

along the Path

Summer 2011

The Newsletter of the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax



FINDING OUR TRUE SELF

by Anh-Huong Nguyen

When the Buddha entered Savatthi, no one was on the streets. All doors were closed. It was dangerous for people to go outside because Angulimala, a notorious murderer, was in town. The Buddha heard steps running behind him in the distance. He knew it was Angulimala. The murderer shouted at him to stop but the Buddha continued to walk with ease. When Angulimala caught up to the Buddha, he said, “I told you to stop, monk. Why didn’t you stop?”

The Buddha continued to walk as he said, “Angulimala, I stopped a long time ago. It is you who have not stopped.” Angulimala was startled by the reply. He blocked the Buddha’s path, forcing him to stop. Everyone else always ran away from Angulimala in terror. But the Buddha was looking at him as if he were a friend or a brother.

Suddenly Angulimala felt he could not bear the Buddha’s kind and gentle gaze. He said: “Monk, you said you stopped a long time ago. But you were still walking. You said I was the one who has not stopped. What did you mean?”

The Buddha replied, “I stopped committing acts that cause suffering to other living beings a long time ago. I have learned to protect all lives, not just humans. Angulimala, all living beings want to live. All fear death. We must nurture a heart of compassion and protect the lives of all beings.”

Angulimala was overwhelmed by the Buddha’s compassion and gentleness, but did not see how he could be forgiven for his years of treacherous deeds. The Buddha assured him that he could begin anew. He called upon his senior monks to embrace and receive Angulimala into the community.

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Stopping, “shamatha,” is one aspect of Buddhist meditation. The other is “vipashyana,” or deep looking. When we breathe and eat mindfully, our mind stops wandering. We become fully present to what is within and around us. We feel nourished by wonders of life such as sunshine, mountains, the smile of a child.

When our suffering is not understood, we live in ways that create more suffering for ourselves and others. The story of Angulimala is a bell of mindfulness. It invites us to stop and look deeply into our suffering, so that understanding and compassion will be born in our hearts. The energy of understanding and compassion

protects us and shows us the way out of suffering.

Traumas and suffering often create an internal atmosphere that is hostile to understanding, love and trust. We seem to be always running as if we are looking for something or someone to fill the vacuum inside. A sense of being fundamentally unfulfilled and dissatisfied makes us run after sensual pleasures, wealth, fame and power. These gratifications can offer moments of relief but ultimately we feel more lonely, confused and fearful.

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What is it or who is it that you are looking for? Are you looking for a father, a mother, a child, a friend, or a teacher? With Sangha's love and support, you'll learn to breathe mindfully in order to come home to yourself and understand the suffering in yourself and in your parents.

"Who am I?" is not a philosophical question. Please ask yourself, "Where is the source of my pain? How did the block of pain grow over the course of my life? What brings me happiness? Is it true happiness or a kind of happiness that numbs my pain and destroys my body and mind?" These are questions that deserve your time and energy if you wish to be truly happy.

Every major event that happens in one's life gives rise to a character in us. There is a whole community residing within every person. To practice mindfulness is to greet and listen deeply to each of these characters whenever he or she appears in our conscious mind. Sometimes, several of them start speaking at the same time. It is important for us to listen and not to let one character take over our decision-making. With continued practice, we gradually build an inner refuge of peace and harmony. It is within this refuge that we can find our "true self."

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In our retreats, upon hearing the sound of the bell, we stop everything we do or think, and say silently, "I listen. I listen" as we breathe in. As we breathe out, we say, "This wonderful sound brings me back to my true self." "True self" is the true person we have been looking for. "True self" also means "true home."

What I am looking for is already in me. This is right view.

What I am looking for is already in me. This is right view. Right view is the first step of the

Noble Eightfold Path, which is the path of right understanding and true love.

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Very often we go to the refrigerator, television, internet, telephone, shopping mall, or just pick up a newspaper or something to read when we feel uncomfortable or dissatisfied. This pattern creates a deep separation within us.

Consider placing a sign on the door of your refrigerator or pantry which says, "What am I doing here?" or "Am I really hungry? What am I really hungry for?" or "What is it I am looking for?"

Standing at the refrigerator door, you may breathe in and out a few times to allow these invitations to penetrate into your heart. Perhaps you can sit down or even lie down on your back comfortably. Put one hand on your chest, the other hand on your belly to feel your belly breathing, and see how you feel in your chest, your heart?

Can you give it a name? Recognize your attention has gone in search of something to eat, drink, read, listen to, watch, or someone to talk to in an effort to relieve the pain of your longing and dissatisfaction. After one or two minutes,

you may say “No, I am not hungry for food. I am hungry for warmth, understanding and love.” Continue to follow your breathing so that you may recognize and take care of the pain, loneliness or craving that is in you at that moment.

In the same way, you may put a sign on your TV remote control or on your computer keyboard saying, “Dear one, how do you feel in this moment?” or “Dear one, who or what are you looking for?”

Return to your breathing as you place a comforting hand on your chest and allow your heart to open to these questions. After a few minutes, you may not need to turn on the TV. You may choose to take this opportunity to breathe and hold gently the vacuum in you.

Several members of the Boat of Compassion Sangha tried this practice and set the intention to not watch TV for at least a week. This is not to say that watching TV is a bad thing. But what is it that lies beneath the desire to watch television? How much time do we spend in front of the TV every day? We cannot let television programs rob precious time from ourselves and our family.

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In the name of entertainment and escape, we have developed patterns for running away from our pain and dissatisfaction to the point that we have lost ourselves and our loved ones. It is getting more difficult for us to communicate and understand each other.

When we practice with a Sangha, we profit from the Sangha’s collective energy of mindfulness and concentration. This helps us to embrace our suffering. With Sangha’s love and support, we do not have to labor for transformation and healing. Our practice carries with it a sense of ease and joy. This is true experience of meditation.

THE PRACTICE OF MINDFUL MOVEMENTS

by Thu Nguyen as interviewed by Jill McKay



During Days of Mindfulness and at Claymont we have the great privilege of spending time with Thu as he guides us through a period of Deep Relaxation, and a series of Mindful Movements. Thu also teaches a course on Deep Relaxation and Healing Movements. We sat with Thu and asked him to share some of his insight into this gentle practice.

Q: Please tell us about the practice of Mindful Movements

Many of us have practiced mindful sitting, walking, eating and mindful movement in the quiet space of the Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax. However in our daily life we are in a state of constant movement in a setting that is

often not as peaceful. So by learning to move mindfully, we can benefit from the practice of mindfulness wherever we are.



through the day and be ready for soft Chi movement.

Another principle from Taiji and Qigong is centeredness and groundedness. When we are centered and grounded, we will move from our core and use less effort. The mind can easily follow and concentrate on the movement. We also observe the principle of Yin and Yang, the continuous flow between the two opposites. It is a

universal principle – Day

In a class, I like taking movements from Qigong and Taiji because they are graceful and promote healing. In fact for those who practice Qigong or Taiji without being mindful of the movements, the benefit is greatly reduced. With mindfulness, you become more aware of, then concentrated on, the movement, and joy and healing naturally occurs.

Q: What have you learned from Qigong that you apply to Mindful Movements?

One of the principles of Qigong is relaxation: you will find that relaxation is something you should experience when you do Qigong. The masters say if your body is not relaxed, the Qi does not flow. Over years of mindfulness practice, I found that if you do sitting meditation or deep relaxation first, you enjoy the movements more. When your mind is calm, you

can easily maintain a level of relaxation while moving. I always start each class with a period of deep relaxation through conscious breathing and conscious relaxation of the body. In this way people can release the tensions accumulated

and Night alternate continuously without stopping – not in an abrupt manner but as a continuous flow. When something approaches one extreme, it begins to decline and then moves to the other extreme. Any movement should reflect the principle of Yin and Yang. An opening gesture alternates with a closing one. Movement must come back to a state of stopping, non-movement. And then you start again.

These are commonsense principles that I use in Mindful Movements. In fact, we can apply them to any act throughout the day. If you have a habit of putting your weight on one leg while standing, the Qi becomes stagnant. You should shift your body to restart its flow. We need to maintain some kind of balance in our bodily position and our movements all the time.

Q: Can you give us some examples of movement based on these principles?

