



# UU Sangha

Volume: XIII, Number 4

Journal of the Unitarian Universalist Buddhist Fellowship

Winter 2013

***A Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit, by Congressman Tim Ryan (Hay House, 2012) .***

A review by Melissa Myozen Blacker

It's pretty clear that these are times of great uncertainty on the planet, with our country plagued by war abroad and violence at home, global warming and financial crises. Our political process seems to be inextricably enmeshed with all of these disastrous scenarios, and while many politicians speak of hope, it is getting harder to believe in their sincerity. So it is particularly refreshing to come across a book by a politician who seems to be genuinely hopeful, and who lives his life in a way that favors awakening to reality over opinion polls and speeches about abstract ideas.

Congressman Tim Ryan, a Democrat from Ohio, has written a book that is infused with hope. In *A Mindful Nation* he writes in a sincere and transparent style, taking us on a wide-ranging and thorough tour of mindfulness in America. For anyone who is curious about mindfulness and its applications in many different areas, it's a great introduction to current research and programs investigating and applying mindfulness meditation.

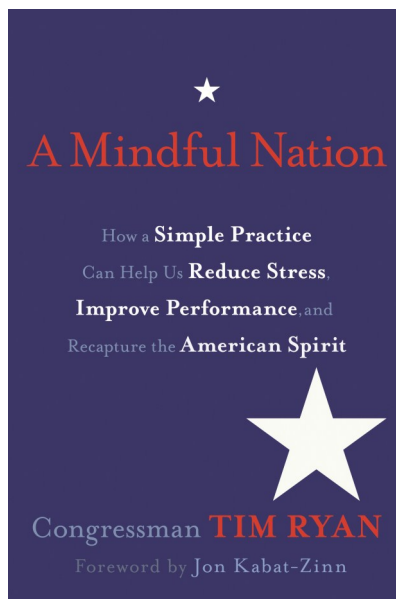
I was lucky enough to meet Congressman Ryan when he came to visit the Center for Mindfulness at the University of Massachusetts Medical School in Worcester, MA, where I worked for many years teaching

mindfulness classes and directing programs. And I have to say that Ryan is the real thing -- a man who walks his talk. He is as clear, direct and inspiring as his writing.

Ryan first discovered mindfulness in 2008, on a retreat for leaders called "The Power of Mindfulness" led by Jon Kabat-Zinn, the founder of the Center for Mindfulness. He was so inspired on a personal level by what he discovered through the practice of meditation that he began to think deeply and widely about how mindfulness could be incorporated into just about every institution in the United States: government, education, the military, the economy and health-care. In his book, there are chapters that focus on all of these topics, and each chapter ends with a section of practical advice called "What You Can Do."

Along the way, he shares anecdotes about his own learning, his family history, and his life as an athlete and then as a politician, partly to illustrate how easily a mindful view can fit into the life of any American, not just people who might be drawn to Eastern religions or mysticism. His version of mindfulness is one of common sense combined with "ordinary American values." As he says in his introduction, "I wrote *A Mindful Nation* to promote the values of slowing down, taking care of ourselves, being kind, and helping each other. It seems that if we embrace these values individ-

(Continued on page 3)



## Notes from the Editor

Greetings.

Some of us at the UU Church of Annapolis were asked to write about our spiritual practices. I thought I would share mine with you.

Having a spiritual practice meets deep needs that are hard to express. Just an aside, I think that's why so many adopt spiritual beliefs so at odds with reason and reality. And so, at the beginning, this church was a place where our daughter Hallie could grow up with some spiritual support, the good parts of the Methodist Sunday School of my childhood without the burdens of the Christianity I had rejected. UUCA was good for Hallie, and, somewhat to my surprise, turned out to be good for me too. The seven principles are good guides to a rational spiritual life (even though sometimes abused and used as articles of faith) and I found myself particularly drawn to "the interdependent web of all existence of which we are a part." In Zen, we refer to "the ultimate oneness of the universe." Together, these gave a depth of spirituality to my non-theism so that it was not a mere negation of rejected beliefs.

