



# DEEP SPRING CENTER NEWSLETTER

Vol. 18, No. 3 Fall 2010

## Using Mindfulness to Ease Suffering

Excerpt from 10/05/09  
Santa Barbara, California



### Letter from Barbara

Dear friends,

*Barbara in San Francisco  
Linda Lawson*

I'm sitting on my cabin deck on a morning that feels more like the September day when you will read this than early June. We've had two days of rain, the wind is blowing, trees dancing, and sheets of water pour down my screens and skylights. But it hasn't all been rain; like life, the storms and sunshine alternate and in between we may be graced with rainbows. This past week has been a rainbow week, 10 days of quiet between activity, with time for long meditations, drifting on my boat at dawn, reviewing transcripts with Aaron (always a great joy), daily swims across the lake, and naps on the raft in the sunshine.

It's been a full year for me, busier than most, and with seemingly constant travel. I love what I do so I was surprised when I finally got out here and with time to be quiet, to see how much I had been holding subtle tension in the body, and how that contributed to the tendonitis that has been so painful all these months. The Casa entities healed my shoulders of arthritic pain in January but the tendonitis in both arms continued. My doctor in Michigan has been stymied. Out here I've been blessed with insights into that holding of tension and how to release it, and it does release. The pain is greatly reduced and I am sleeping soundly for the first time in almost a year.

I think we all carry around layers of subtle armoring and tension, just by habit. For me this week, simple mindfulness led to the start of release of the tension. Every few minutes I return to breath/ body awareness if I have drifted away. If there is any tension or arm pain, I stop and breathe, and consciously release. I've been using a visualization I picked up in the lake, floating on my back beneath a warm sun, water gently rippling past, feeling enormous ease and well-being, and experiencing the elements very balanced or inviting them into balance. So in that moment of tension I pause and feel the lake and sunshine, and see the clouds and forest as I float. Here is the balance of earth, air, fire and water; and what about space? That seems almost the most essential, as it seems the body pain related directly to absence of space in the body. Contraction does equate with pain, if not immediately, then eventually.

The Venture Fourth, two-year program has been wonderful for us all; I am learning so much as Aaron and I teach it, including more about what brings balance. Please

Aaron: My blessings and love to you all. I am Aaron. Thank you for giving me this opportunity to speak with you today. I understand you are all therapists and that means to me that you are deeply involved with the alleviation of suffering in others and in yourselves and in the world, so we have that in common. I speak to you as brothers and sisters of light. I deeply respect the work you do. There is so much suffering in the world and it needs loving people to attend to it.

The challenge for many of you is that as you attend to others' suffering it deeply awakens your own suffering and you don't know how to release that.

What is suffering? We must differentiate between pain and suffering. Pain happens. You stub your toe and there's pain. It's part of the human experience. Suffering arises as resistance to pain. As Barbara explained in her story, she was suffering as well as experiencing deafness because there was so much fear and resistance to the deafness.

But she actually found that being deaf was not so terrible all the time. Living in a home as a mother of three energetic sons, it gave her a place of solitude. She could not go off to meditate in a cave somewhere and find silence; she could close her eyes.

So often in your life you are afraid of the unknown. So much of your energy is spent trying to control, to make what is pleasant remain with you and to push away what is unpleasant. But you can't do that. Some-

*(continued on page 8)*

times what's unpleasant just is unpleasant. Sometimes what's pleasant is fleeting and then it's gone.

I understand that you've met some Buddhist psychology but let's start at the beginning. First, the nature of the mind is to give rise to thoughts. The nature of the body is to feel sensation. These thoughts and sensations may have a quality of being pleasant or unpleasant or neutral. What happens at a very basic level is that the sense organ, for example the eye, touches an object, and seeing consciousness arises. So there's contact of sense organ with an object, then consciousness.

As soon as there's consciousness there will be feelings and perception. What arises will feel pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral. Habitual pattern is that when feeling is unpleasant, aversion arises, wanting to push it away. When feeling is pleasant, grasping arises, wanting to hold on to it. Often when feeling is neutral, there is boredom and turning away, attention seeking a more interesting object. There's nothing bad about this; this is simply how the human is wired.

However, it leads to suffering. Furthermore, that shift from pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral to grasping or aversion is merely conditioned and is not necessary to the human experience. Contact is necessary. If the sense organ is working and it touches an object, there will be contact and there will be consciousness. With consciousness there will be both perception, seeing what it is, and feeling, pleasant, unpleasant or neutral. But the chain can end here.

This is the place where there's a shift, where freedom is possible. You can watch yourself making that shift from unpleasant feeling to tension or aversion, to pushing it away, or the shift from pleasant to grasping. For example, a delicious meal. "What a feast. Oh, so good." You haven't even finished chewing this morsel yet and you're looking around saying, "Is there another one? I want another." Already you're suffering and this delicious treat is still in your mouth.

This is called the active moment, the moment of shift from pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral feeling into grasping and aversion. It's the active moment because it's the moment where karma is created and where it may be released. It's the moment where liberation is possible. But in order to do that there has to be mindfulness of that shift and how it feels.