One of the walking exercises I like a lot is where we put one foot forward, and shift our weight forward, and then we shift back. A movement

forward is an action – an engagement into life – then there must be a retreat to disengage from action, otherwise you are bound in a state of action and you cannot rest. So there is deep wisdom in this pattern: engage in action / deep rest / get ready for the next action. I believe if you move your body in this way, it is a way to train your mind to engage and disengage in your thinking and not just in your body. Sometimes we attach to a goal. If we can detach from the goal we can see that there may be another way to go forward, and so we can make a brand new step.

Another exercise, which is very helpful for a restless mind is making the shape of a letter with your hands like writing calligraphy. By following the shape of the letter, your mind will shift into a state of concentration and stillness. In other movements, you can visualize holding a ball, hugging a bear, etc. Visualization helps to make the movement more mindful and more pleasant.

Q: Do you pay attention to the surroundings while practicing Mindful Movements?

Initially, we are aware of body and breath to re-center ourselves, then we expand our awareness to our surroundings so that we can connect and exchange the energy with the universe. We see the blue sky and that makes us happy. You see the wonder in your surroundings and so the seeds of happiness are watered. If you are calmer, there is a kind of subtle dynamic between you and your surroundings. That is a kind of nourishment and healing happens naturally.

Sometimes you see people doing these movements with eyes closed. This may be because they don't want to be distracted, especially if they are just learning the movements. But based on the principles of Yin and Yang, you should be open to the

surroundings sometimes, and sometimes you should retreat into yourself. It is like in your house, sometimes you want the windows to be open to the outside, and sometimes you want them closed. As a simple practice, let's open our mind and our heart to see the sky and be part of the whole cosmos. Then let's close our eyes, and enter a state of deep resting or hibernation. It's like a seed: it hibernates and then it opens and connects to its surroundings.

Q: Can you talk about breathing?

When your breath is calm, your body becomes relaxed. When the breath is smooth, the movement becomes graceful. At first we must learn the movement, and when you learn, you tend to hold your breath. But when you have memorized the movement, the breath and the body harmonize with each other. Paying attention to the breath is a way to bring your mind back to the movement. After a while the breath becomes a natural background to the movement. The whole body and the breath move in unison.

Q: What do you recommend for daily practice?

The practice of Mindful Walking is a kind of Mindful Movement. Whenever you walk, you should walk mindfully. You need to realign your body and follow your steps. After we sit for a while, we can do a simple mindful movement of opening and closing the hands, or we can rotate the upper body in a circle. Practice it with joy. Any movement should be a joyful movement. If you are cleaning the table, center yourself and move your arm and your body together. Remember to have a gentle smile on your face. Make your movement playful and beautiful. After practicing some movements for a few minutes, let there be some quiet sitting or standing so that the energy flow has a chance to settle down in the body. It is a period of nurturing.

**THE THINGS WE CARRY:
LIVING SIMPLY**
by Garrett Phelan

The Mahatma's Earthly Possessions

*Two dinner bowls
a wooden fork and spoon*

*diary
prayer book
eyeglasses*

*three porcelain monkeys
speak no evil
hear no evil
see no evil
(gift from a Japanese Buddhist)*

*watch
spittoon
letter openers*

*two pair of sandals
(from *Journeys of Simplicity: Traveling Lightly*,
edited by Philip Harnden)*

The fifth Mindfulness training of the Fourteen Mindfulness trainings of the Order of Interbeing suggests, "We are committed to living simply." Many of us who practice with the MPCF sangha live comfortable lives. By many cultures' standards, in a very expensive part of a very rich country, a lot of us live a full rich life with more than abundant creature comforts. We are surrounded by and part of so much wealth. So when the training suggests that we live simply, what might that mean for us?

Recently I saw a flyer in our local library announcing that author Tim O'Brien was coming to read from his novel about the Vietnam War, *The Things They Carried*. The first chapter of the book, which has also been much anthologized as a short story that stands alone, focuses on lists of

things the soldiers carried. List after list. These two books – *Journeys of Simplicity* and *The Things They Carried* -- started me reflecting: What do we carry? What clutter -- both physical and emotional -- do we accumulate and heave onto our backs getting heavier and heavier each day, each month, each year? We glom onto what we already have and won't let go, and then keep adding more and more. The clutter and junk get heavier and heavier, even though we think, falsely, that we are drawing some sort of comfort from all the accumulation.