I came late to mindfulness practice and still later to Buddhist practice. Sitting still, being aware of the inbreath and the outbreath, is a deep spiritual practice; it lets us live fully in the present moment, not trying to fix the past and not trying to fix the future so that it works some certain way. I like the way we describe the Mindfulness Practice Group on our website:

**"The Mindfulness Practice Group is a community,** a sangha supporting each other in meditative practices. We are peer-led and lay-led: We are all each others' teachers. All are welcome to sit with us; our group practices are Buddhist, yet we respect all meditative practices and celebrate the diversity of practice among us."

We've had some rocky times and more drama than any Buddhist group ought to have but we worked hard through these conflicts to make the MPG a safe place, functioning in accord with UU principles and the UUCA safe congregation covenant. We are not interested in teaching "the Truth" and thus we support many spiritualities. Being in the present moment, not needing to fix anything, helps some of us live with anxiety or depression, anger or tragedy, helps some of us stay straight, away from drugs and drink. For myself, I feel a connection with the ultimate oneness of the universe and the interdependent web of all existence and that is the essence of my spirituality. But because we respect one another we do not rank our different spiritualities and thus we grow our community.

Gassho,  
Robert Ertman,  
Editor



## UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP

### President

Rev. Dr. Judith Wright (Tibetan)  
First Parish Church Unitarian Universalist  
Northborough, Massachusetts

### Secretary

Rev. Samuel A. Trumbore (Vipassana)  
First Unitarian Universalist Society of Albany  
Albany, New York  
email: strumbore AT uumin.org

### Treasurer/Publisher

Richard Swanson (Zen)  
164 Page Knoll  
Lincoln, VT 05443-9582  
email: rswansonvt AT gmail.com

### Editor

Robert Ertman (Mindfulness, Zen)  
c/o UUCA  
333 Dubois Rd.  
Annapolis, MD 21401  
(410) 533-4203 (cell)  
email: robertertman AT msn.com

### Directors

Rev. Wayne Arnason (Zen)  
West Shore Unitarian Universalist Church  
Rocky River, Ohio  
Rev. Catherine Senghas (Zen)  
Unitarian Universalist Urban Ministry  
Roxbury, Massachusetts  
Rev. Dr. Meredith Garmon (Zen)  
Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Gainesville  
Gainesville, Florida

**Web page:** <http://www.uubf.org>

### List server

To subscribe, go to the UUBF homepage.

### Membership/Subscriptions: \$25 per year;

Join or renew on our web page or make checks to **UU Buddhist Fellowship** and send to Richard with the form on the next-to- last page.

### Submissions

Please send all material for *UU Sangha* to the editor, by email or mail, as you prefer. Submission implies permission to publish in the print and digital editions of *UU Sangha* and to maintain a copy in the UUBF online archive. Copyright is retained by the authors, artists, and other copyright holders.

*(Continued from page 1)*

ually, it will benefit us collectively. And our country will be a little bit better off as a result." He believes that "we can reinvigorate our traditional, commonly held America values -- such as self-reliance, perseverance, pragmatism, and taking care of each other -- by adding a little more mindfulness to our lives."

Ryan takes us on a tour of mindfulness all over the United States, telling stories of his meetings with many of the leaders who are devoted to bringing mindfulness into the mainstream. He introduces the science of mindfulness by carefully explaining current theories about the physiology of stress, and how the new neuroscience is helping us to understand how the brain is affected negatively by stress and positively by meditation. He interviews a number of leading researchers who are studying the effects of meditation on the bodies and brains of ordinary people as well as "super meditators" who have devoted their lives to practicing meditation, and the impact of mindfulness on improved memory and attention.