You don't need to become Buddhists to practice this, of course, and you don't need to become vipassana practitioners. Just be present. There's no right form of meditation any more than there's a right house to live in. What do you want for your home? Do you want a big home or a small home? Do you want a home

with a view or a home in a sheltered space? Do you want a home that is bright and wide open or a home that feels secure and sheltered?

With meditation we choose the practice that suits the needs at the moment, but along with the present meditation that you do I would encourage you to deepen in mindfulness, not calling it vipassana, just presence. This will support any meditation practice. Vipassana: passana means seeing. Vipassana means deeper seeing. It's just a practice of being present in this moment and seeing what's happening in this moment. If we don't see what's happening in this moment, how can we know why we get swept away?

Let me use an illustration here. Let's say we all went rafting together. We put our inner tubes in the water, each of you with your own tube and a paddle, and we're going to float down this river, but I have one word of caution: part way down the river you will come to a fork. If you go right, the river winds gently around

and on down the hill. But if you go left, and the current seems to sweep you left, you go over a lot of rocks and will probably get banged up. You'll come out in the same place but it will be a rough ride. So as we go down the river, don't be afraid, just watch and be aware, and when you see the fork approaching, pull right.

On we go down the river, and the scenery is beautiful. An hour passes. You're lulled into a dreamlike state, appreciating the beauty, enjoying the flow of the water, the warmth of the sun, and suddenly this fork is in front of you. As

I said, the current pulls you off to the left because you were not present to propel your tube the other way. Over the rocks you go. Ouch! Bang! Scrapes, bumps.

Everybody misses the fork. You come out together at the bottom, bruised and bleeding. The guide says, "Shall we try it again? This time take the right fork." We try it again and you have an idea about when this fork will come, now. You start to pay attention as you see the scenery approaching the fork but a big eagle flies overhead, "Ah, look at that!" and you're pulled into the left fork just as you turn to watch the eagle. Off you go down the rocky fork again.

How many times do you need to go over those rocks before you're ready to pay attention and say, "I choose the smoother ride."

Mindfulness is like this. It's a way of paying attention so we start to see where we end up on the rocks and start to know, "All I have to do is pay attention and I can avoid the rocks. And I do this not out of fear but out of love and out of kindness, because it's not kindness to keep bruising myself on the rocks."



We watch this whole arising of experience. The physical senses: eyes, ears, nose, tongue, body, touch. Sense organs connecting with objects; contact and consciousness. The mind touching mental objects: memories, planning, judging, whatever kinds of thoughts have come. Whatever arises with that contact and consciousness will either be pleasant, unpleasant, or neutral and there will be some perception of what it is.

Sometimes the perception is as though you were wearing filtered lenses, maybe a very dark lens, so what you see takes on a different color; it's not how it really is. It's conditioned by your experience. As a simple example, if somebody who was grievously bitten by a dog as a child sees a dog, he doesn't just see a dog—he sees the whole attack with its fear and pain.

I'm speaking to you here for your personal work but this is also something that you can communicate in simple terms to your clients. There's a big difference when you get sucked into the story. It is like being sucked into that rocky fork of the river, "A dog! It will attack me!" Terror, terror.

Or, seeing the chain of objects arise, "dog, unpleasant, memory, fear." In this moment, fear is just fear, memory is just memory. If we learn to slow down the process in that way we can become more attuned to how we get drawn into that rocky fork and steer ourselves clear of it, not out of fear but out of kindness.

There's a challenge in work with some of your clients, in that they may not be ready to choose kindness. That's a different point and we'll come to that later. But assuming that many are ready to choose kindness and simply don't know how, when you start to talk to them about slowing down, experiencing, perceiving the flow of experience, they can see how they're getting caught in what we call old mind conditioning, the old stories. You know these stories intimately from your own lives and your work.

This process does bring freedom. Barbara tells a powerful story of her early childhood. She experienced abandonment by a mother figure. It wasn't planned abandonment but through illness, so it was very painful for her. She grew up with this feeling of unworthiness, feeling unloved, abandoned, and that she personally had done some-

### Looking Within

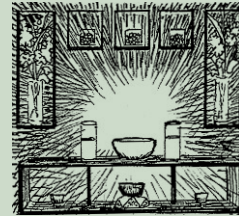
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# NEWSLETTER

published three times each year by the

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thing wrong that had caused the mother figure to leave. She worked with a therapist for a number of years and got to the point where she understood this was just a story, and she didn't have to live her life around it. So she had a lot of freedom. But still the issue would come up.

She was at a month-long meditation retreat, held in silence. There is instruction given, not just no talking but no eye contact; silence, inner silence. She began to notice when she walked along a pathway and somebody was coming toward her, and she reached up her eyes to make eye contact, they followed instructions and looked away. For Barbara it brought up these old feelings of shame, fear of abandonment, and unworthiness.

