

**Starr King School for the Ministry**

**ILLNESS, HEALTH & HEALING**

**Fall 2016**



*Each of us has been, or someday could be, Lazarus. Each one of us could be a person who emerges from the tomb of our own serious illness, life crisis, or other catastrophe. When, sometime in our lives, we hear the command, "Lazarus, come forth!" we will understand that the person being spoken to is none other than ourselves. In their journey home, not everybody will follow in Lazarus' footsteps. But everyone will recognize the terrain - the steep cliffs, the sharp stones, the dense thickets, and all the other features that indicate we are feeling our way through the landscape of healing. -- Lewis Richmond, Healing Lazarus: A Buddhist's Journey from Near Death to New Life (2004).*

**Course Description:** "Illness, Health & Healing" is a three-unit online class. The class invites students to listen for the voices of the ill, disabled and/or not neuro-typical even when those voices are tinged with pain and confusion or have long been ignored. It invites students to engage with scriptures and stories from a variety of religious traditions that address the timeless themes of illness and healing. Finally, the class invites students to

develop practices that promote health and healing in their own lives, congregations, and ministries.

### **Course Requirements:**

- Students are expected to participate on-line in class weekly.
- Students will discuss each week's texts through on-line posts, online group sessions, and/or off-line conversations with classmates via skype, phone, or in person.
- Students will do one practice exercise per week and comment on at least one classmate's practice post. They will also do a brief weekly check-in about their own spiritual/health practice.
- Students will read, watch and reflect on at least 3 recommended books or watch 6 recommended films or some combination thereof during the semester. Other books, films, or projects may be substituted with the instructor's approval.

**Course Objectives:** By the end of the semester students should be able to:

- (1) Reflect on what they have learned by listening for the voices of those who are ill, disabled and/or not neuro-typical and cite some examples, including how the class has affected their own lives and ministries.
- (2) Discuss how their faith or spiritual tradition – and one other – address illness, health and healing.
- (3) Share some of the joys, lessons, and struggles involved in caring for their own health and well-being during the semester.

**Course Instructor:** The class will be taught by Rev. Christine Fry, an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister and cancer survivor. Chris has

been teaching at Starr King for the Ministry for over twelve years. She facilitated writing groups for more than twenty years in a variety of settings including hospitals, jails, recovery programs, homeless programs, and churches.

**Virtual Office Hours:** Chris is available via skype, phone and occasionally in person, on Monday and Wednesday afternoons by advance appointment. She is also available through e-mail at [revcfry@aol.com](mailto:revcfry@aol.com).

## **Fall 2016 Calendar**

### **With Suggested Books & Films**

*(note: students will need to read 3 books or watch 6 films, or some combination thereof)*

### **Week One**

#### **September 5: The Wounded Storyteller**

##### **Suggested Books:**

Hanagarne, Josh. The World's Strongest Librarian: A Memoir of Tourette's, Faith, Strength, and the Power of Family (2013). \$15.00. ASIN: B009VMC98O

Taylor, Jill Bolte. My Stroke of Insight: A Brain Scientist's Personal Journey (2006) \$9.00. ASIN: B00XI0S6K8

##### **Suggested Film:**

*Healing Words: Poetry & Medicine with John Fox* [\$16.00 ASIN: B001CR49AM]

## **Week Two**

### **September 12: Broken Bodies, Healing Spirits**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Earle, Rev. Mary C. Broken Body, Healing Spirit: Lectio Divina and Living with Illness (2003) \$14.00 ASIN: B00ADVUDW6

Jaffe, Rabbi Hirschel. Why Me? Why Anyone? (1994) \$1.00 ISBN-10: 1568212607

#### **Suggested Film:**

*Ram Dass: Fierce Grace* [\$16.00 ASIN: B00008DDV1]

## **Week Three**

### **September 19: Healing Lazarus**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Richmond, Louis. Healing Lazarus: A Buddhist's Journey from Near Death to New Life (2002) \$4.00 ISBN-10: 0743422600

Bernhard, Toni. How to Be Sick: A Buddhist-Inspired Guide for the Chronically Ill and Their Caregivers (2010) \$7.00 ISBN-10: 0861716264

#### **Suggested Film:**

*The Mindfulness Movie* [\$15.00 ASIN: B00IRMME2U]

## **Week Four**

### **September 26: Hannah's Gift**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Housden, Maria. Hannah's Gift: Lessons from a Life Fully Lived (2002). \$10.00. ISBN-10: 0553381221

Philo, Jolene. A Different Dream for My Child: Meditations for Parents of Critically or Chronically Ill Children (2009). \$8.00. ISBN-10: 1572933070