We accumulate so much: we take our suffering, our pain, our hurts, our humiliations and our anger and stuff them into our backpack. They become heavy, but nonetheless cherished, belongings. Some we grow out of, some get worn and raggedy, yet we cannot let them go -- we continue to carry them even as we add new ones to our pack. We rarely take them out and reflect deeply on them. We seem unable or unwilling to discard them, let them go, repair them, or redesign them. We just lug them around. And so the burden on our back continues to grow. Oh, the things we carry! They are obstacles to lightness, spaciousness, and liberation.



Drawing by Emily Whittle

One way we tend to think that we can relieve some of the weight of the things we carry is to possess material objects of luxury and opulence: acquiring bigger cars and houses, new

technology and labor-saving gadgets, thinking our baggage will be lighter! When in fact, it just increases the things we carry. We

get more advanced degrees, awarded by more professional responsibility and titles. We over-consume clothes, books, food. We become increasingly lost and overwhelmed by all we carry.

We don't have to take a vow of poverty to live simply. But we might ask ourselves, what do we possess and what possesses us? Why do we feel we don't have enough, when with the help of the practice and the support of the sangha, we can realize that we already have enough, enough to meet the conditions of happiness?

How do we let things go? How does the present moment not become tainted by the past, flooding over us and drowning the present? Or how do we accumulate so much, thinking we are preparing for the present moment, when all these possessions obstruct us from even appreciating we are now *in* the present moment?

Our practice offers a different path. It offers the present moment: clean, clear, with spaciousness, and time to pause. It offers mindfulness so that we are aware of all we have. It offers us compassion, community, and support. It offers us love.

The simplicity of our practice is in itself a practice of simple living. Sitting on our cushion and breathing. And walking meditation, where we walk slowly and mindfully, enjoying each

step. Mindful eating, where we honor that we have enough -- more than enough -- that we are "interbeing" with the

universe and other sentient beings. Practicing mindful speech and deep listening so that our hearts are open and rich with compassion, coming together to practice so as to create a peaceful loving community of friends: these are our guides.

As our practice seeps into our daily life, we see that our family life, our social life and our work life -- all are interconnected -- we can begin to unburden ourselves of the things we carry, and be lighter and freer to be present for ourselves, our loved ones and our communities.

RELIEVING THE PRESSURE

By Joan Rooney

My meditation teacher says meditation is the break we need to relieve the pressure from all the things we are thinking about, all the stories going through our minds. In my mind's eye, I see this pressure as a pile of logs—each heavy, dense and immovable. I sit; I meditate. A soft wind blows. There is a carpet of sweet grass where logs once laid.

THE ARTS OF MINDFULNESS

by Jane Phelan



Mary Beth Hatem

On May 28th, several of the mindfulness communities of the Washington area celebrated their first evening of “The Arts of Mindfulness” at Circle Yoga studio in Northwest DC.

Mindfulness practitioners and friends from The Mindfulness Practice Center of Fairfax (MPCF), Washington Mindfulness Community (WMC), Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Center, and Circle Yoga Mindfulness group attended. OI member and longtime practitioner **Annie Mahon** generously made available the space at Circle Yoga studio for the evening performance.

The event was created with the idea of bringing the area sanghas together in an informal and celebratory environment to connect and socialize

with each other and at the same time, enjoy the arts and passions of fellow members. As one audience member commented, “It was a truly beautiful and fun evening. What a great way to be together with other sangha people and to nurture and enjoy being creatively alive together.”

Poet **Mary Beth Hatem** (aka “the Mindful Humorist”) from Stillwater Mindfulness Practice Center opened the evening sharing her delightful poetry full of humor and wry reflection. She set the tone of welcoming and compassionate lightheartedness that continued throughout the evening. Mary Beth has been practicing for ten years, four with Stillwater. She read from her book in progress, *The Buddha Channel*.

THE BEST ABS

The best abs you’ll ever see
are not on tv.
South of your chest
north of your sturdy thighs
Look to your mid
section: it’s you
you, all you--
more, maybe
different, maybe--
a product nonetheless
of DNA
and your life so far.
You want tv abs
abs for drumming
abs for the beach
but what you find is pillow-like
soft in the way
you’re soft
you--the you that gets on
with what needs
doing.