We are introduced to teachers who are using mindfulness with children in programs designed to help improve learning, self-regulation and empathy. And Ryan even shows us how mindfulness can be applied in the military. One program that has sparked some controversy in the mindfulness community introduces soldiers to mindfulness meditation before deployment. There is some evidence that these soldiers, who practice mindfulness in battle, may have lower levels of post-traumatic stress when they return to civilian life.

And he shows us how mindfulness is making a difference in medicine, by teaching patients how to manage stress and make better choices about their health. In every example, Ryan suggests the positive effects all of these programs could have on the economy, health-care, education and the general well-being of the nation.

Ryan's cheerful style is utterly convincing. Whether you are someone who is suspicious about mindfulness, or if you are already convinced that the practice of mindfulness could be

beneficial and would like to know more about it, this is a perfect introduction to mindfulness meditation and its applications. And for anyone who feels a bit cynical about where America is heading, Ryan provides some reassurance that, if we can all begin to practice mindfulness, we may not be heading off the cliff any time soon.

*Melissa Myozen Blacker, Roshi, is a Zen teacher and the abbot of Boundless Way Zen, a school of Zen Buddhism with practice centers throughout New England. She is one of the resident teachers at Boundless Way Zen Temple in Worcester, MA. From 1993 to 2012, Melissa was on the staff of the Center for Mindfulness (CFM), founded by Jon Kabat-Zinn, at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Her positions at the CFM included Director of professional training programs and senior teacher and Associate Director of the Stress Reduction Clinic. In addition to Zen teaching and writing, Melissa also offers private meditation consulting and spiritual direction. She is co-editor of THE BOOK OF MU, published by Wisdom Publications in 2011, and her writing appears in BEST BUDDHIST WRITING, 2012, published by Shambhala Publications.*



**Tara Brach is a brilliant teacher for newcomers and experienced yogis alike. She radiates kindness and good humor, listens attentively and guides accordingly. Raised by Unitarian Universalist parents, she understands our spiritual context well. Tara has walked with me through many challenging moments on my journey; often her very presence has allowed me to breathe more deeply. Some days when I'm feeling particularly challenged, I listen to her dharma talks just to hear her voice. I'm incredibly excited that she'll be leading the retreat for the UU Sangha in April.**

**Rev. Meg Riley  
Church of the Larger Fellowship**

## **Mindfulness Meditation Group of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg**

By Amy Winans

For the last twelve years, the Mindfulness Meditation Group, a lay-led ministry of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, has gathered at UCH on Tuesday nights for meditation, readings, and, often, some discussion. Since its inception, the group has been organized as a mindfulness group, rather than identifying itself as a Buddhist group. This had meant that the group welcomes anyone who would like a shared experience of contemplative practice, regardless of one's affiliation (or lack of affiliation).

Each gathering is opened by the facilitator, who opens the group up for the sharing of brief announcements and introductions. This is often followed by a short reading recited by all members who wish to join the recitation. The typical format is for the group to sit silently for 25 minutes and then to listen to a reading chosen and presented by one of its members. The reading is often followed by some discussion, prior to a brief break. Discussion often begins with the reading but sometimes addresses personal practices, especially as members reflect on ways that the reading might inform their practice or connect to daily experiences or challenges. The evening concludes with a second 25-minute silent meditation period. The third Tuesday of each month is a silent meditation evening: no readings or discussion occur. There is simply a brief break between the two meditation periods. On months with five Tuesdays, the format for the fifth Tuesday offers a movie, a speaker, or some AV component. This format has changed only slightly over the last decade.

Periodically the group has hosted outside speakers such as Cheri Huber, a Zen monk from the Zen Monastery Peace Center in California; Bhante Sujatha, a Theravadan monk from the Blue Lotus Buddhist Temple in Illinois; or Rev. Daishin McCabe, a Zen monk from Mount Equity Zendo in Pennsylvania. Some members have found our group based

upon their attendance at one of these larger events.

