

DRAFT

## SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR THESE TIMES



*This is not a time to live without a practice. It is a time when all of us will need the most faithful, self-generated enthusiasm (enthusiasm: to be filled with god) in order to survive in human fashion. Whether we reach this inner state of recognized divinity through prayer, meditation, dancing, swimming, walking, feeding the hungry or enriching the impoverished is immaterial. We will be doubly bereft without some kind of practice that connects us, in a caring way, to what begins to feel like a dissolving world. – Alice Walker, We Are the Ones We Have Been Waiting For (2006)*

**Course Description:** In this semester-long, on-line course, students will explore, develop and/or deepen their spiritual practice and support others in doing the same. The class will be experiential and multi-religious, drawing on some of the wisdom and practices of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and earth-based traditions, as well as on neuroscience, poetry, and deep ecology. Please see the calendar below for the list of practices that will be covered in class.

### **Course Requirements:**

- Students are expected to participate in class, on-line, weekly.

- Students will need to engage with the texts related to that week's theme, doing at least 1 post and commenting on a classmate's post.
- They will also be asked to do one spiritual practice exercise, and comment on at least one classmate's practice post each week.
- By the fifth week of class, students will commit to doing a particular spiritual practice regularly each week for the duration of the semester. They will post weekly reflections on their experiences, struggles, and joys.
- Finally, in order to deepen their understanding and practice of one or more spiritual practices, students will be asked to read and comment on two of the suggested books or four of the suggested films or some combination thereof. Substitutions are also possible with the prior approval of the instructor.

**Course Objectives:** By the end of the semester, it is expected that students will have (1) developed, deepened and/or begun some form of personal spiritual practice; (2) created a caring and collaborative learning community; (3) sampled a variety of spiritual practice exercises; and (4) be able to cite and discuss how practices such as mindfulness, gratitude, movement, the arts and soulful rest promote health and well-being, foster spiritual connection, counter oppressions, and help build joyful, just and sustainable communities and ministries.

**Course Texts:** There will be no required course text(s). Instead, each week there will be a selection of short readings, video clips, and poetry. Books and films related to the week's theme will also be suggested.

**Course Instructor:** The class will be taught by Rev. Christine Fry, an ordained Unitarian Universalist minister. Chris has been teaching at Starr King for the Ministry for over twelve years offering classes on Forgiveness and Moral Repair; Families & Spiritual Practices; and Illness, Health & Healing. She lives in Davis, California with her husband, Isao Fujimoto, a retired UC Davis professor and long-time community activist.

## **SPRING 2018 CALENDAR**

*Please Note: The books and films listed below are NOT required reading or watching. Students are asked to do a reflection for 2 of the books, 4 of the films, or some combination thereof. Substitutions are possible with prior approval by the instructor. Prices listed are from Amazon, lower prices may be available from other sellers.*

### **Week of January 29, 2018**

#### **SPIRITUAL PRACTICES FOR THESE TIMES**

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

Rahman, Imam Jamal. Spiritual Gems of Islam: Insights & Practices from the Qur'an, Hadith, Rumi & Muslim Teaching Stories to Enlighten the Heart and Mind (2010). \$14.81, ISBN-10: 1954734305.

Taylor, Barbara Brown. An Altar in the World: A Geography of Faith (2009). \$7.17, ASIN: BOOBP0M570

##### **Suggested Films:**

Man on Wire, 2008 (Amazon video, \$3.99).

Young@Heart, 2007 (Amazon video, \$3.99).

### **Week of February 5, 2018**

#### **MINDFULNESS IN EVERYDAY LIFE**

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

Scott, Alexander, ed. Everyday Spiritual Practice: Simple Pathways for Enriching Your Life (1999). \$16.00, ASIN: B004Q&CI4E

Vaughn-Lee, Llewellyn and Hilary Hart. Spiritual Ecology: 10 Practices to Reawaken the Sacred in Everyday Life (2017). \$11.01, ASIN: B06XF265YQ/

**Suggested Films:**

The Mindfulness Movie (Amazon Video, \$3.99).

Gurukalam, 2016 (Amazon Video, \$3.99).

**Week of February 12, 2018**

**MOVING OUR BODIES**

**Suggested Books:**

Michaelson, Jay. God in Your Body: Kabbalah, Mindfulness and Embodied Spiritual Practice (2008). \$17.01, ISBN-10: 158023304X

Winton-Henry, Cynthia. Dance – The Sacred Art: The Joy of Movement as a Spiritual Practice (2009). \$14.81, ISBN-10: 159473268X

**Suggested Films:**

The Professor: Tai Chi's Journey West, 2016 (Amazon, \$14.32)

Yoga Is: A Transformational Journey, 2012 (Amazon Video, \$3.99).

**Week of February 19, 2017**

**EATING, FASTING & FEASTING**

**Suggested Books:**

Bays, Jan Chozen. Mindful Eating: A Guide to Rediscovering a Healthy and Joyful Relationship with Food (2009). \$15.54, ISBN-10: 1590305310

Farajaje, Ibrahim and Katherin George Golitzen. Queen of Months: An Eco-Halal Sufi Vegan/Vegetarian Cookbook for Ramadan and Beyond, kindle (2013). \$6.99, ASIN: B00E193490.

**Suggested Films:**

The Hundred-Foot Journey. (Amazon Video, \$3.99).

Sweet Bean, 2016 (Amazon Video, \$4.99).

**Week of February 26, 2018**

**MAKING ART**

**Suggested Books:**

Azara, Nancy. Spirit Taking Form: Making a Spiritual Practice of Making Art (2002). \$17.25, ISBN-10: 1590030168.

Paintner, Christine Valters. The Artist's Rule: Nurturing Your Creative Soul with Monastic Wisdom (2011). \$11.90, ASIN: B0IN7CUNIL.

**Suggested Films:**

Herman's House, 2013 (Amazon Prime).

The Danish Girl, 2015 (Amazon Video rental, \$3.99).

**Week of March 5, 2018**

**BEING OUTDOORS**

**Suggested Books:**

Chase, Steven. