved being with. Or the image may stem from a moment of genuine connection from any part of your life—a warm smile, a welcoming gaze—with someone like a teacher, a friend, a mentor, or even a stranger. If it makes you happy to recall such a moment, it is suitable to bring it to mind for this practice. Try imagining that moment is occurring right now; notice what it feels like to hold that experience in mind. This is what it is like to receive care. Hold this moment in mind for a little while longer, allowing yourself to accept this person’s care to whatever extent you can. Take a few minutes to relax and allow this feeling to infuse every part of your body and mind.

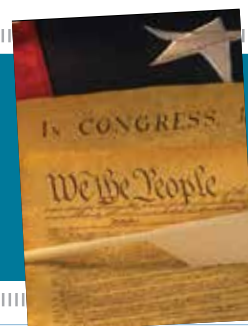


IGOR BORISOV/TRUNK ARCHIVE



1994 | Brown v. Woodland Joint Unified School District

A curricular teaching aid used in the first through sixth grades in the Woodland, California, public schools involves asking children to pretend they are witches or sorcerers, and to role-play these characters during readings of North American literature. The Brown family argue that the curriculum’s role-playing encourages children to become “practitioners of the witchcraft religion,” who are known as “sorcerers and witches,” and that “spells and charms are sacred rituals of this occult religion.” The court sides with the school district.





“THE FOUNDATION OF ETHICAL LIFE, ALL OF HUMAN LIFE, IS RELATIONSHIPS, LOVE, AND SELF-SECURITY.”

children, you must involve people they're in a relationship with.

“Support for teachers is certainly key to what we're doing and is our starting point,” Zajonc says. But community-based support, especially from the parents, is vital. “So this will be an ongoing question. How is it that we undertake that element as well?”

“The first thing we want to do is to wrap around the child a set of real relationships that are loving, supportive, and that afford them an opportunity to be seen and heard. How do we do that?” says Roeser. “We have to offer the same set of supports to those caregivers.”

SELF-CARE, RECEIVING CARE, EXTENDING CARE

“Teachers come into the field because they're givers,” says Dodson-Lavelle. “They come to these trainings, and they're not there working on themselves. They're translating every single thing into, ‘How do I teach this to a kid?’ They completely bypass their own work. And they're going to continue to burn out if they do that. Which is why even though we're designing this curricula, really the teacher program is

primary. It's not a teacher program in the sense that ‘Here, this is how you teach this,’ although that's important. It's, ‘Here's how you deepen in this so you *embody* this.’”

The Call to Care initiative draws from Innate Compassion Training, a program developed by core group member John Makransky. Makransky is a professor of Buddhism and comparative theology at Boston College who has developed different methods of making Tibetan Buddhist practices accessible to people of diverse backgrounds, faiths, and professions.

For almost 15 years, his focus has been on teachers, counselors, clergy, and social service professionals who work with prisoners, the homeless, at-risk youth, and addicts. Many of his contemplative practices are designed to help prevent burnout, which is especially germane to teachers. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future pegs annual national teacher attrition rates at 16.8 percent. In urban schools, it's more than 20 percent. Forty-six percent of all new teachers will leave the profession within five years.

Part of the reason for the dropout rate may be because teachers are motivated in part by a desire to help kids and make the

world a better place, but the emotional needs of the children may be overwhelming—especially if a teacher is not coming from the most nurturing and supportive background herself.

“It's very easy to become overloaded with emotions,” says Zakrzewski. “Teachers get completely slammed with their students' emotions and their own interactions, and they don't know how to deal with that because nobody gets training in this.”

Child Trends, a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center, reports that nearly one in eight children (12 percent) have had three or more negative life experiences associated with stress levels that can impair their development. Those experiences include abuse or neglect, parental divorce or separation, witnessing domestic violence, the incarceration of a parent, the death of a parent, and living with someone who has a mental illness or an addiction problem.

“People in all kinds of social service, including teachers, have repeatedly been caught in dynamics of burnout and negative thoughts and feelings and reactions because we're frequently overwhelmed,” Makransky says. “Through contemplative practice, we



1996 | Alvarado Et Al. v. The City Of San Jose

The city of San Jose, California, funds the construction of “the Plumed Serpent,” a sculpture representing Quetzalcoatl, of Aztec mythology. Local elementary school students participate in a ceremonial procession at the sculpture's unveiling, accompanied by traditional Aztec dance and drum groups. In court, the plaintiffs argue that the Plumed Serpent advances religion because of its “alleged association with New Age and Mormon beliefs.” The court disagrees and rules for the City.



can repeat a way of bringing our awareness into more connection with our inner capacities—capacities for inner peace and an inner sense of safety and well-being.”

While mindfulness practice often means becoming more aware of one’s thoughts, Makransky’s practices are more muscular in terms of activating one’s imagination and building resilience.

For example, one of the practices offered to teachers in the pre-pilot program involves “bringing to mind a meaningful figure, a figure that represents or embodies for the practitioner a deep, unchanging loving care. Or someone who embodied that kind of connection for even a moment. To bring to mind what it’s like to be held in loving care. For someone to wish you well, to take joy in you, to be happy you exist,” Makransky explains. “Such a practice . . . can help shift us into what many developmental scientists would call a ‘secure base,’ a sense of being loved, a sense of having one’s deep worth and value seen.”

Scientists believe that such acts of imagination recruit “the very same brain regions that would be operative if you were imbuing me with love and kindness in a face-to-face way,” Roeser says. “But I think the important point is that we’re not trying to just teach kids private, inner exercises. What we’re trying to do by starting with the adults is to create actual relationships in which the child is seen and heard in her full personhood. And providing actual experiences to teachers where they feel seen and heard as full people and as valued professionals.”

These goals relate to what developmental psychologists call attachment theory. People who grew up in a loving environment where they feel valued have that “secure base,” explains Makransky. “From that secure base . . . they form secure attachment.

Taking a few moments regularly to recall such moments can help you remember many other instances of care that have permeated your life. Learning to re-experience these moments of warmth and affection when you were seen in your potential provides the safety and security from which you are better able to welcome and see others in their potential. As you work with this practice, you might find yourself spontaneously recalling more and more moments in which someone took joy in you or wished you well, from many parts of your life.



JOHN DOLAN

DEVELOPING SELF-CARE

Deepening our capacity for self-care can facilitate a sense of inner refuge and safety that is central to our health and well-being. In this mode, we learn to let our patterns of thought and feeling gently relax and unwind within a basic openness of mind. We thereby learn to host our difficult thoughts and emotions with compassion, which can empower us to host others’ feelings with compassion, becoming a more stable source of support and care for them. Finally, accessing this sense of inner safety or refuge can help protect us against stress and fatigue and also the burnout that many caregivers encounter in their work. The following practice helps us embed “self-care” more deeply:

One way of learning to rest in inner safety is through the practice of three deep “letting be’s” of body, breath, and mind. First, drop into the body with a sense of openness. Sense the body’s “groundedness” and wholeness. Notice any feelings of grasping or holding on within the body, and gently let those places of tension relax, letting all bodily feelings settle in their own way. Deeply let be within the body, as if you are becoming one with it. After a little while, sense any grasping to the breathing process, and let that relax. Let the breath settle into its own natural flow, as if you are becoming

2001 | Altman Et Al. v. Bedford Central School District

Roman Catholic families in New York accuse the Bedford schools of administering programs that promote “satanism and occultism, pagan religions, and ‘New Age spirituality’ through the use of meditation and yoga, as well as “guided-imagery, self-hypnosis, and ‘crystal-power.’” The families protest other practices, including “stress management” and “so-called ‘stress thermometers,’ relaxation, and deep-breathing.” After a five-day trial, the court finds the families’ rights under the First Amendment have been violated.