The group is facilitated by a member who also belongs to the Unitarian church. Since the time of its founding, the group has had 4 facilitators, each serving in that capacity for 3-5 years. (According to current UCH rules, the leadership of the group must be a UCH member and at least 5-6 church members must be among the group membership.) The facilitator circulates information about the group, coordinates each week's sitting, and frequently offers readings. However the facilitator does not serve as a teacher for the members. Readings are drawn from periodicals, Internet sites, and books, including those authored by Buddhist teachers such as Suzuki Roshi, Thich Nhat Hahn, Pema Chodron, Steven Bachelor, Charlotte Joko Beck, and Cheri Huber. The facilitator also guides discussion about events linked to the group and about any changes to the group's practice. The background of the facilitators has varied—from those with experience with Soto Zen, for example, to one with an ongoing yoga practice.

The group's membership has been fluid, while also growing gradually over the past decade: currently only three of the those who joined during the group's first few years are among the typical weekly attendance of 10-15. Of those who attend regularly, some identify as Unitarians, some identify as Buddhists, and some simply identify themselves as people who value mindfulness practices, apart from any religious identity. Roughly half of the members also belong to the UU church. Some members support their practice by attending retreats at Buddhist practice centers throughout the US and/or by attending daylong or half-day mindfulness programs organized by the group but facilitated by a visiting teacher. Many of us also borrow books and other materials from our group's library, a collection drawn from Buddhist writers of diverse traditions and from others whose works support mindfulness practice.

The reasons for participation in MMG are as varied as its members, yet many attend be-

cause they are seeking sangha, appreciate support for their personal practice, and/or are engaged with questions of meaning and purpose. The simplicity of the format and the welcoming nature of the members and facilitator have drawn members to the group and have kept them attending. As one of the group's former facilitators wrote, MMG "was a community born and nurtured in silence." It is likely that what the group describes as its privileged environment has also contributed to the group's longevity. For that reason, this history of the group concludes with our privileged environment statement, something that continues to inform the group's approach.

#### *MMG's Privileged Environment Statement*

Each week we are able to gather as friends, as fellow human beings, sharing the same space and time believing that meditation and other mindfulness practices may be of benefit to us, and those whose lives we touch. We gather together in a common quest, uncommon to our times, to discover for ourselves, by ourselves and with one another a place in our lives for a path thousands of years in the making. This is a unique, special opportunity. This is a unique opportunity that has arisen through the Mindfulness Meditation Group (MMG).

To make the most of this opportunity, each MMG participant is asked to take responsibility for maintaining a 'privileged environment': a time and space where each person can feel safe and accepted. We strive to be mindful that the world as we experience it is mostly a matter of our own projections. When looking at others, the world, and ourselves, we see everything through our individual hopes, fears, and dreams. Each event, each opinion, and every stimulus presented to us is viewed, judged, and interpreted by our individual past and experiences. If we honor the wisdom of mindfulness, we can see that truth or reality for one person may not be the truth or reality for another.

The privileged environment is recognition of that philosophy. It is hoped that each of us will strive to be aware of the distinction between truth/reality and our opinion/belief and

we will try to not judge the comments of others in the group (or elsewhere). The MMG privileged environment is one in which each participant takes responsibility for interaction with others in a mindful, accepting, and non-judgmental way. In turn, each person can also trust that whatever opinions, thoughts, or questions they express will be received in an open and respectful manner.

The levels of exposure to mindfulness and awareness practices of MMG members vary greatly. We have members involved in some type of practice for 10 or more years and we have participants who are new to the experience. When we state that we are all beginners together we are stating that each of us has much work to do to remain awake, aware, and mindful in the present moment. No matter the level or understanding, the practice is a difficult struggle for each of us.

Let it be the goal of each MMG participant:

to strive as a beginner  
to maintain the privileged environment  
to let each have a say  
to be comfortable to express an opinion or remain silent  
to be open and accepting  
to be free of judgments  
to be thoughtful in reaching conclusions.