So I said, "Is there anybody here who is unworthy or is it just the old conditioning coming forth?" She said, "Well, if I'm not unworthy I guess I'm worthy." I said, "No, that's just the flip side of the coin. Nobody's worthy; nobody's unworthy. All that's happening is when the person looks away there is seeing, eyes seeing the person looking away. Contact, consciousness, perception, seeing the person looking away, unpleasant feeling, then pulled into the aversion and the shame." Pulled into that rocky fork.

In that moment, the active moment, we stop the flow by being present with the feeling that's come up. Tension, feel the tension in the body. Open to the tension, hold the tension with love. The feelings of shame and abandonment are a subterfuge, they're a way of escaping the deeper pain, and when you are with that deeper pain, and allow yourself to remember the feelings of loneliness as a five year old, the feelings of being so cut off as a young adult with the hearing loss, you really touch that pain, open the heart to that pain and can be less afraid of it.

Through the month she continued to try to make eye contact with people and each time, they looked away. By the end of the month when they looked away, it no longer brought up these intense feelings; it was just somebody looking away. Now, she had a month of silence to do this work; that's pretty intense. But she was able to open her heart to her pain so deeply that the chain that bound in unworthiness resolved.

There was a very different result because when somebody looked away or said something unpleasant to her, she just heard it as unpleasant words, or saw a person look away. Sometimes the angry words might have grounding in reality, if somebody said, "You're being noisy," she'd have to stop and see, "Am I being noisy? I don't hear myself walking or closing doors. Am I being noisy? No, not at this time, it's just this person." She didn't take it personally anymore. Here is freedom; no more suffering. We still have to attend to the world and the pain we experience in the

world. We do it with an open heart.

So objects arise into your experience. There is perception about what has arisen and feeling, and then you may watch the tension of either grasping or pushing away. To illustrate, please raise your hands as if you were pushing something away. Feel yourself pushing. Can you feel the tension in your body when you push? Your body really can't stay relaxed and push. Generally there's a tightening in the belly, and tension.

We know that moment of unpleasant feeling and we watch the shift into strong aversion. Then we know, this is aversion. What is the experience of aversion without any stories? Can there just be

aversion? Can there just be unpleasant feeling, but if unpleasant shifts into aversion, can there just be aversion? All the stories of a self that has to be the good one, has to fix, to make everything right, the incessant stories begin to fade away.

I'd like you to try an exercise with me here. I want you to hold an arm out, straight out so it feels heavy, one arm. In the first moments there won't really be discomfort but as I speak, slowly the arm is going to feel heavy.

Begin to feel sensation, as touch. The body feeling the heaviness of the arm; maybe there is the beginning of an ache. Watch very carefully for the shift, where the focus of your attention moves from the discomfort in the

arm or the sensations in the arm to the unpleasant feeling and then wanting to get away from it, wanting to put the arm down, wanting to stop the experience. It will come at different times for different ones of you so I'm going to just keep talking.

Try to experience that shift and that first moment when you want to put the arm down. You're no longer present with the sensation in the arm but with the aversion, as the thought, "I don't want this," and the body tightened in aversion. Then, depending on who you are and your habitual energy, for many of you there will be a response to that "I don't want this" of tightening in the body, with another thought, "I'll bear it, I'll put up with it." Hardening the heart, pushing away the experience. Or for some of you, you may be feeling helplessness. For some of you, probably for many of you, a thought, "I shouldn't mind this." Different emotions will come depending on your conditioning.

Whatever is coming, can you simply open your heart to this human who's experiencing some physical discomfort? Breathing in, I am aware of the discomfort; breathing out, I smile to the discomfort. Breathing in, I am aware of the aversion to the discomfort; breathing out, I smile to the aversion.

I hold this human being—literally take your other hand and hold it over your heart. I hold this human being in love and kindness. Allow this human to be present with its experiences without fear,

but if fear comes, to be present with the fear.

Many of you can feel a softening. There's still physical discomfort, perhaps more intense because it's been a longer period of time. But there is a softening of the tension around the discomfort. How is one relating to discomfort? Discomfort will come; this is the human experience. How is one going to relate to it? Can there be kindness, an open heart, patience, wisdom that knows that whatever has the nature to arise has the nature to cease? It arises out of conditions; just see it out. It will go.

Breathe deeply, keeping the arm out but relaxing the body. Soft belly. Breathing deeply into the belly. From the hand that's over the heart, sending love into the heart, and out into this arm that's painful. Just body sensation, perhaps throbbing or aching, heat. Breathing in and smiling to this discomfort, opening the heart to it ...

You may put your arms down. I'd appreciate if you would share your experiences. I'd like to hear from you. (sharing omitted)

So we bring in this skill, this learnable skill, into our lives. Watching that shift from unpleasant feeling into aversion but sometimes pleasant feeling into grasping, and watch for where one gets pulled off into the rocky channel. No matter how far one has gone one can say, "Ah, I'm getting sucked into that rocky channel." Sometimes you're so far in it's hard to extricate yourself but usually you can back out.