2013 | Sedlock Et Al. v. Baird Et Al.

Judge John S. Meyer decides in favor of the Encinitas School District’s yoga program. Citing *Lemon v. Kurtzman* (1971), a case that gauged the constitutionality of government funding for a private Catholic school, Meyer applies the “Lemon” test and finds that the yoga course “has a secular purpose,” “neither advances nor inhibits religion,” and does not represent “excessive government entanglement” with religion.

Theory of Mind

CONTEMPLATIVE SCIENCE BEGINS TO UNPACK THE CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF CARING

BY WENDY HASENKAMP

One of the central elements of caring involves the capacity to see things from another person's point of view. In psychology, this ability is referred to as "theory of mind." If we want to be able to respond to someone compassionately, we must first understand what he or she may be thinking, feeling, or perceiving—we must have a theory of his or her mind.



COURTESY OF ATELIER JO-VANNI

In order to do that, we must shift from our own perspective and "put ourselves in their shoes." In that process, however, we don't completely abandon our own view. Since we can't observe others' minds directly, we instead make use of personal memories and experiences, intuiting what another person is going through by way of analogy. If you think about it, this is actually a complicated set of cognitive operations, but we make this shift effortlessly, many times each day.

Not surprisingly, the brain mechanisms for processing self-related experiences are also used for interpreting the mental states of others. Neuroscientific research has implicated a region called the temporoparietal junction (TPJ) as important for theory of mind. The TPJ is also involved in processing self-

related information (e.g., the spatial unity of self and body, or "embodiment"), and is key for distinguishing between self and other. Several medial frontal and parietal areas appear to work with the TPJ to form a brain network that underlies theory of mind.

So, if we want to become more caring, the first question we might ask is whether it's possible to enhance our theory of mind? In psychology, theory of mind has not historically been viewed as a skill that might vary among the population, or be trainable. Until recently, theory of mind has been viewed as a capacity that is either "normal" or grossly impaired, as has been suggested in autism. However, psychology research is now beginning to examine differences in theory of mind ability in healthy adult populations. For example, it was recently shown that people who read literary fiction have improved scores on theory of mind tests.

Researchers have not yet examined whether meditation affects theory of mind ability directly, but some contemplative practices appear to target exactly this capacity.

Richard Davidson and colleagues at the University of Wisconsin studied expert and novice meditators, scanning their brains while

they performed a compassion-based meditation. During the scans, participants were also exposed to emotional sounds. The study showed that both during meditation and in response to the sounds, expert meditators had greater brain activation than novices in several areas including the TPJ. In fact, more than any other area, activity in the TPJ was most strongly related to meditative expertise. This suggests that experienced meditators might be more primed to share emotion with, or take the perspective of, another person.

Another study, at Emory University, tested people's ability to infer others' emotions by looking only at their eyes, a standard test of "empathic accuracy" that is closely related to theory of mind. Compared to a control group trained in healthy living, participants trained in compassion were more likely to improve their accuracy on the test, indicating they were better able to judge the emotions of other people based on subtle cues. In addition, the improvement in scores correlated with increased brain activity in frontal cortical regions known to be involved in empathic accuracy and theory of mind.

Finally, a recent longitudinal study of brain structure at Harvard found that the TPJ and other regions implicated in theory of mind had increased grey matter density after eight weeks of mindfulness training. It is generally assumed that increases in grey matter (neurons) result from repeated activation of a brain region, through a process of experience-dependent neuroplasticity. This study suggests that just eight weeks of training may induce neural rewiring in brain structures important for social cognition.

Taken together, these studies indicate that meditation impacts brain areas that are critical for theory of mind. However, when interpreting such results, it is important to remember that all of these brain regions are also involved in other mental processes. For example, the TPJ has been implicated in various forms of attention, as well as aforementioned self-related processes. Of course, one can argue that these other functions are important for developing theory of mind. Still, conclusions about the specific cognitive implications of these brain changes must remain tentative until more standard behavioral and cognitive testing is applied. In future studies, it would be fascinating to examine whether people who practice meditations that involve perspective-taking show changes in basic theory of mind tests, as well as related neural alterations.

Based on all we know about how the brain changes with repeated practice of any skill, it is reasonable to assume that theory of mind can be improved through intentional exercises. In some ways however, we don't need brain scans to show this; you can engage in these kinds of contemplative practices and see if there are effects in your own life. Can you more easily imagine how others might be feeling? Are you moved toward caring and compassion? These will be the true indicators of meaningful change.

It's a psychological term, and it means they feel at home, and therefore they can have a certain ease at establishing relationships with others, feeling affection for others, respecting others."

Contemplative practice is a way to train the brain to continually return to a secure base, a safe place in our own mind. With repeated practice, caregivers can learn to stay present and effective with others—essentially serving as a secure base for them—while reducing their own risk for burnout.

Other exercises include methods of helping a person see the limited ways we view ourselves and others. "We're constantly mistaking our latest thought about ourselves or someone else for the actual people. We do that repeatedly," Makransky says. "Through contemplation, we can be drawn back again and again to the knowledge that there's a lot more to me and a lot more to them than my latest thought of them, no matter how familiar that thought is."

How might that principle animate our interactions in an educational setting?

Dodson-Lavelle shares with teachers these practices on a weekly basis, checking in with them to see which resonate and connect with work they're doing in the classroom. For example, some teachers realize that if a child or a child's parent annoys them, they are not as present for that child. They use the contemplative practices to try and address that.

"A lot of them feel like this is exactly what they need," says Dodson-Lavelle. "One teacher said her primary role in that classroom is to create a sense of trust and safety. No learning will ever take place unless we create that. The only way we create that is if we ourselves have done our own work, so to speak. And embody a sense of safety and trust."

Adds Zakrzewski: "I think one of the most interesting things that will come out of this program is having an understanding not only of what care and compassion for ourselves and each other is, but also, what are some of the blocks? Why is it hard for us to care for others sometimes? Why is it hard for us to act compassionately? We all want a better world, what keeps us from being able to do this?"

one with the breath, feeling it breathe you, and letting be. After a little while, notice any grasping to the thinking process in the mind, and let that feeling of holding on relax deep within. Give the mind permission to fall totally open letting all patterns of thought and feeling relax and unwind within a space of deep allowing and letting all be. Experience all thoughts, feelings, and sensations within this compassionate space of deep acceptance—the natural kindness of letting all be.