Dear Editor:

I have been receiving your newsletter and have always found it to reference something going on in my life, etc. The review about why we can't move on was interesting.

I am a Zen Buddhist practitioner incarcerated near LA. A monk from the Los Angeles Zen Center sits with us on a weekly basis and I always look forward to it. I find this to be a blessing because many prisons do not have a Buddhist teacher and practitioners have to struggle.

So thank you for your fine newsletter.

Sincerely,  
Ken

Dear U.U. Sangha Editor,

May this letter find your sangha and congregation well. I am writing from a private prison in Arizona that is holding California inmates due to the overpopulation problem in California. I am the facilitator of the U.U. Group and the literary Coordinator for the Buddhist group. Both our groups are doing really well and provide inmates opportunities to reflect, grow, and learn. Over half the members of the U.U. group have a Buddhist practice as well. We are attempting to strengthen our curriculums and libraries in both groups. I am writing your organizations to see if you are able to make any level of donation. If so, here the things we could use in order of priority:

1. DVDs— lectures, movies, workshops on Buddhism, world religions, mindfulness, restorative justice, ecology, meditation, yoga, etc. We have come to understand that [www.festivalmedia.org](http://www.festivalmedia.org) has many great titles.
2. CDs— meditation/ambient music (Carlos Nakai, Kitaro, etc.), ethnic music (Native American, Andean, Indian, etc.) and Classical. These would be used for our yoga, meditation, and writer's workshop programs.
3. Books and magazines— spiritual, ecological, holistic, etc.

New or used items can be sent. We can receive any quantity of materials through our Chaplain:

Chaplain Keller c/o U.U. Group  
LPCC Comp. 2  
5501 N. La Palma Rd.  
Eloy, AZ 85131

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,  
Tom  
La Palma Correctional Center

## UUBF CONVOCAATION WORKSHOPS

We are pleased to offer three workshops at the UUBF convocation on Saturday evening, 5:00 to 7:30 (with a short break), followed by dinner at 8:00. There will also be T'ai Chi Chih before breakfast on Saturday and Sunday mornings.

### **The Hidden Lamp: Stories of Buddhist Women Through the Centuries**

Led by Zenshin Florence Caplow

In this workshop we will explore stories of Buddhist women over the last twenty-five centuries, and how they matter for our lives today. Most Buddhists are not fully aware of the rich lives and teachings of awakened women. These stories and koans are about old women, nuns, teachers, courtesans, wives, daughters, teenagers, and uppity women from all walks of life. Whether you are male or female, you are invited to come draw inspiration from these wise and feisty women!



Zenshin Florence Caplow is a Soto Zen priest, a seminarian at Starr King, and the co-editor of *The Hidden Lamp: Stories from Twenty-Five Centuries of Awakened Women*, forthcoming in 2013 from Wisdom Publications.

### **What's in the Pure Land for Unitarian Universalists?**

Led by Galen Amstutz

Pure Land Buddhism in its various forms has been extremely important in Asia but for a variety of reasons has interacted less productively with non-ethnic Americans than other kinds of Buddhism. With an eye to seeing if more people can get something out of it, this workshop will focus on Jodoshinshu (Shin Buddhism, or True Pure Land Buddhism, from



Japan) and take up topics which may include the following:

- A twenty-first century age of consilience around the concept of interdependence?
- What Pure Land language really means: the thinker Shinran and mythologizing Buddhist awareness as a gift
- Buddhism as primarily an imaginative field
- A bit of Japanese cultural history (If the "protestant" shoe fits, don't wear it!)
- The strange career of D.T. Suzuki: when "Zen" is really "Shin"
- Messages from cognitive psychology: the unconscious, American self-help, and the blank slate; golly, could there be any limit to one's ability to intentionally undermine one's ego?
- And gosh, Mom, is there any evidence for authority problems and scandals in American Buddhism?
- The need to re-invent and re-develop insights from Pure Land in an independent, non-conventional, non-ethnic context