I'm speaking of your own personal lives and the places that each of you become caught. Everybody has their own stories, their own personal stories. It may be the need to be the good one. Those of you who are caregivers—many of you are caregivers for beautiful reasons, because you deeply care about people and you want to alleviate suffering—but also because there's something in you that needs to be good, needs to help people.

When you can stay centered in this loving heart that is deeply compassionate and cares about human suffering and wants to alleviate suffering, you're in a centered space. But as soon as you get pulled out of that centered space, there is a shift into being the conditioned one who had to be a good little girl or boy, had to take care of your younger brothers and sisters, had to take care of your sick mother or whoever it might have been, and who started to find self-identification in that, the feeling of being loved through these actions of caretaking. It's not that the caretaking was wrong; it's that you're pulled into those stories. Then when the client is suffering, you get pulled in and then you can't be as accessible to the client.

When it's about yourself and you get pulled in, it's harder to see it because it goes so deep. And each of you have your own habits. Barbara mentioned Stephen Levine before; Stephen calls it the Top Ten Hit Parade, your own top ten of the specific stories that catch you most. What are these? Start to become aware of when they arise in the daily life, in small things.

Perhaps it's as simple as this; there is a bee flying around your child's room and you don't want your child to get stung. You don't want to harm the bee. You don't want to close the door and say goodnight and leave the bee in the child's room. What are you going to do? From a place of clarity and love you might find a way to catch the bee. From a place of fear, you're going to either say, "I need to kill this bee," and get out the swatter or, "I cannot kill the bee." What does love say? What does the open heart say? Watch the self pulled into the place of fear. Can you come back to that place of center? Let's call it the One Who Knows. Within each of you there is this One Who Knows. From fear's perspective, "the one who knows" is not accessible.

You all know that experience resting in that place where there's an intuitive wisdom from the heart, and you know the place where it's coming from the ego and from fear. How does it feel when it's coming from fear? How does it feel when it's coming from wisdom? What's the difference that lets you know which it is? What lets you know?

Replies from the group are grasping, tension, contraction, pressure, heat...

I think the primary experience is one of contraction felt in different ways—tension, fire. Running, moving fast. Tension. Another experience, though, the opposite experience, is one of pulling back, disassociation and flatness. Everything gets flat. It imitates non-contraction but this is really a state of contraction itself. So we have contraction in either direction, one that's moving fast and one that's flat.

I have the image here of a logjam. First the logs are moving slowly down the river, just flowing. Then they get jammed up and they're banging into each other. And the river is flowing fast, tumbling over itself. Tension.

But then they get so congested that there's no motion at all and it looks like stillness but it's not stillness. You can feel the tension in it. It's still tension. It's very different than a smooth flow of energy.

*Discomfort will come; this is the human experience. How is one going to relate to it? Can there be kindness, an open heart, patience, wisdom that knows that whatever has the nature to arise has the nature to cease? It arises out of conditions; just see it out. It will go.*

So you can feel this energetically. When you feel it, my guess is that for many of you the first thought is, "I shouldn't feel this," trying to control it. The tension is a result of conditions. If the conditions are present, the tension will arise.

If you were walking across the floor here and you put your foot on a tack, ouch! You pull the tack out, there's a drop of blood. How many of you would say, "I shouldn't be bleeding, I shouldn't feel pain"? But if you have an emotional tack, stub your toe on an emotional object, you say, "I shouldn't feel this."

This is what creates the logjam. When there can be presence that sees that thought arise, as soon as you see "I shouldn't," please note, "Judging, judging. Here is judgment. In this moment can I just be with the judging mind?" You might ask, "If I were not feeling judging now, what might I be experiencing?" It's a powerful question. "What does this judgment protect me from?"

It's the same thing with anger, stepping on the tack of anger. Somebody says or does something and anger comes up and then the thought, "I shouldn't be feeling anger." Judging, judging. As soon as you hear "I shouldn't" just note it as judgment. If I were not feeling anger right now, what might I be experiencing? What does this anger protect me from? You all know many answers to that. This is part of your work. You understand that behind anger are fear, shame, and other different emotions. The anger becomes a smokescreen. If we feel the anger we don't have to feel the fear.

How deep are you willing to let yourself go to be fully present with your experience without judgment? But if judgment comes, just to note it as judgment and not to be afraid of the judging thought? It's part of this whole flow of conditions. There's no reason to self-identify with it. The judgment is not who you are, it simply is risen from conditions.

When you attend to the conditions, the result will pass away. It all arises from conditions. So you don't have to fix it. If there's judgment, there's just judgment. It doesn't need to be fixed, it needs to be taken care of so it doesn't pour over and harm others. But it's a result.

The more you try to fix it, the more tension, then the more negativity, and the deeper you get yourself into that rocky channel. But when you stop and say, "I'm headed for the rocks!" and just pause and breathe, "Here I am present with judgment, with anger, with sadness, with confusion," what happens? What is the direct experience of anger when there are no stories about who's to blame or how to fix it, but just anger? What is the direct experience of confusion, of shame, of loneliness? Can one just bear witness?