©Mary Beth Hatem
December 08

Patrick Smith (WMC) shared his passion for composing and playing the guitar in a deeply moving set of five original compositions: “Dancing Free,” “Gathered Hearts,” “Matka Boska” (Polish for Blessed Mother) which was dedicated to all of the mothers in the room, and “Stepping Stones.” You can hear Patrick at www.PatrickSmithMusic.com.

To honor Memorial Day Weekend, **Susan Hadler** (WMC) shared a powerful poem she wrote about her father who died in WWII. She dedicated her poem to all who have died in war. It added a gentle, poignant touch to the evening. As one person said about the acknowledgement of Memorial Day, “It was a favorite moment for me.”



Susan Hadler

AVALOKITESHVARA

Standing tall now
where he fell then
as a young soldier,
my father is a tree.

first he became earth
then he sprouted,
grew a mottled trunk
and branches.

by the time i found him
he was 50 years tall
head in the sky
his many arms embracing life.

I find him now in trees everywhere
I find him inside of me.
he is the light
that grows from darkness.

and every day at dawn
he dances with the sun.

© Susan Hadler

Garrett Phelan has been practicing mindfulness with the MPCF for over 10 years. He has published and read his poetry for many years. His wife, **Jane** (MPCF) provided musical accompaniment to a few pieces and they performed their original improvised chant, “Breathing—I’m Always Breathing.” Guests' comments included "I loved the teamwork with Jane - adding rhythm and music. It's so inspiring." And “I also want to say especially how I loved your poem about breathing. In sharing it with us, you and Jane showed us the way of fearlessness and joy which are at the heart of our practice.”

Singer and guitarist **Joyce Bailey** (MPCF) closed the evening by encouraging everyone to join her in singing. With Joyce's guidance -- and the help of print-outs of the lyrics -- the audience joined her to sing "Snakes Need Friends," "Happiness Runs in a Circular Motion," "This Little Light of Mine," and "Rocka My Soul." Improvised accompaniment was provided by volunteer musicians playing djembe drum, claves, and bell. Joyce then sang a "Prayer of St. Francis" that she has adapted and put to music. Closing the first Arts of Mindfulness evening (of what is hoped will be a continuing series), everyone sang "Walk on the Path of Love."

As the evening closed we heard, "I didn't want it to end." "I felt last night was a new step for us as a sangha, a new door opening onto our collective creativity and joy of being together."



Joyce Bailey

WHAT TUNES ME TO LOVE by Patrick Smith

*The heart is the thousand-stringed instrument.
Our sadness and fear come from being out of
tune with Love. ~ Hafiz*

What tunes me to love? Meditation, prayer, contemplation, insight, sangha, music, the touch of a dear one. As Hafiz so eloquently expresses "sadness and fear come from being out of tune with love." I wonder if it is also from being out of time with love? My fear is seldom in the present moment, nor is my sadness. To bring my instrument into tune, I must be there in the moment listening, just listening. Sadness and fear are powerful emotions, watered by family, community, country, and life itself. Yet as one wise sage has said: "in the end there are three things that last - faith, hope, and love, and the greatest of these is love." So again I ask what tunes me to love? When do I tune?

When a piece of music touches someone, this becomes part of their memory, life, and being. One of a multitude of subtle shifts and insights forming one life, yet forming all of life. Seek truth in yourself, and truth will manifest in your art. In the ocean of my heart there are depths that words cannot touch. The language which expresses that which is inexpressible -- music -- can stir these depths, bring them into light, and allow them to heal and blossom into understanding. And as I have been taught in the Fourth Awareness* - "We are aware that understanding is the very foundation of love."

As cycles of suffering surround us, we pause, tuning our instrument carefully with the breath. Finding the present moment, finding love, tuning and turning towards love. There is no end in mind. There just is.

So I breathe, I tune, I play my notes listening to the melodies of life, pausing to tune as needed. Becoming lost in the flow, distracted, and then the muse reminds me to tune again, to begin again, to connect again with life. Will I ever stay in tune? What a question as I smile. Never will I stay in tune, so I practice. To tune a thousand strings takes a lifetime, needs a craft of loving care, requires help from a Sangha, and beyond.



Patrick tuning to love

* *The Five Awarenesses*

We are aware that all generations of our ancestors and all future generations are present in us.

We are aware of the expectations that our ancestors, our children, and their children have of us.