Galen Amstutz had the intercultural experience of growing up in an Asian-American neighborhood in Sacramento, California. After he became interested in Buddhism while teach-

ing English in Japan in the 1970s, he studied at the Institute of Buddhist Studies in Berkeley, California, and qualified as a minister of the Nishi Honganji True Pure Land organization. Later, having continued his academic study with a Ph.D. in Asian Religions from Princeton, he worked for Florida State University, the Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard, and Ryukoku University in Kyoto, Japan. Besides a book (*Interpreting Amida*, 1997) he has done numerous articles and translations. He is currently an online teacher for the Institute of Buddhist Studies and an Associate of the Reischauer Institute.

## T'ai Chi Chih

Led by Debbie Cole



Begin your mornings at the Convocation with T'ai Chi Chih led by Debbie Cole, an accredited T'ai Chi Chih instructor since 2000. This moving meditation uses gentle continuity of motion to relax the body and calm the mind. There are no special physical requirements and it can

easily be modified to be done while seated. Debbie is a UU seminarian, Intern Minister at the UU Congregation of Columbia (MD), and an engaged parent.

## Nonviolent Communication and Prison Dharma

Led by Barbra Esher and Karen Holcomb

How could you thoroughly test guidelines for improving communication and building supportive relationships? You might try them with prisoners in the Maryland Correctional Institute. If Marshall Rosenberg's system of Non-Violent Communication works with and among men convicted of violent crimes, what might it accomplish in kerfluffles in your UU committees? The Buddha told us to believe only what we could experience for ourselves, and this WORKshop offers opportunities to practice listening and speaking in Non-Violent Communication with partners. NVC is a natural fit for Buddhism. It enables us to reach toward Right Speech and the Fourth Lay Precept by bringing full presence even to uncomfortable circumstances and thereby supports Thich Nhat Hanh's Deep Listening in particular. At the core of NVC is deep respect for the heartfelt needs of all parties to a discussion, and it has been used internationally in peacemaking to keep deeply divided groups in the room and engaged. If it weren't enough to teach new

skills for starting or coping with difficult dialogues within families, workplaces, and UU committees, the workshop will also offer tips for engaging in prison dharma/prison ministry so that your sitting group or whole church can take its commitment to service off the cushion and out of the pews.



Karen Holcomb is a facilitator of the Mindfulness Practice Group of Annapolis and a volunteer with the UU Church of Annapolis' program in Prison Ministry and Restorative Justice. She has Received

Transmission of the Five Mindfulness Trainings in the Order of Interbeing. Karen attended a training session in NVC with Lynd Morris and Barbra Esher, and then Barbra offered at UUCA the first ever Day of Mindfulness with Compassionate Communication. A beautiful partnership was born.



Barbra Esher is an Aspirant to the Order of Interbeing and works with Lynd Morris to offer NVC events under the aegis of Capital NVC as a candidate for certification in NVC. She is also the head of Baltimore Shiatsu and Acupuncture Center, web columnist for Asian Healing Arts, AOBTA certified in several forms of shiatsu, acupuncture, and acupressure, disciplines she began to study in Tokyo and pursued during a five year stay in Asia.

## The Perfect Moment Is Always Now

By Christopher Huneke

For my tenth birthday, my parents gave me a simple point-and-shoot camera. I loved that

camera and so it wasn't long before I could picture the world through a lens. Photography quickly became a way for me to hold onto things that I cherished; things I knew would fade into the past the way lightening-strikes briefly illuminate the Earth, then decay leaving only a silhouette in its place. But with film, I had the power to freeze time and soon I would wake up intent on chasing the magic in life.

Anything that touched me would show up in my pictures. At first I would photograph the family dogs who just stared at me blankly when the flash strobed in their eyes. Then I turned my lens on my friends and forced them into ridiculous poses so I could make homemade baseball cards for our neighborhood Wiffleball league. Later, when I lived on the Santa Cruz Coast, the landscape became my subject. I photographed the deep dramas of the shoreline, the fairy tales of lonesome lighthouses and the grand vistas in the night skies. You can imagine how gleeful I was when my work successfully sold at a local consignment shop.