EXTENDING CARE

Many of us feel called to care. We value caring and compassionate people, and feel inspired to cultivate these qualities more deeply in ourselves. Practicing the extension of care should not be an additional obligation, but flow out of an awareness of one's own sense of worth and belonging. Martin Buber described "I-thou" relationships as sensing another person not as a mere object but as a subject of care, one of "us," held in an inclusive community. This is the ethical sensibility for loving action that respects and listens deeply to others. The following practice helps us embed "extending care" more deeply:

Sit in a relaxed way with back comfortably straight, eyes gazing gently downward. Begin with the "three letting-be's" practice described above, becoming one with body, breath, and openness of mind. Recall one of your caring figures above and slightly behind you, taking a moment to connect with this presence and his/her wish for your deepest well-being. Imagine this loving wish and energy as a gentle shower of energy that permeates your whole body and mind. After a few moments, call to mind someone dear to you, for whom it feels natural to extend this wish of love. As you continue to receive this energy from your caring figure, allow it to come through you to the person before you, imagining this loving energy pervading this person's whole body and mind. Sense that you are communing or connecting with the depth of that person's



JOHN DOLAN

being, affirming his/her goodness and worth, wishing him/her totally well. When ready, you can extend this wish to a few more people that are dear to you, while allowing the loving energy from your caring figure to come through you to all of them. After a few more moments, allow this image to fade, and simply merge into oneness with that loving energy, allowing the mind to fall completely open.

Recalling a caregiver evokes our underlying capacity for love and compassion that is always available, from which we learn to extend love to others more and more. The practice of extending love does not involve a struggle to try to get ourselves to be nicer or more loving, but is a means to help us cooperate with the underlying capacity of love that is always ready to come out. As we consciously accept that loving energy from our caring figures, we sense our fundamental worthiness that always deserves such love, no matter what we thought we deserve. From there, we can intuitively sense the same essential worth of others, no matter what they think of themselves; connect with that in them; and uphold them in their best potential beyond the field of individual or social judgments.



“CONTEMPLATIVE PRACTICE DOESN'T MEAN ESCAPE: IT GIVES YOU **THE TOOLS TO STEP TOWARD** THE DIFFICULT PARTS OF YOUR PSYCHE.”

“Contemplative practice does not mean escape,” says Zajonc. “Contemplative practice gives you the means of stepping toward the difficult conversations, toward the difficult parts of your psyche. It doesn’t provide a panacea, like, ‘Do this and five minutes later, you’re happy.’ But it’s a practice that allows you to find those places of attentiveness and emotional balance and the capacity to have what nowadays is called grit, where you persist in adversity. At the same time, I think ultimately the greatest sources of creativity arise out of this capacity for sustaining our attention in complex and even contradictory situations with an openness to the new.”

BRINGING IT HOME

Roberta “Robbie” Murphy is a supervising teacher for second grade at the Smith College Campus School in Northampton, Massachusetts, located near MLI headquarters. Undergraduate and graduate students who are becoming teachers are trained there.

Murphy, who has been teaching for more than 20 years, noticed a pronounced uptick in children with attentional challenges beginning in the late 1990s. At that time, the children were often medicated. That experience led her to become a certified yoga practitioner for children so that she could incorporate some of yoga’s attention and breathwork into her classes. The mindfulness training proved helpful, but Murphy had been searching for a way to take those explorations further when MLI invited her to join the project.

She recognized immediately that instead of having another curriculum foisted upon her, MLI was offering something different. The initiative is “about the well not going dry” for teachers, Murphy says. “Right then and there, that is different.”

“Teachers will always respond to ‘this will lessen your stress and lessen your burnout.’ Because every teacher deals with that,” Zakrzewski says. “The thing about a program like this is that it’s not a set of science lessons or a set of history lessons; it’s more, when you really get down to it, about how you are in the classroom. It’s more about your affect. It’s more about your relationship with students. It’s more about creating that classroom environment. There are stand-alone lessons, absolutely. But if the teachers can embody the stuff, that’s going to have even more of an impact on the students.”

Teacher training and “buyin” is key for effective education reform and any new vision for education. “I think it is especially important that this work begins by supporting contemplative practice with teachers,” Murphy says. “Given the statistics about those who leave teaching, it would be a great study to see if starting off with a practice had any effect on one’s ability to withstand the pressures of teaching, particularly in the early years.”

This fall, in addition to the Call to Care rollout in Western Massachusetts, MLI wants to introduce the program to school systems from other backgrounds. Later, the goal is to bring this work to an international level.

“Part of our process has been to recognize that this idea of coming into a classroom and sitting on a cushion is not universal. It doesn’t have to look the same in all contexts,” says Dodson-Lavelle. “In certain parts of the country, people love the idea of a secular program. In other parts of the country, it sounds to them as if we’re taking out the very source from which they already cultivate love and compassion. What we need to be asking is what brings this to life in the communities where we’re hoping this call to care grows.”

Says Roeser: “John Makransky, what he’s done, which I think is quite beautiful, is he’s created a version of these practices in which we experience receiving and extending love to others in a way that I believe preserves the freedom of the individual to fill in the blanks of who is extending love. For instance, if I pick a benefactor, I might pick Jesus as the one bestowing. And if I’m not religious, I might pick my mentor or my coach. There’s a way that he’s created a structure that allows people to fill in the content in a way that’s culturally enriching and meaningful to them.”

“There has to be that freedom ultimately; people have to feel ownership of this,” Dodson-Lavelle says. “We’re trying to help supply a framework. It’s an offering.” **ML**

Lynn Tryba is chief content officer and strategist for Lifestyles Ink, publisher of *Taste for Life* (tasteforlife.com) and *Remedies* (remediesmagazine.com), natural health magazines. Her work has appeared in numerous outlets, including *Psychology Today*, *CNN*, and *Whole Life Times*.

The Altruist

Roshi Joan Halifax

A PIONEER IN COMPASSION-BASED MEDICINE ON DEATH, DYING, AND OUR HEALTH CARE SYSTEM



NEVADA WIER

Much has been made over the past several years about the state of American health care. What it needs, what it does not, and who is responsible for both. Lost in that discussion, however, is the very nontheoretical and yet everyday experience of becoming ill, or facing mortality, and engaging the clinician in hospital rooms that do not distinguish between red and blue states. What happens when politics are trumped by diagnosis?

Since the early 1970s, when she was a medical anthropologist, Mind and Life Fellow and board member **Roshi Joan Halifax** has been operating at these pivotal moments in human life. A Zen priest, Halifax is the founder, abbot, and head teacher of the Upaya Institute and Zen Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico, which has a central focus on applied Buddhism. The Center also offers programs connected to Halifax's pioneering professional training program in compassionate end-of-life

ROSHI JOAN HALIFAX, PhD, is the founder of the Upaya Institute and Zen Center in Santa Fe, New Mexico. Much of her work has focused on the psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual aspects of caring for the dying. Her books include *The Human Encounter with Death* (with Stanislav Grof), *Fruitful Darkness*, and *Being with Dying: Cultivating Compassion and Wisdom in the Presence of Death*.

NN→ FROM PAGE 17

and practice of nonduality. Together with Jolie Gorchov (a 2012 MLSRI Fellow) and David Bosch, he organizes Margam (metro-area research group on awareness and meditation), a series of talks at NYU, as a forum for presenting research on contemplative practice and consciousness. Now in its fifth year, the presenters have included, among others, **CLIFF SARON**, Ned Block, Bernard Baars, **DAVE VAGO**, Catherine MacLean, Fadel Zeidan, Paul Condon, and Steve Fleming.