We are aware that our joy, peace, freedom, and harmony are the joy, peace, freedom and harmony of our ancestors, our children, and their children.

We are aware that understanding is the very foundation of love.

We are aware that blaming and arguing can never help us and only create a wider gap between us; that only understanding, trust, and love can help us change and grow.

(Five Awarenesses, from *Chanting from the Heart: Buddhist Ceremonies and Daily Practices*, compiled by Thich Nhat Hanh and the Monks and Nuns of Plum Village)

GOOD FRIDAY AND MINDFULNESS

by Kathy G.

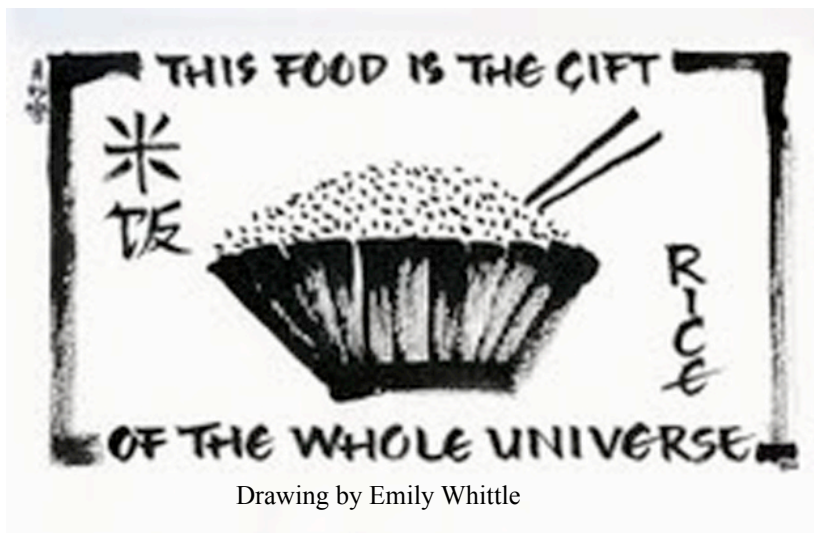
I would like to share a story about a moment of grace and some Sangha building I did in my church.

On the Friday of Holy Week in my Catholic tradition, we commemorate the death of Jesus before his resurrection on Easter. The church I attend is very lively and observes these days with great energy. But most of the observances, particularly on Good Friday, involve a lot of activity, including a long procession through the streets with much singing and group prayer. For some time, I have felt a strong desire for a space of quiet contemplation to observe the day. So this year I asked my priest if I could create such a space and he agreed. I reserved a room and sent an invitation to the parish community to sit and pray in silence from 12:00 noon until 3:00pm. People could come and go as they wished.

I checked the room the night before, but on the Friday morning when I arrived to set it up, I found a whole group in the middle of waxing the floor. There had been a scheduling mix-up and the room wasn't going to be available! I felt a wave of panic. I was wrestling with anger, blame, and fear that our vigil wouldn't happen. And suddenly I remembered some advice I got on my last Blue Cliff retreat -- that retreats aren't necessarily times of peace. They are places where you encounter your unskillfulness and practice to transform it. And that insight let me recognize all the anger and blame in me at that moment, breathe and embrace it, then keep my eyes on our ultimate goal -- which was to create a space of silence and prayer for the community. And this dissolved most of the

tension, and together we found an empty room that we could use instead.

At the beginning of the time, only myself and one other person were there. Then I remembered a sentence Anh-Huong and Thu shared in their New Year's letter: how in the beginning months of the MPCF, Anh-Huong would go over to the sanctuary, light the candle, sound the bell, and sit alone. So that gave me courage to begin as if there were ten people. It was such a powerful experience! In the end, there *were* about ten people. We sounded the bell each hour and read one line from scripture, but mostly simply allowed people to use the silence to pray in any way they wanted to. Some meditated, others read, some prayed the rosary silently. I felt such a supportive energy sitting in prayer with others, much more deeply than I could on my own. And it was wonderful to feel as if there was a 'home' where both of my spiritual traditions could be together in one space. I am so grateful to the MPCF sangha for all the support and teaching, and opportunities for practice it has given me, to make this possible. And I really believe St. Camillus will grow from this too. Thanks to Anh-Huong and Thu for these many gifts.