When you work with the vipassana practice it leads you step by step in these paths, but one does not have to do it in a formal vipassana practice. Of course the daily practitioner finds it easier because with daily practice, you're more likely to catch these things

before you get swept so far into that rocky channel. But just the determination to be more present is a very good starting place, holding in your heart the highest intention to live your life from a place of kindness and in service to others, in kindness to all beings including yourself. You ask yourself, as a kind of self-affirmation, to be more aware when you're pulled out of that intention. That's all you need to start with. And then you become increasingly mindful of the places where you are most apt to get pulled out.

We start with the simple commitment to be more present and see what is actually happening in each moment, with as much love and spaciousness as is possible. It is this basic presence and kindness that transforms our experiences and opens our hearts.

Vipassana:  
passana means seeing.  
Vipassana means deeper  
seeing.

## DEEP SPRING CENTER'S mission and goals are to:

- offer non-denominational spiritual teachings on non-duality
- teach and support the deepening of awareness on non-duality and related topics through the practice of meditation
- sponsor discussion groups, classes, retreats and workshops designed to provide support for spiritual growth and to further the teachings
- publish and distribute materials concerning these teachings
- foster a community of individuals interested in and practicing these teachings
- expand and redefine our specific teachings always with spiritual focus, into directions the teachings themselves lead.



## President's Letter

Fall 2010

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Deep Spring Sangha,

Summer is here, and there's no better way to start the summer than with the retreat at Emrich. Twenty-six people attended the weekend and 17 remained for the week. By all accounts, it was a wonderful experience and provided great support for everyone's practice.

Unfortunately, the Emrich retreat, like most of the retreats this past year, lost money. Looking at this unhealthy trend and addressing the sustainability of the Deep Spring retreat program is the board's top priority. Expect to hear more about this in the weeks and months to come.

Looking a little further back, our annual sangha meeting was held on April 18. More than 30 people attended, and the discussion was lively. For part of the meeting, the sangha broke into groups and discussed ways to improve in areas such as Classes, Communication, and Retreats. Following the discussion, the groups shared their feedback with the sangha. This feedback, and the minutes from the sangha meeting, are posted on the web site in the Sangha and Social section. A video is also posted of Barbara's message to the sangha.

Several of the suggestions have already been implemented. First and foremost, the building fund has been allocated the appropriate interest and will now be kept in separate CDs accumulating their own interest. Other suggestions have been implemented as well including level indicators on the classes posted on the web. Dinner nights and a book club are being planned as well.

There were many more suggestions that we'd like to address—but we need your help: we need volunteers. If you are able to help, please visit the Volunteer Opportunities page of the Deep Spring web site and find something you'd like to help out with. Opportunities range from joining a committee to taking away recyclables.

Just in case you haven't yet heard: you can sign up, and pay, for both retreats and classes online! Just visit the Deep Spring web site, find the class or retreat that interests you, and click the Register Now button. After filling out the registration form, you'll have the option to pay online using Google Checkout. Once again, many thanks to Terry Gliedt and Tana Dean (our Office Manager) for making this happen.

In other news, Tana, our office manager, has now been with Deep Spring for over a year. It hardly seems possible, but she started on June 10, 2009. I've said it before but it bears repeating: Tana has done a tremendous job here. She's not only mastered all of our processes, but she's greatly improved our online presence. And she's working to do even more.

Of course, now that summer is in full swing, the annual Deep Spring Sangha picnic is right around the corner. The picnic will be held at Friends Lake on August 15. Hope you can come and join the fun.

Finally, just a quick note to let you know that this will be my last President's letter. I'll be retiring from the board in September. I've met many wonderful people and enjoyed the experience very much. Thanks and metta to one and all.

Curt

## THE WORK

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(continued from page 1)

see the whole of the Venture Fourth transcripts on the Deep Spring site/ archives/ venture fourth/ intensives. I think you'll enjoy reading along with us, and hope you will also be inspired to practice what you read.

My other update is about the new book, or at this point, books! Cosmic Healing: a Spiritual Journey with Aaron and John of God (the book that was originally named Manna in the Wilderness) will be released by North Atlantic Books, Berkeley California, March 15. They are doing a superb job with publication and publicity. I am delighted to see it make its way out into the world. We will have a book release party in Ann Arbor, readings in numerous other cities, and it will be available in your local bookstores as well. You can read more about it and see where we'll make presentations on my new web site: [www.cosmichealing.com](http://www.cosmichealing.com)

The second book is *The Aaron/Q'uo Dialogues: An Extraordinary Conversation between two Spiritual Guides*, channeled by me and my dear friend, Carla Rueckert. This book is the end product of nine weekends over as many years, 33 sessions, some held in Kentucky and some in Ann Arbor. It is a wonderful dialogue between Aaron and Q'uo on all the spiritual questions we often ask such as: who are we; why are we here; how do we live with love; how do we work with negativity; how do we support transformation of consciousness? What I love about this book is that Aaron is what we call an "inner plane contact," or ascended master who has lived through the earth experiences, while Q'uo is an "outer plane contact," an "ET" who has never been human. Yet they clearly love and respect each other as two highly positively polarized beings, and speak with one voice.