JULIA ANN KELLER has completed two mixed-method research studies on the impact of mindfulness training on cognition in elementary students. She is submitting the quantitative results of these studies to the Association of Psychological Science conference and the New Mexico Health Disparities 2014 conference. She is also preparing the qualitative results of these two studies for publication this spring. Keller is a doctoral candidate at the University of New Mexico currently writing a dissertation proposal to investigate whether mindfulness ameliorates the symptoms of dyslexia in children. Using funds from the Varela grant she received, she plans to collect behavioral and ERP data on this research question this summer.

SAHIB KHALSA completed his residency training in psychiatry at UCLA in 2013, serving as the program's chief resident, as well as the chief



Sahib Khalsa

NN→



NOAH ROSSETER

Halifax at the Humla Nomads Clinic in Nepal

care: Being with Dying. Being with Dying focuses on developing, in health care professionals, the psychosocial, ethical, and spiritual aspects necessary to care for the dying. Trainings based on it have occurred in hundreds of medical and educational institutions around the world.

Recently, Halifax launched a complementary offering called GRACE. It stands for “Gathering attention,” “Recalling intention,” “Attunement to self/other,” “Considering what will serve,” and “Engaging/ending”—all stages of an internal process clinicians can undertake to stay centered and compassionate while avoiding the burnout that can coincide with the personal distress when in the presence of suffering.

We spoke with Halifax after she moderated Mind and Life’s latest Dialogue with the Dalai Lama on craving, desire, and addiction. The following are excerpts from that exchange.

Was there a moment in your life when you realized that the field of medicine may need the gifts of the contemplative traditions?

Since the 1960s, I’ve been fortunate to have a meditation practice. When I found myself working in a huge hospital in the 70s, along with clinicians, medical students, and patients, I saw that training the mind, cultivating compassion, having attentional balance

were essential for those who serve the sick as well as for those who were sick. But meditation was not something that was taught in medical school at that time.

Why not?

Medicine is an evidence-based discipline. Medical training is often grueling. Compassion is frequently regarded as suspect. It’s been more than 40 years since I conducted my first experiment in meditation with clinicians. Today, Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) and other similar programs are taught in medical schools in many parts of the world. Upaya’s clinician training is another powerful endeavor. For example, more than 60 clinicians from the University of Virginia have been trained in our program, and clinicians come from around the world to the training. Mind and Life’s contribution to the training has been significant, as it has introduced to a wider world the science of the profound value of the inner life, particularly the importance of training the mind.

Would you say the oft-trumpeted idea of dispassion in medicine as a means to diagnose accurately is therefore a false notion?

I feel that the diagnostic process is enhanced with attention and empathy, a grounding in self-attunement—being aware of one’s own somatic,

COURTESY PHOTO

affective, and cognitive biases—and insight and compassion. That’s why I developed the process called GRACE. After a clinician “gathers” her attention, “recalling intention” reminds her to remember that she is there to serve and to aid in ending suffering, the ethical basis of care. “Attunement” is about connecting with our somatic, affective, and cognitive responses to the patient—this is an active part of bearing witness: You first “sense” into your own subjective experience, then into the patient’s. Most clinicians jump right into diagnosing the patient before getting a sense of their own biases. Our own unconscious biases are often at work and can distort our perception of what is really going on. Another interesting value in this process of “attunement” is how it primes the neural networks associated with empathy.

This relates to Mind and Life Fellow Tania Singer’s work.

Yes. When Tania shared her research on interoceptivity and empathy, I was struck by her findings, and my colleagues—Drs. Tony Back and Cynda Rushton—and I did a major revision of Upaya’s clinician training curriculum based on the work of neuroscience and social psychology. I then developed a heuristic model of compassion when I realized that you can’t teach compassion without training in attention, prosocial affect, intention, insight, and embodiment. In other words, compassion is made up of non-compassion elements. I see compassion as the great key to being an accomplished clinician.

THE DIAGNOSTIC PROCESS IS ENHANCED WITH ATTENTION AND EMPATHY... I SEE COMPASSION AS THE GREAT KEY TO BEING AN ACCOMPLISHED CLINICIAN.

In the GRACE process, you note that seeing a patient’s suffering as not one’s own is essential in helping a clinician not to be overwhelmed by the suffering. But does “detachment” oppose the process of empathy that GRACE encourages?

In fact, GRACE, the application of the compassion model, is not about developing empathy, but about fostering compassion. It is not that empathy is a bad thing. Not at all. However, it is only one element in the

NN→ resident in the UCLA Anxiety Disorders Clinic. He also joined the department as a faculty member in the division of adult psychiatry at UCLA, where he remains actively involved in research. He recently presented the results of his Varela grant examining interoceptive awareness in meditators during cardio-respiratory deviations in body arousal at the 2013 American College of Neuropsychopharmacology conference.

JOY LAINE is currently working on a manuscript that takes a cross-cultural approach and examines key topics from the philosophy of the yoga sutras in the context of contemporary analytical philosophical thought. In it, she will focus on topics related to the philosophy of mind and personal identity.

EMMA LAWRENCE is in her final year of retraining as a clinical psychologist. She is enjoying the opportunity to use mindfulness in her clinical work and meditation research through her doctoral thesis project.

DIANA LIVERMAN has continued to work on climate change and its human dimensions. In 2013, the fifth edition of her coauthored book *World Regions in Global Context* was published by Prentice Hall, and she contributed to a book on climate change in the southwestern United States. She also wrapped up the transition plan for an alliance of international organizations—including UNEP, UNESCO, and the International Council for Science (ICSU)—to create a new interdisciplinary, international initiative called Future Earth, which explores deep changes in human values and behavior as a means to greater sustainability.

MICHELE LUCANTONI is extending his academic interests and applying them to practical projects that could inform and expand his theoretical research. In particular, he is focusing on eco-villages, i.e. places to practice



Jennifer K. Lynne (center) in Gboko, Nigeria

meditation and cultivate earth in spiritual ways (e.g. the Fukuoka way). The core of the project would be to welcome young people and teach them the philosophies of nature and biology, which have been at the heart of his professional and research path.

DOROTHY LUCCI has been using contemplative practices (mindfulness, yoga, and others) at Aspire, a program at Massachusetts General Hospital serving individuals diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder in a variety of settings (therapeutic groups, summer camp) and capacities (i.e. school consultation). In addition, Aspire incorporates positive psychology, cognitive-behavioral techniques (CBT), HeartMath emWave, and technology, among other techniques, to foster personal growth in participants. Those at Aspire recently published a chapter in *Technology Tools for Students with Autism* in which they documented their approach and the power of these practices. In addition, Lucci and Rachel Robb Avery authored an early childhood curriculum called “Think Smart Feel Good” (TSFG). It is currently being used within a private preschool serving three- to five-year-old students who have similar diagnoses. TSFG incorporates the same tenets (i.e. mindfulness, CBT) and is showing promising results.