All of these images are burned into my mind like permanent strips of film. I can often remember the date, the weather and even the smells that I experienced as I set up my shots. My pictures are like small capsules of frozen time, which is why the photos of my daughter mean so much. I remember the day I took the picture of her collecting a small bouquet of flowers during a short springtime bike ride. I can feel the hot summer day when I captured her with ice cream covering her face. I still smell the ocean in the photo of her at the beach wrapped tightly in my arms. In every picture, she never fails to flash that electric smile.

But for the past eight years I've been without a camera. There is no way for me to capture the memories that blow by me like dandelions in the wind. So instead I focus on the experiences as they occur. I simply enjoy the moments before me, fully and more present than ever before. And then, I let them float away.

To this day, I still wake up looking to chase the magic in life. But it's different for me now because I know that life is really about finding that magic in every new day.



## Six Weeks of Mindfulness in a Single Day of Connection

by Julie Roehm

## The Last Day of Summer

by Robert Ertman

*fleas, lice,  
a horse pissing  
by my pillow  
--Matsuo Basho*

Out on the streets the way Bernie Glassman teaches "street retreats"—unwashed and without money—we spend the day walking around, not staying any place too long. We find a church soup kitchen, panhandle, and look for water and other necessities that we had always taken for granted.

restrooms—  
for customers  
only

Someone puts us on to a garden behind a downtown church. As discreetly as we can, we gather cardboard from the alleys. It takes a lot of cardboard to sleep six and it would have taken a lot more to sleep six comfortably.

no horse pissing  
near my pillow—  
no pillow

Towards morning my daughter discovers that her cardboard is covered with slugs and she takes refuge with her mom in a dryer spot. There are slugs on my cardboard too, but I just try not to roll over. Before dawn, as cars arrive for the first service, we slip away.

looking for a place to pee—  
marking the autumnal equinox

Jane and Garrett Phelan, teachers from the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax, offered a day long program of study of the Five Mindfulness Trainings at the UU Church of Annapolis last November. About 40 people came together, from as far away as Richmond and Leesburg, for the purpose of investigating the Trainings and looking deeply into themselves and their communities in order to free themselves from the destructive habit energies that foster the illusion of separateness.

Thich Nhat Hanh often speaks of watering the seeds of peace in ourselves to foster peace and compassion. The foundation for that process is the practice of mindfulness. The Five Mindfulness Trainings are something anyone can use to deepen the understanding of avoiding hurt to ourselves and others. Each training contains an awareness of suffering caused by destructive behaviors and a commitment to action that would alleviate that suffering on personal and communal levels. Garrett and Jane condensed what is usually a six-day course offered over six weeks into one day-long training, so that participants could apply to Receive the Trainings in a mid-Atlantic Transmission Ceremony with Anh-Huong Nguyen. Participants journaled in response to topics suggested by each of the Five Trainings: Reverence for Life, True Happiness, True Love, Loving Speech & Deep Listening, and Nourishment Healing. Jane and Garrett shared anecdotes and personal reflections on each of the trainings, providing a rich backdrop for the journaling responses done by the participants. The second part of each activity involved sharing responses in pairs or small groups. Finally, each participant received, in draft form, a booklet newly authored by Garrett with suggestions for further study. A temporary group was formed to support locals who wish to further prepare and study in the weeks before the Transmission Ceremony. In his writing, Thich Nhat Hanh says that, "Our real enemy is forgetfulness". Perhaps those engaged in this study will not forget their connection to themselves or to others.



# UNITARIAN UNIVERSALIST BUDDHIST FELLOWSHIP CONVOCATION 2013

The biennial convocations of the UU Buddhist Fellowship are an opportunity for Buddhist-inclined UU's to get together for conversation and mutual inspiration.