Each weekend has a special focus. Here is a small part of the table of contents, from weekend one:

**Weekend one, session one:**

*Our perceived imperfections, when they give rise to fear, inhibit our knowing of the Creator and ourselves. By being instead of doing, those fears are seen as illusory. We then find a deeper level of self-acceptance and become more skillful in relating to others and ourselves.*

**Weekend one, session two:**

*In third-density experience, we have two minds, that of wisdom and "the womb," and four bodies, those of the physical, the emotional, the mental and the spiritual. These assist us in dropping barriers to fears that limit our expression of the Divine. Companions on the path are always near. The distortions of anger, fear and separation are healed with gentleness, compassion and patience.*

**Weekend one, session three:**

*The dynamics of fear involve the mental, emotional and spiritual bodies. Freedom from fear can be accomplished through a practice of awareness, faith, devotion and loving-kindness. Help on the path is available from both the inner and outer planes.*

**Weekend one, session four:**

*There is a Zen of working with fear. It affirms oneness, leads to authentic selfhood and redemption and leads to a transcending of perceived limits. By understanding that responsibility is a joyful gift, unskillful choices can*

*be met with love. Advice is offered for those who fear that they might infringe on the free will of others.*

**Weekend one, session five:**

*We can work with anger by being loving and non-judgmental and by the healing practice of an inwardly meditative gazing. All experiences are learning opportunities. When we learn to trust the wisdom of meeting them with love and openness, our fears simply drop away.*

We completed the channeling, and loving friends did extensive work to combine the many manuscripts and proofread them. In late fall 2009, a publisher expressed interest but said it was too long and he would want to cut it severely. In January 2010 I had just signed the book contract for Cosmic Healing. In the contract was the statement that I give North Atlantic Books first chance at any other book, so I sent in the *Aaron/Q'uo Dialogues*. Meanwhile, in January, 2010, Carla was teaching in Hawaii and met a woman there with whom she had a long conversation. When this woman discovered that Carla had a manuscript to offer, she suggested that she would be able to show it to her nephew who had founded a publishing house; it happened to be North Atlantic Books! Carla wrote to me with the suggestion, and I replied that, just that day, North Atlantic Books had accepted our manuscript. I don't believe in coincidence. Clearly, Aaron's and Q'uo's conversation had come to the right people at the right time. We don't yet have a release date for *The Aaron/Q'uo Dialogues*, but it will be released in fall, 2011.

This fall will see me on east and west coasts and in between. I hope to see many of you as I travel. In addition, Frank Levey, Aaron and I will teach a one-year dharma/meditation class at Deep Spring Center. It's the first such class I have led in many years; it will be good to touch base with many of you again as we walk a dharma/vipassana path together. Details are in the calendar. And winter takes me back to Brazil for this year's trip to John of God and as a guide for those who choose to come along with me.

Wishing you a lovely autumn filled with russet and gold.  
With love, Barbara

## Presence, Kindness & Freedom

Aaron's Teachings on  
Living from an Open Heart



For more information:

- ~ see <http://deepspring.org/PKF.htm>
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## Editorial Opinion

Rori Stienstra



There has been discussion recently about the viability of a paper newsletter for DSC. Some are advocating for switching to a primarily electronic publication. There would then be very limited availability of printed and mailed copies. The arguments for this change are logical: it will be ecologically friendly, be a rational economical option, and provide fast and efficient distribution, increasing accessibility to on-line users. All of this makes sense. I appreciate the benefits and challenges of our times.

I will tell you honestly, however, that I don't read electronic material. OK, I work at a computer much of my day. And I may read a short article here or there—blurbs ... bytes—in my free time. But I won't sit and read anything as long as a newsletter on-line. I have a bias for the real deal—a paper copy in my hand. And I don't think I'm the only one.

I would not read the newsletter if I received it only electronically. I might open it, skim it, maybe even save it to read later ... which would be unlikely. Like books and magazines, I prefer to hold reading material in my hands, to interact with it in my three-dimensional world. I will pick it up and put it down and like to have it handy to discover when the time is right.

I want the benefit of this material in print for myself and for others. Even now, there are those who may not have computers or an interest in reading electronic material. Some readers may be able to read only paper materials but cannot afford to donate to the newsletter. Some would never "find" this if it were only on-line. In addition to being a vehicle to share the wisdom and vision of DSC, the newsletter provides visibility for the center in the wider community. I choose to support the effort to keep the paper copies available.

If you are reading this, the newsletter is a part of your connection to DSC. Please let us know how you read the newsletter and give your opinion about having it printed by responding to the survey below.

### Readership Survey

The survey can be found on-line at [www.doodle.com/778neiscp8n6g8ds](http://www.doodle.com/778neiscp8n6g8ds). You can also e-mail your responses to [rori.dsc.nl@gmail.com](mailto:rori.dsc.nl@gmail.com) or call and leave a voicemail reply at 734-883-7738. If you prefer to mail a postcard, address it to "Newsletter" and send to the DSC office address. You can also jot your responses on paper and put it in the newsletter mailbox in the DSC office. Regardless which way you choose, please be sure to reply only once.