As a Visiting Scholar at Mind and Life during the summer of 2013, **JENNIFER K. LYNNE** had the opportunity to work and refine the content for Engaged Identity workshops as a

part of her doctoral research. During the fall, she worked with local peace-building initiatives in Benuue, Plateau, Kaduna, and Abuja in Nigeria, providing the workshop and collaborative opportunities to look at how contemplative practice, complexity, and identity can assist local peace-building efforts. These workshops and dialogues reached more than 200 local leaders, teachers, clergy, and youth. With a preliminary sampling, she reports a 67 percent inclusion of contemplative practices in local peacemakers’ efforts.

KRISTEN JASTROWSKI MANO reported that an article on her randomized, controlled pilot study of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction for Pediatric Chronic Pain—supported by a Mind and Life Varela Award—was recently published in *Alternative Therapies*.

DAVID MACMAHAN recently won the Bradley R. Dewey Award for excellence in scholarship at Franklin & Marshall College. His recent publications include “The Jade Buddha for Universal Peace” for Yale University’s Initiative for the Study of Material and Visual Cultures of Religion, and “The Enchanted Secular: Buddhism and the Emergence of Transtraditional ‘Spirituality’” in *The Eastern Buddhist*. He continues to research and write on the globalization, secularization, and scientific study of Buddhist mindfulness and meditation practices.

COURTESY PHOTO



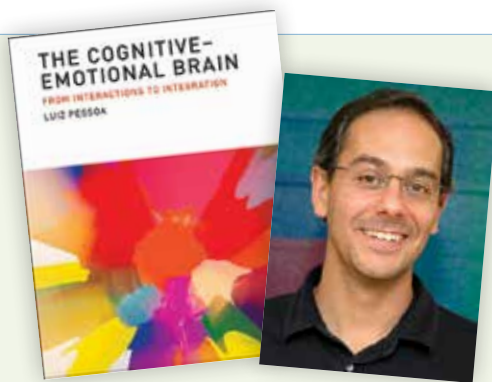
NN→ CHAYIM NEWMAN

is currently working as a psychology resident at London Health Sciences Centre in London, Canada. Clinically, he is focusing on a behavioral medicine population and the integration of mindfulness and acceptance-based treatments in a medical hospital setting. In terms of research, his primary project consists of a study exploring the relationship between trait mindfulness, health behaviors, and health outcomes in the Jewish community.

During 2013, **GREGORY NORRIS** was able to bring his concept of measuring handprints—an assessment of the positive impacts we make in the world—to Harvard. He first presented Handprints publicly, in a discussion with the Dalai Lama at a Mind and Life Dialogue. In his role as codirector of the Sustainability and Health Initiative for NetPositive Enterprise (SHINE) at the Center for Health and the Global Environment at Harvard School of Public Health, Norris is helping corporations measure and accelerate the ways in which they help the world become a healthier, more sustainable place. SHINE sets a bold vision for companies to factor their impact on our health and the environment into all business decisions, and to act in ways that will protect, nurture, and heal people and the planet.

BRIELLE PAOLINI is a fourth-year MD/PhD student in neuroscience at Wake Forest School of Medicine. Paolini attended the 2010 and the 2013 MLSRIs. She is currently researching how mindfulness techniques can be applied to weight loss and self-regulatory behaviors. She is also cofounder of the Student Wellness Center (SWC) at Wake Forest School of Medicine, which now offers weekly meditations taught by Fadel Zeiden. Through the SWC, Paolini also leads an annual mind, body, spirit elective course for medical students.

LUIZ PESSOA recently published *The Cognitive-*



Mind and Life Fellow Luiz Pessoa's new book from MIT Press

Emotional Brain: From Interactions to Integration with MIT Press. The book addresses the theory that a specific brain circuit constitutes the emotional brain, and that cognition resides elsewhere. This theory has shaped thinking about emotion and the brain for many years. Recent behavioral, neuropsychological, neuroanatomy, and neuroimaging research, however, suggests that emotion interacts with cognition in the brain. Pessoa's book moves beyond the debate over functional specialization, describing the many ways that emotion and cognition interact and are integrated in the brain.

KAREN JOHANNE PALLESEN, in conjunction with Lone Fjorback, started a pilot project in which they are evaluating the effects of MBSR on veterans, using heart-rate variability as an effect measure. The group will also start sampling heart-rate variability in patients with bodily distress syndrome—a research diagnosis that covers fibromyalgia, chronic fatigue syndrome, irritable bowel syndrome, somatization syndrome, and more. The premise is that heart-rate variability is related to stress, and that MBSR will lead to a normalization of that variability.

ZACHARY SCHLOSSER is in the process of cofounding a contemplative summer program for college-age students. The program, Alderlore SOLE, blends multidisciplinary collaborative research on ethics, contemplative philosophy, the built environment, and leadership, with personal

mentorship, collective insight practice, and group projects focused on subtle energetics training with horses, ecological engagement, and inspired architecture. The program prepares students to make profound, transformative contributions to multiple academic and applied fields.

SEAN SMITH is currently through the second year of his PhD in philosophy at the University of Toronto. His work is on the relation between affect and consciousness with an aim to try and think about the emergence of consciousness from an evolutionary point of view. He is also learning Pali so that he can incorporate early Indian Buddhist theories of affect into his work, which also draws upon contemporary philosophy of mind and cognitive science, as well as phenomenology.

SHARON TETTEGAH has a book under contract with Elsevier Publications that focuses on emotions and technology; it is entitled *Emotions and Technology: Communication of Feelings Through, With, and for Technology*. Her current research focuses on empathy, creativity, and innovation. The work on empathy examines the use of empathy/emotions that are mediated through technology. The work on innovation is focused on education to promote innovative thinking.

DAVID VAGO has recently published a series of conceptual and theoretical papers on mindfulness and contemplative practices. His article in the New York Academy of Sciences describes



compassion process. For example, if a clinician is over-empathic, distress can follow, and compassion is not possible. **Daniel Batson**, Nancy Eisenberg, and **Tania Singer** have made clear cases for the necessity of regulating empathic arousal so as not to slide into personal distress. Empathic arousal is necessary—we have to feel something!—but feeling too much can push us over the edge into states of distress that give rise to fear-based responses, including moral outrage, avoidance or abandonment of the patient, or numbing, as well as self-protective responses termed “selfish prosocial behavior.” Some people are naturally able to regulate their empathic responses. For others, this is not so easy, and distress increases and resilience decreases. So learning to recognize signs of empathic distress is important.

How does a person regulate empathy?

There are a number of approaches, including recognizing that your patient's suffering, on some level, is not your own. This uses a cognitive appraisal process that allows you to feel but not be overwhelmed. In my years of working with clinicians, the loss of boundaries in the clinical process with attendant empathic distress is one of the greatest causes for clinician suffering, clinician distress, and clinician breakdown. Consider the impact of pathological altruism: vital exhaustion, secondary trauma, moral distress, horizontal and vertical hostility, and structural violence. Clinicians can benefit profoundly from reflective and meditative practices that stabilize the mental continuum, enhance prosociality and insight, and cultivate a strong ethical base.

How are the obstacles to compassion in a medical setting related to our reluctance to accept death as inevitable? In other words, isn't a part of compassion coming to an understanding that medicine cannot save us? Otherwise, compassion begins to appear like ego, doesn't it? That a doctor or nurse must save a life at all costs to fulfill his or her purpose.