Drawing by Emily Whittle

**STUMBLING ALONG THE PATH
(A Letter to the MPCF)
by Jim Ebaugh**

I hope those of you in Fairfax understand in your hearts how important you are to those of us in rural communities in Sanghas without brown jackets (OI Members) or dharma teachers. We are humans quite capable of human foolishness and kind of stumbling along the path together united by our devotion to the Mindfulness Practice and Thay. So, for many of us you are really our mother Sangha. I do wish to convey my personal gratitude for what you have created. You could have 100 (OI members) brown jackets and dharma teachers, but if the Sangha members themselves do not have the courage to at times be vulnerable, exposed and willing to confront, challenge and transform the sources of individual suffering, then I am not sure much light can emanate from that Sangha. Your light has shined very brightly at the weekend retreats I have been to. You as a community have created an environment of true intimacy, connection and safety. Your weekend retreats are deeply appreciated not only for the access to your two wonderful teachers, but also as a model for the kind of environment we would like to create and bring to our own Sanghas. Every time I leave one of your weekend retreats, I spend the ride home with either myself or another Sangha member asking how can we bring what you have created to our own communities. Your willingness to sit still with the suffering and work towards transformation has deeply touched a hardened old jock like me who too often has to be dragged kicking and screaming to the mirror. With much love and respect from this simple country special ed teacher.



**INVESTIGATE
by William Menza**

Use your distracted mind
to investigate the place of distraction.
Use your fearful mind
to investigate the place of fear.
Use your bored mind
to investigate the place of boredom,
And so on....
Then turn back
to investigate the investigating mind.
Who or what do you find?

UPCOMING EVENTS

(Please visit the MPCF website for updates, suggested donations, and directions.)

Ongoing Activities in the UUCF Chapel (Program Building)

Morning Guided Sitting Meditation:

Opportunity to relax, sit quietly and comfortably. Practice enjoying each moment of sitting and mindful walking.

Monday to Friday 8:15-9:15 am (except Thursday)
Thursday 8:00-9:00 am

Morning Mindful Movement:

Learn to be mindful with movements. Improve one's health and vitality with soft physical exercises, Taiji and Qigong.

Thursday 9:15-10:00 am

Noon Guided Sitting Meditation:

Thursday 12:00-12:45 pm

Thursday Evenings Meditation with Anh- Huong:

A peaceful evening of meditation, mindful movements, walking meditation and dharma sharing. Every Thursday from 7:30-9:00 pm

First Thursday of month: Recitation of the Five Mindfulness Trainings and Dharma talk by Anh-Huong.

Tea and cookies 6:45-7:25pm. Sitting begins at 7:30pm

Before meditation you are invited to join us for tea and cookies any time between 6:30 and 7:20 pm.

Workshops & Classes

Fall Weekend Retreat in West Virginia

led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen

September 23-25, 2011 From 6:00 pm Friday to

2:00 pm Sunday Practicing mindfulness in a rural setting for the whole weekend, together with a loving and supportive community.

Days of Mindfulness

led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen

Saturdays at the MPCF in Oakton, Virginia (in the Chapel) July 23, 2011 and August 13, 2011.

from 8:45 am -4:00 pm.

Half Days of Mindfulness

led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen

Saturdays at the MPCF in Oakton, Virginia (in the Chapel) June 18, 2011 and July 30, 2011

8:45am -1:00 pm

Winter Weekend Retreat in West Virginia

led by Anh-Huong and Thu Nguyen

December 9-11, 2011 From 6:00 pm Friday to 2:00 pm Sunday Practicing mindfulness in a rural

setting for the whole weekend, together with a loving and supportive community.

Submission Guidelines

Along The Path is a newsletter of the art of mindful living. Practicing mindfulness cultivates understanding, love, compassion, and joy. This practice helps us to take care of and transform suffering in our lives and in our society.

Along The Path is intended as an inspiration and teaching resource for those practicing mindfulness in daily life.

Writers please submit stories, poems, photos, art and teachings on mindfulness, based on your direct experience of transformation through the practice of mindfulness. Instead of giving academic or intellectual views, the teachings emphasize simple and successful ways to transform the difficulties and limitations in our lives so that each day becomes an experience of peace, happiness, and freedom.

Send submissions to Garrett Phelan

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Along the Path

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