- Prefer electronic newsletter*
- Prefer hard copy but electronic OK*
- Prefer hard copy*
- Willing to pay \$12 annually for hard copy*

***It is especially important for those who want to keep receiving a hard copy to let us know.***

Please reply by September 30, 2010. Your reply and comments are appreciated.

## DONATIONS TO BARBARA

Barbara Brodsky is not paid a salary nor does she receive money from your donations to Deep Spring Center. Your support permits her to do full-time teaching, channeling and work on Aaron's books. You may offer your donations directly to Barbara.

Donations for Barbara may also be offered into the Roth Retirement Account started for her by sangha members. Make checks payable to: Oppenheimer custodian for Barbara Brodsky Roth IRA. Contributions can be sent to: Oppenheimer & Co. Inc. / Attn: Gary Austin, 301 E. Liberty Street, Ann Arbor, MI 48104  
800-423-7491 or 734-747-8040



## Retreat Committee News

Karen Mori and friends

The retreat committee has organized four retreats this year and looks forward to a fifth retreat in October. We are concerned about the financial viability of these retreats, however. One more retreatant at both the Senior Personal Retreat and the No-Frills retreat would have brought us close to breaking even for those retreats. This was not a problem at the retreat held at the Steiner house, where we reached capacity and closed registration early. The summer retreat held at Emrich Center did lose a substantial amount of money and we are looking for ways to increase attendance next year.

The Senior Personal Retreat was held in March at the Weber Center in Adrian, with 6 retreatants and our teacher Barbara Brodsky. Weber offered numerous places to walk and sit in silence and provided a very supportive atmosphere for going deep into one's own practice, along with daily interviews with Barbara. Sister Peg O'Flynn, who runs the center, told a DSC sangha member that there was something very special about the DSC group and that our presence was a gift to them. Hugh Danville was the manager.

Retreatants at all levels of meditation experience were enthusiastic about the meditation basics retreat held at the Steiner House led by David Lawson, Frank Levey, and Lou Weir in late March. This retreat is especially recommended for the beginning meditator or first time retreatant. Those who chose to commute could mindfully take their practice home each night and work with it there. There were 18 retreatants, 9 of whom were commuters. Jan Eveswell and Mallory Walczesky did the managing, which included heating up the foods that had been prepared ahead of time by Chef Kate.

At the end of April, Mary Grannan and Hugh Danville organized and ran the No-Frills retreat for 9 experienced meditators at the Howell Nature Center. This was a largely unstructured retreat with no teacher and it allowed meditators to practice in the way that was most meaningful to them. The natural setting especially lent itself to a wonderful atmosphere with the end of winter transitioning into spring—as evidenced by a beautiful cherry tree blossoming outside the meditation hall. In contrast to the surrounding grayness, it reminded us that spring was on its way. Dave Coupland led the chanting each morning.

The summer retreat, open to all levels of experience, returned to the Emrich Center in Brighton for the first time since it was abruptly closed two years ago. There were 26 retreatants during the weekend and 17 stayed for the entire week. Barbara Brodsky, John Orr, Erica Dutton, and Aaron were our teachers. Sandy Norton and Karen Mori managed the retreat. There were no beginners and Erica met with those who felt they would benefit from additional basic meditation instruction. Shari, who was

the cook two years ago, has now also taken over the caretaker responsibilities along with her family. The buildings have been repainted inside and out, bathrooms renovated, and some new carpeting and wood flooring laid in the dining hall and yoga room. Shari put in a large vegetable garden where we could practice work seva. She uses the produce and berries in her cooking and donates to food gatherers. There is a circular labyrinth mown into the field that was a lovely place to walk. The care that Shari and her family put into the grounds and buildings was palpable. Our tents sprouted up around the grounds and some of us stayed in them even as the thunderstorms rocked and rolled around us.

Barbara, John, and Aaron gave dharma talks and instructions that guided us through our practices. Aaron spoke about how he first came to know the Dharma. John talked about what he learned from Barbara and Aaron that he had not gotten from his teachers while he was a monk—the depth of the love and the unique combination of dharma and spiritual connection. The teachers explained the merging of access concentration and pure awareness and led us in guided meditations into access concentration. This was a new and transformative experience for some. John explained the cycle of dependent origination as a map of seeing how we get caught up in karma-producing reactive behavior and also showed us where we can interrupt that cycle.

Weeklong retreatants got the opportunity of several extra days to look deeply into themselves with the loving support of our teachers and the strong sense of sangha that developed. Another important part of the experience for many of us was the chanting. At the closing ceremony we chanted, 'All I ask of you ...' as ever-increasing love and energy surged through and around us. The retreat was a rich experience. One retreatant said: "Everything was perfect—even the weather." We hope others will join us next year.

The theme for the October Howell retreat with Barbara Brodsky and John Orr will be "Practicing Vipassana and Dependent Origination." This retreat is open to anyone who is ready to take classes beyond the beginner level. More information is available at the [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org) website under the retreat heading.