Life is precious. Clinicians know this; this is why most have gone into medicine. Doctors and nurses want to end suffering and prevent death. This is a profound value in medicine. At the same time, a subtle and insidious distortion exists within medicine, which is to avoid death at all costs. And the costs can be great, not only to patients, but to families and clinicians as well. Death is normal; it is inevitable. So how do we balance these two things: that death cannot ultimately be avoided, and that the clinician's work is to keep death at bay? I think we live in

COURTESY PHOTO



Halifax's Upaya Institute and Zen Center in New Mexico

an either/or world; somehow it is difficult for us to hold contraries, and this is a contrary: how to do the best we can to support life and at the same time rest in the wisdom of not being attached to outcomes.

How do we do that?

I keep returning to the great value of mind training. Meditation was long looked at as something exotic and marginal. Doctors and nurses would ask, "Why spend time doing nothing?" Well, a very different picture is emerging at this time. For clinicians, "doing nothing" is what might be needed, mentally and interpersonally. Or to put this another way, the value of your doctor or your nurse being stable, present, kind, alert, and compassionate cannot be underestimated. There is really only one path to cultivating this collection of qualities, and this is through training the mind.

It's fascinating that attention forms the base of compassion in much of your work. How do we ensure that gateway in a world that almost demands distraction? How do we make attention "seductive" again or even once more a matter of etiquette?

We do live in a world where our attention has been co-opted by market forces, as well as by fear and addiction. We are more easily manipulated when our attention is divided, dispersed, or distracted. Techniques that train in attention, such as those in

Buddhism, are based on the selfless intention to be of benefit to others. So, we can say that attention and intention influence each other. In the end, altruism, kindness, and compassion are mental qualities that give life meaning and enhance the well-being of all. The case for prosociality is very compelling, to say the least. And distraction and poor attentional balance is tiring, to put it mildly!

When you consider all the work you've done on death and dying, what do you feel people still don't understand about the process or need to realize before they enter it?

I entered the end-of-life care field in the early 70s because, of all the disciplines in medicine, working with dying people is where fundamental existential questions exist. We will all die. We all want to die well. And we can never really penetrate the mystery of death. It is the contemplation of our own mortality and the mortality of those whom we love that can give life meaning. Our priorities become clear, our relationships more cherished, our purpose for being alive can become more grounded in selfless compassion. The value of meditation practice, of training the mind and the heart, cannot be underestimated in relation to the truth that we will face death sooner or later. Having a mind that is clear, grounded, open to not-knowing, kind, at ease with change, stable, and able to let go—what can be more valuable as we die or as we care for those who are facing death? **ML**

NN→ potential explicit and implicit mechanisms by which meditative techniques can contribute to transforming maladaptive habits of mind and perceptual and cognitive biases. The second article, written with Jake Davis in *Frontiers in Psychology*, describes the potential for tracing enlightenment to specific neural correlates, cognition, or behavior. The third article, written with Sara Lazar, Gaelle Desbordes, Liz Hoge, Tim Gard, Britta Holzel, **CATHY KERR**, and **ANDY OLENDZKI**, describes equanimity as a novel outcome measure in meditation research. He will be presenting some of this work at the Kluge Research Symposium at the Center for Mindfulness conference. He has also been recently awarded private funding to continue researching modalities of awareness using fMRI in novice meditators practicing specific forms of noting and labeling.

After almost five years in a PhD program in clinical psychology, **SANDRA VITALE** is happy to be realizing her aspirations of cofacilitating a Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) group at the San Francisco VA Medical Center with women veterans. She is also certifying to be an MBSR instructor and hopes to be doing the same for Mindfulness-Based Mind Fitness Training (MMFT), created by **ELIZABETH STANLEY**, **AMISHI JHA** and Stanley, along with their colleagues, have found preliminary evidence that MMFT has improved cognitive functioning and emotion regulation among pre-deployment troops, which may decrease the risk of suicide, domestic violence, substance abuse, and psychological injury later on.



Want to update us about your work, projects, awards, or other news? Write to us at communications@mindandlife.org. And don't forget to subscribe to our eNews or follow us on social media for the latest.

RD & D

Over the last six months, Mind and Life welcomed nine Visiting Scholars to its recently opened house on the Amherst College campus. The Visiting Scholars program is meant to provide time and space for intensive individual and collaborative work that extends and broadens the intellectual fruits of MLI's mission in three areas: ethics and education; mapping the mind; and craving, desire, and addiction. Visiting Scholars are generally in residence for periods ranging from a few weeks to an academic semester. We asked them to share their works-in-progress with us.



▲ **Nathan Fisher** worked on two articles to be submitted to peer-reviewed journals. The first presents pilot data from "The Varieties of Contemplative Experience" project at Brown University. The second article emerges from data from a sociological study at Indiana University that investigates the diffusion of contemplative practices in the workplace and corporate cultures. The article considers widespread assumptions related to how contemplative practices are thought to enhance productivity and profitability.

▼ In order to more deeply understand meditation, **Peter Grossenbacher** analyzed findings regarding brain function during meditation, with the goal of identifying neurobiological patterns conducive to successful meditation, and providing practitioners—in consultation with neuroscientists and meditation teachers—with efficient training and new techniques that elicit those patterns. He plans on piloting an ensuing program of research that will allow for testing these new methods that combine first-, second- and third-person perspectives.



▲ **Chris Kaplan** focused on two projects: a book manuscript, which examines how parallel developments in global forms of spirituality and activism are redirecting currently destructive trends in globalization toward more democratic, humane, and sustainable ends. The book examines the origins, underpinnings, and implications of interrelated global phenomena, from the proliferation of meditation in modern contexts and the explosion of grassroots social movements, to dramatic shifts in philosophical and scientific understandings of "interconnectedness." His second project combines a cross-traditional contemplative methodology and pedagogy, based on overlapping understandings of contemplative development and "subtle physiology."

▼ **Terje Sparby** developed a research proposal dealing with fundamental ontological, epistemological, and methodical issues concerning the interconnection of philosophy and meditative research. His initial ideas for this project were outlined at Mind and Life Europe's Symposium in Berlin. Additionally, he worked on two articles, the first focusing on how the de-emphasis of self-centered consciousness can lead to deeper insights into the nature of consciousness, the self, and objects in the world; and a second that centers on the issue of how deep, meditative insight can be communicable and have an impact on the discursive mind.





▲ **Dana Jack** explored selflessness (*anatta*) as an essential core of the Buddha's teaching on liberation from suffering. In particular, she focused on selflessness as it pertains to women, who, in striving to be "good" and loving, often follow a flawed understanding of selflessness that leads them to silence their voices in close relationships and experience a "loss of self" and despair. Through intensive dialogue and research with experienced meditators and non-meditators, Jack deepened the comparison of these two versions of self(lessness) and began to articulate assumptions underlying Buddhist and Western psychological perspectives on self-sacrifice. Drawing from Buddhist teachings and practice, her aim is to show how a focus on selflessness may be transformed from promoting depression to fostering flourishing and social and relational change.