This year we will gather in the greater Washington-Baltimore area, April 5-7, with our guest teacher, Tara Brach, founder of the Insight Meditation Community of Washington and a leading western teacher of Buddhist meditation, emotional healing and spiritual awakening.

Our convocation will be held at the Pearlstone Conference & Retreat Center, 5425 Mt. Gilead Road, Reisterstown, Maryland, just minutes from Baltimore. Visit their website for information on the facility and transportation. <http://www.pearlstonecenter.org/>



Registration and Accommodations (Housing, Five Delicious Meals, and Snacks)

Arrival 3:00 PM Friday, April 5, Departure 12:00 Noon Sunday, April 7

*Special Reduced Rates Until March 1*

Multi-occupancy (2-4) w/shared bath	<del>\$290</del>	\$260
Double w/private bath	<del>\$330</del>	\$300
Single w/private bath	<del>\$440</del>	\$400
Commuter w/all meals	<del>\$230</del>	\$200
Commuter w/Sat. lunch & dinner only	<del>\$170</del>	\$150
New! Day rate w/Sat lunch only	New!	\$100

New this year—register and pay online on the [UUBF home page](#)

You may still register by mail. Send this form and check payable to UUBF to  
UUBF Registrar c/o Richard Swanson, 164 Page Knoll, Lincoln, VT 05443-9582

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Telephone \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_  
Congregation/UUBF Group \_\_\_\_\_  
Pre-arranged roommate(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Please note any special needs or email the Registrar, [rswansonvt@gmail.com](mailto:rswansonvt@gmail.com)  
You may also join the UUBF online. Visit our home page.



Jane and Garrett Phelan offering a day of instruction at the UU Church of Annapolis to a group hoping to receive the Five Mindfulness Trainings at a mid-Atlantic Transmission Ceremony. (The sanctuary is “decorated” for a performance of *Crimes of the Heart* by our Dignity Players.)

**NEW MEMBERSHIP, RENEWAL (\$25 CONTRIBUTION)  
or CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM**

NAME: (Last, First, Middle) \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

CITY: \_\_\_\_\_

STATE, PROV. : \_\_\_\_\_

COUNTRY: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter Receipt Preference (check one): ☐ E-mail ☐ U.S. Mail (U.S.A. only)

**The e-mail edition is in color!**

MAIL TO: Richard Swanson, 164 Page Knoll, Lincoln, VT 05443-9582, USA

**NEW: JOIN THE UUBF OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP ONLINE!  
VISIT THE UUBF HOME PAGE AT [HTTP://WWW.UUBF.ORG](http://www.uubf.org)**

UU Sangha  
c/o Richard Swanson  
164 Page Knoll  
Lincoln, VT 05443-9582

Return Service Requested

## UU Sangha      Winter 2013

### Contents:

Book Review, Congressman Tim Ryan's <i>Mindful Nation: How a Simple Practice Can Help Us Reduce Stress, Improve Performance, and Recapture the American Spirit</i> , by Melissa Myozen Blacker .....	p. 1
A note from Rev. Meg Riley, Church of the Larger Fellowship .....	p. 3
Mindfulness Meditation Group of the Unitarian Church of Harrisburg, by Amy Winans .....	p. 4
Letter from Ken .....	p. 5
Letter from Tom, La Palma Correctional Center .....	p. 6
UUBF Convocation Workshops .....	p. 6
The Perfect Moment Is Always Now, by Christopher Huneke .....	p. 8
The Last Day of Summer, by Robert Ertman .....	p. 9
Six Weeks of Mindfulness in a Single Day of Connection, by Julie Roehm .....	p. 9
UUBF Biennial Convocation 2013 Flyer .....	p. 10

**Don't forget the UUBF Convocation, April 5-7, 2013,  
near Baltimore at the Pearlstone Retreat Center,  
Reisterstown, Maryland.**

**Our guest teacher will be Tara Brach!**