The online registration and payment process seems to be working well. Many thanks to Terry Gliedt for overseeing and tweaking it.

The retreat committee is planning to kick back and enjoy a summer picnic together as we discuss upcoming plans and decide about such issues as the future of the senior personal retreat and the no-frills retreat. Please share your ideas and concerns with us as we plan next year's events by contacting the DSC office.

Volunteer Opportunity  
Newsletter content manager needed  
Please e-mail [rori.dsc.nl@gmail.com](mailto:rori.dsc.nl@gmail.com) with interest



## Refreshing the Deep Spring Library

Peg Tappe

The Center has had a library for many years with books to lend relevant to the classes and practice of the center, and the development and interests of individual members. We are very grateful to Ingrid Weisz and Lalita Doke for offering to be co-chairs for the Deep Spring Library Committee. Ingrid and Lalita have fresh ideas and have already done significant work reorganizing and cataloging materials. Thanks also to Phil Kneessi for his offer to help out in the library.

Please come check out the new books, tapes, CDs and videos that have been generously donated by Sangha members. Deep Spring benefits greatly from all offerings of Seva.



John Orr visits David Lawson's class  
Mary Hickey



## John Orr Talks with David Lawson's Class

Peg Tappe

One of David Lawson's classes has been working with the Satipatthana Sutta, or the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The third foundation looks at mind. John Orr graciously agreed to share experiences he had with Ajahn Chah's teaching on this topic during the time John was a monk in Thailand. The talk was recorded on cassette tape and is available for loan from the Deep Spring Center library.



Karen, Lisa, David and John  
Mary Hickey



## Social Committee News

Tom Slank

The first "It's All Dharma" book discussion took place July 9 at Deep Spring Center with *Mind Wide Open* by Steven P. Johnson. Next discussion to take place Friday, August 20, 2010 at 7:30 PM at Deep Spring Center.

It's time to mark your calendars for the Annual Summer Lake Picnic/Potluck slated for Sunday, August 15, 2010, beginning at 2:00 PM, with a potluck picnic around 5PM and bonfire at 7PM. Swimming, games, boating, and relaxation—always a good time. Watch for email updates for details.

Also keep an eye out for announcements about the summer canoe/kayak trip, more game nights (lots of fun), and a planned dinner party group.

I'm pleased to announce that Hal Rothbart has volunteered to help with the social committee. More is better, of course, so if you'd like to volunteer to help with social committee events, or just have an idea for something fun to do, contact Tom Slank at 734-660-6415 or [thomasslank@yahoo.com](mailto:thomasslank@yahoo.com).



"Element Dancers" from Emerald Isle retreat

## Newsletter

The newsletter is published three times each year and is offered freely. Your donations allow us to continue to publish the newsletter. Our cost to print and mail the newsletter is \$10/year for U.S. addresses, \$12 for Canada and Mexico, and \$15 for other locations (e.g., Asia, Australia, Europe, India, South America).

## Publications from Deep Spring Center

If you would like a book and are not able to pay the listed price, please pay what you can. Any donation you care to offer above the listed price will help offset the cost of books made available at a lesser price or for free, such as those sent upon request to prisoners, the elderly, etc. Any extra money received for books is recycled into the reprinting of books.

## Donations to Deep Spring

The work of Deep Spring Center (DSC), a nonprofit 501(c)3 tax exempt organization, is supported by your donations. Your contributions are tax deductible to the fullest extent of the law.

Please send checks and money orders to the address below. For online donations and information about other methods of donation, click *Make a Donation* on our web site.



### Visit our web site at [deepspring.org](http://deepspring.org) for:

- **Newsletters** – current and past issues: see Library section.  
*If you would prefer to receive the newsletter online, please let us know.*
- **Transcripts** of many of Barbara's and Aaron's talks: see Library section.  
*If you would like to receive future transcripts via email, please let us know.*
- **DSC Publications** – descriptions and online versions: see Publications section. (Includes link for ordering Aaron's *Presence, Kindness and Freedom.*)

Deep Spring Center 3003 Washtenaw Ave., Suite 2 Ann Arbor, MI 48104 734-477-5848 [info@deepspring.org](mailto:info@deepspring.org)

## Donation and/or Order Form

Please make checks payable to *Deep Spring Center*.

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### Publications

Prices are in U.S. dollars and **include** U.S. shipping and handling

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___	<i>Christmas Stories</i> .....	\$ 10
___	<i>Human</i> .....	\$ 11
___	<i>No Chain at All</i> .....	\$ 12
___	<i>The Path of Natural Light, Part 1</i> .....	\$ 15
___	<i>The Path of Natural Light, Part 2</i> .....	\$ 15
	<b>TOTAL Publications</b>	\$ _____

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## Aaron's Closing Thought

This is why I tell you that you are not going to be enlightened  
someday after endless years or lifetimes of practice. You are  
already there: you just haven't realized it yet. Wake up! Know this  
pure awareness mind, this awakened mind.

~ Aaron