▼ **Heather Buttle** fine-tuned her research on "mindfulness, morality, and meta-awareness," which considers how mindfulness practice affects moral decision-making and awareness of our feelings and emotions. She plans to create a set of morality vignettes on which mindfulness practitioners and non-practitioners base decisions. Then, a number of variables will be measured: decision choice, reaction time, facial electromyography (to detect subtle changes in emotional expression over time), and psychophysiological measures of the sympathetic/parasympathetic nervous systems. Other factors to be considered will include whether decisions made under time pressure differ to non-time pressured responses, and whether the decision context (e.g. eudaimonic versus hedonic contexts) alters response measures.



▲ **Poppy Schoenberg** investigated three overarching questions: Does selfless experience during intensive mindfulness, and the pathological "loss of self" in germane psychiatric disorders, share a unified mechanism? Is the process of selflessness a prerequisite for compassion, and can such abstractions be illuminated at the neural level? And, finally, what is the (micro-individual and macro-societal) "worth" of the concept of compassion and its cultivation toward humanistic progress? These explorations aim to contribute to the neurophysiological-phenomenological debate, producing insights that may foster the development of more fruitful interventions for psychiatric conditions centrally characterized by disrupted self-concept and dissociation.

▼ **Paivi Ahonen** analyzed the strategies of the Kingdom of Bhutan in developing education policies along with the national development strategy of Gross National Happiness (GNH). The GNH was developed in Bhutan in the 1970s as an attempt to define an indicator to measure quality of life or social progress in more holistic and psychological terms, as opposed to the purely economic indicator of Gross Domestic Product (GDP). During the last 10 to 20 years, GNH principles have been implemented in national development strategies of different sectors of society in Bhutan. The key research problem has been: How is Bhutan managing to combine the national sustainable GNH-based development strategies in the education sector? The ultimate aims of Ahonen's research are to understand and support the global efforts to increase education for sustainable development, and to determine what the international community could learn from Bhutan's policy and its implementation in the education sector.



2013 Annual Report

Mind and Life Financial Partners

Mind and Life is deeply grateful for the continuing generosity and kindness of our friends and partners. With your support, we continue to investigate the mind and pursue our greater mission of alleviating suffering and improving well-being. On behalf of our board of directors, His Holiness the Dalai Lama, our staff, and all of our friends, scientists, contemplatives, and stakeholders, please accept our heartfelt thanks. We look forward to sharing our journey with you in the days ahead.

SUSTAINING PATRONS

(gifts of \$30,000 or more, commitment for a minimum of three years)

1440 Fund of Silicon Valley Community Foundation
Anonymous Foundation
Anonymous Individual
Steve and Joan Belkin
The Dalai Lama Trust
Ann Down
The Eagle and the Hawk Foundation
Raymond and Jacquelyn Gellein
George Family Foundation
Klaus Hebben
Hershey Family Foundation
Constance Kemmerer
The Debbie & Don Morrison Family Charitable Foundation
Pierre and Pam Omidyar
Tan Teo Charitable Foundation
John Templeton Foundation
Tuttleman Family Foundation
Jeffrey and Suzanne Walker
The Adam J. Weissman Foundation

MAJOR SPONSORS

(gifts of \$10,000 or more)

Anonymous Individual
The Baumann Foundation
Leslie Lykes de Galbert
Fetzer Institute
HopeLab
Jon Kabat-Zinn
Kalliopeia Foundation
Ashish and Rachna Kulshrestha
Lostand Foundation
Yaffa and Paul Maritz
Sager Family Traveling Foundation & Roadshow
Jeane Schwarzkopf
Bennett Shapiro and Frederika Foster Shapiro
TASCHEN
Diana Chapman Walsh
Joni Winston

PARTNERS

(gifts of \$1,000 to \$9,999)

Anonymous Individuals (4)
Tom Attar
Barry Baer
Victor and Roberta Bradford
Joanne Clark
Richard and Susan Davidson
Melanie Dean
Jacqui and Scott DeFelice
Natasha Giraudie
Denise Greger
Olivia Hansen
Dan Hruza
Carolyn Jacobs
Jonathan Rose Companies
Wesley Johnson
Mathias Jourdain
Feng-Yang Kuo
Catherine Lewis
Christian Mortier
Barbara Muller-Ackerman
Khoa Nguyen
Francene Orrok
Presley O. and Patricia Stacey Reed
Patricia Rush
Paula Sager
Friends and Family of David Kieran Spyke
Robert and Nena Thurman
Annie Umbricht
Julia Ward
The Windmill Fund
Arthur Zajonc

FRIENDS

(gifts up to \$999)

Edith Adams Allison
Sherif Barakat
Laura Benedict
Carla Boccaccio
Patricia Brennan
Christie Buffington Leal
John Callaghan
Vicki Capek
Claude Champrenaud
Terry Chapman

Pedro Contró
Marion Cox
Nancy Craigmyle
James Dailey
Edward Dunn
Claire Durand
Jeff Eaton
Mona Fishbane
Kimberly Flood
Anders Ruud Fosnaes
Carol Foster and Rober Drinkwater
Beta Franca
Maria João Geissberger-Pires
Martin Gieda
Marcia Grabowecky and Ken Paller
Edward and Paula Hamlin
Susan Harmon
Margery Harter
Ville Havia
Helen Stephanie Ho
Sean Houlihan
Chi-chan Huang
Thomas Jackson
Sabina Johns
Mary Kaiman
Gurmeet Kanwal
Yury Karpenko
Carlo Lepori
Celeste Killeen
Kimberley Korb
Gretchen Laise
Ken Landfield
Lori Lariviere
Theresa Laurie
Carlo Lepori
Rita Lewis
Lenley Lewis
Shiou-Yue Liu
Marina Lopez Sola
Heather MacKenzie
Albrecht Mahr
Martin Mauch
Metta McGarvey
Natalie Myers
Ros Nealon-Cook
Vladimir Nedovic
Rachid Abrahin Neto
Priscilla Newton

Trung Nguyen
 Cristina Noble
 Lynn Noon
 Michaela Oldfield
 Jonathan Owen
 Doris Pasteleur Hall
 David Patterson
 Berta Perez Verdia
 Martin Petkov
 Herb Pluemer
 Helene Podziba
 Johannes Prins
 Judith Raiffa
 Kim Richards
 David Riley
 Andrew Rittenour
 Caroline Robaglia
 Denise Robson
 Charlie Ross
 Mr. & Mrs. Allan Sampson
 Ying Scheeh
 Milton Schlosser
 Jeane Schwarzkopf
 Douglas and Ann Scott Dumas

Andoni Serrano
 Carmen Serrat-Valera
 Catherine Shaddix
 Sue Shapiro
 Yu-Fen Shih
 Hector Silveira
 Tania Singer
 Simon Smith
 Blaine Snow
 Carlos Sousa
 Terje Sparby
 William Stahl
 Andrea Switzer
 Supriya Syal
 Mikk Tamme
 Sharon Thomas
 United Way of the National Capital Area
 Dori Urch
 Johan Visser
 Zarko Vuckovic
 Peter Wayne
 Ayumi Kie and Brian Weissbuch
 Todd Welstein
 Ya Wen

John Wendt
 Laura Whitaker
 Gail Wingate
 Melinda Winter

**MAJOR SPONSORS,
 MIND AND LIFE EUROPE**
(gifts over CHF 20,000)

Anonymous
 Lily Bafandi
 Heinz Buhofer
 Liselotte Irniger
 Charles-Antoine Janssen
 Sibylle Pacher-Oltramare
 Ferdinand Pacher
 Dieter Paulmann
 Hanna Paulmann
 Renaud Samyn
 Monica Voegelé

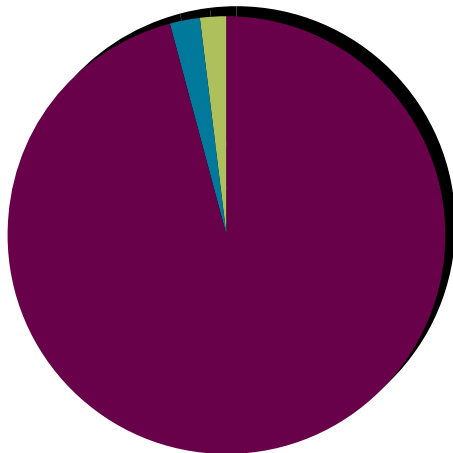
2013 Financial Position

Thanks to the commitment of all our supporters, Mind and Life continues to rest on sound financial footing.