#### **Suggested Film:**

*Extraordinary Measures* [\$8.00 ASIN: B0027G97J2]

## **Week Five**

### **October 3: A Body, Undone**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Crosby, Christina. A Body, Undone: Living on After Great Pain (2016). \$15.11 ISBN-10: 1479833535

Walker, Robert (ed). Speaking Out: Gifts of Ministering Undeterred by Disabilities (2012). \$18.00. ASIN:B007XXRU9G

#### **Suggested Film:**

*Jean-Dominique Bauby, The Diving Bell and the Butterfly* [\$6.00 ASIN: B00XI056K8]

## **Week Six**

### **October 10: Speak the Language of Healing**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Kuner, Susan and Carol Orsborn, Linda Quigley, and Karen Stroup. Speak the Language of Healing: Living with Breast Cancer Without Going to War (1999). \$3.00 ISBN-10: 1573241687

Lorde, Audre. The Cancer Journals (2006). \$13.00 ASIN: B00C5UM2PE

#### **Suggested Film:**

*Five* [\$10.00 ASIN: B008M6MFY8]

## **Week Seven**

### **October 17: Family, Friends & Caregivers**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Feiler, Bruce. The Council of Dads: My Daughters, My Illness, and the Men Who Could Be Me (2010). \$2.00 ASIN: B003M3LHS

Pogrebin, Letty Cottin. How to Be a Friend to a Friend Who's Sick (2013). \$4.00 ASIN: B00B3M3LHS

#### **Suggested Film:**

*My Left Foot* [\$6.00 ASIN: B004U7MR1Y]

## **Reading Week**

**October 24**

### **Week Eight**

**October 31: Being Mortal**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Gawande, Atul. Being Mortal: Medicine and What Matters in the End (2014). \$15.60. ISBN-10: 0805095152.

Kalanithi, Paul. When Breath Becomes Air (2016). \$15 ISBN\_10: 081298840X

#### **Suggested Film:**

*Wit* [\$6.00 ASIN: B000005MKKV]

### **Week Nine**

**November 7: In the Age of AIDS**

#### **Suggested Books:**

Monette, Paul. Borrowed Time: An AIDS Memoir (1998) \$11.00 ASIN: BOOITBWXW2C

Strub, Sean. Body Counts: A Memoir of Politics, Sex, AIDS and Survival (2014) \$3.00 ASIN: B00BSAZ6PA

**Suggested Film:**

*The Dallas Buyers Club* [\$5.00 ASIN: B006UO2SKA]

**Week Ten**

**November 14: Bi-Polar Lives**

**Suggested Books:**

Moezzi, Melody. Haldol and Hyacinth: A Bi-Polar Life (2013) \$1.00 ASIN: B00AGWOVGG]

Pierce-Baker, Charlotte. This Fragile Life: A Mother's Story of a Bi-Polar Son (2012) \$14.00 ASIN: B008ALQDSO

**Suggested Film:**

*Up/Down: Bi-Polar and Living* [\$20.00 ASIN: B002X78Q8Q]

**Week Eleven**

**November 21: Counting Blessings**

**Suggested Books:**



Simmons, Philip. Learning to Fall: The Blessings of an Imperfect Life (2000) \$7.00 ASIN: B000FBFNH4

Sacks, Oliver. Gratitude (2015) \$10.11 ISBN\_10: 0451492935

**Suggested Film:**

*The Man Who Learned to Fall [available through instructor, VHS]*

**Week Twelve**

**November 28: The Reason I Jump**

**Suggested Books:**

Higashida, Naoki. The Reason I Jump: The Inner Voice of a 13 Year-Old Boy with Autism (2013) \$10.00 ASIN: B00BVJ63CS

Suskind, Ron. Life, Animated: A Story of Sidekicks, Heroes and Autism (2014) \$11.00 ASIN: BOOJN867QG

**Suggested Film:**

*The Horse Boy [\$20.00 ASIN: B00346UX5E]*

**Week Thirteen**

**December 5: Healing Rituals**

**Suggested Books:**

Clarke, Jim. Creating Rituals: A New Way of Healing for Everyday Life (2011). \$12.46. ISBN-10: 0809147165.

Eulert, Don. Ritual & Healing: Stories of Ordinary and Extraordinary Transformation (2013). \$16.82. ISBN-10: 1628650265.

***Suggested Film:***

*Little Saints: Eat a Mushroom Talk to God (2015) Amazon Video Rental \$4.55*

**Week Fourteen**

**December 12: Closing Reflections**