During calendar year 2013, we received from all sources, including pledges and one-time contributions, \$4.4 million to be used during 2013 as well as in future years. Total expenses paid in 2013 were \$3.3 million, including costs associated with our Dharamsala conference in India.

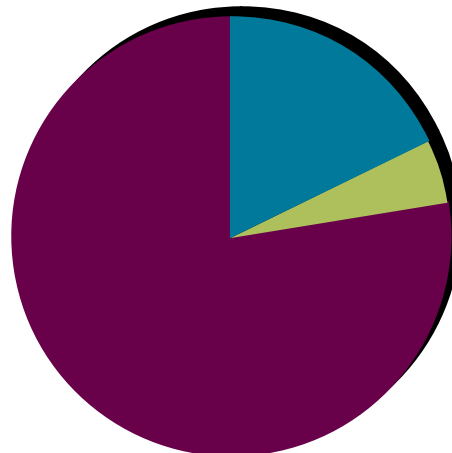
For additional information or to request a copy of our audited financials, please visit our website or contact Lila Mereschuk, controller, at lila@mindandlife.org.

2013 MIND AND LIFE REVENUE



CONTRIBUTIONS \$4,232,199
EARNED \$110,371
INVESTMENT \$80,000
TOTAL \$4,422,570

2013 MIND AND LIFE EXPENSES



ADMINISTRATION \$589,959
FUNDRAISING \$159,692
PROGRAM SERVICES \$2,595,127
TOTAL \$3,344,778

Moment

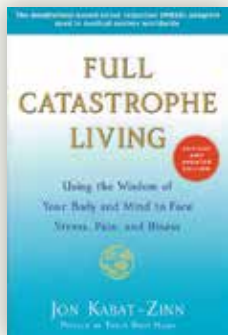
BY ANDREA COHEN

We Lost Our Everything

We lost our everything,
she said, which said everything
about loss. My accumulation
dictates my ruin; it's different
from your dismantling, which
can happen slowly or all at once.
What's crucial is a total
inventory, which may reveal
some one element not obliterated.
We lost our everything,
she said—we—she repeated,
meaning the we-ness remained,
which in the end must be the seed
of re-beginning, the seed that
divines the plow, the ounce
of dirt, the memory of digging.

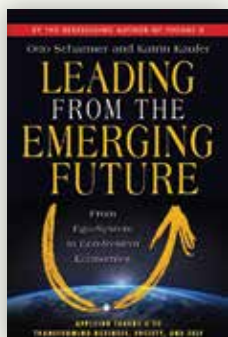
.....
Andrea Cohen's poems have appeared in *The Atlantic Monthly*, *Poetry*, *The Threepenny Review*, *The New Republic*, *The Hudson Review*, and elsewhere. Her fourth poetry collection, *Furs Not Mine*, will be published by Four Way Books. She directs the Writers House at Merrimack College and the Blacksmith House Poetry Series in Cambridge, Massachusetts. This poem originally appeared in the *Harvard Divinity Bulletin*, Vol. 41, Nos. 1 & 2 (Winter/Spring 2013). Copyright 2013, The President and Fellows of Harvard College. Reprinted with permission.

NEW BOOKS...



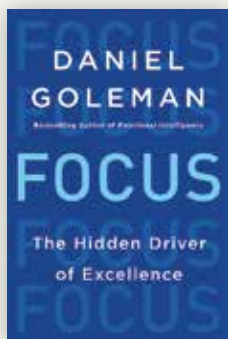
Full Catastrophe Living | BY JON KABAT-ZINN

Be sure to pick up the second version of Mind and Life Fellow **Jon Kabat-Zinn's** landmark *Full Catastrophe Living*, which has been called "the complete owner's manual for our lives." Based on the author's renowned mindfulness-based stress reduction program, this new edition shows how to use medically proven mind-body approaches to counteract stress, establish greater balance of body and mind, and stimulate well-being and healing.



Leading from the Emerging Future: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies | BY OTTO SCHARMER

Well-being is the subject of Otto Scharmer's *Leading from the Emerging Future: From Ego-System to Eco-System Economies*. In it, the author explores our "age of disruption" and proposes moving from what he terms an obsolete "ego-system," which focuses entirely on the well-being of oneself, to an "eco-system" awareness that emphasizes the well-being of the whole. The book offers proven practices to build that more resilient, inclusive, and aware economy.



Focus | BY DANIEL GOLEMAN

Best-selling author and MLI Fellow **Daniel Goleman's** new book, *Focus*, explores the various realms of human attention, including how attention manifests in personal connection, leadership, performance, childhood and education, and emotional intelligence. "At a time when there are increasing demands on our attention," says Goleman, "this simple mental skill has become more crucial than ever."

Compassion: Bridging Practice and Science | BY TANIA SINGER



This e-book on compassion from MLI Fellow **Tania Singer**, director of the department for social neuroscience at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Science, tracks different forms of compassion practice; incorporates theoretical concepts from psychological, Buddhist, and evolutionary points of view; and covers many of the newest empirical findings and secular training programs now emerging.

Plaidoyer pour l'altruisme: La force de la bienveillance | BY MATTHIEU RICARD



Is the power of kindness our best "weapon" in a society immersed in violence? MLI Fellow **Matthieu Ricard** investigates human altruism, examining research at the intersection of philosophy, psychology, neuroscience, economics, and ecology.

GREAT MINDS



Mind & Life Institute
4 Bay Road, Suite 101
Hadley, MA 01035

OCTOBER 30 - NOVEMBER 2, 2014 // MARRIOTT COPLEY // BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

www.iscs2014.org

MIND AND LIFE'S 2014 INTERNATIONAL SYMPOSIUM FOR CONTEMPLATIVE STUDIES



JOIN US FOR FOUR EXCITING DAYS as we gather the most innovative thought leaders and present their groundbreaking research in neuroscience, psychology, clinical science, the humanities, philosophy, and education—all with the goal of advancing our understanding of the mind, reducing human suffering, and enhancing our well-being.

ISCS 2014 keynote speakers include: the Dalai Lama, Richard Davidson, Arianna Huffington, Amishi Jha, Tania Singer, Diana Chapman Walsh, and David Germano.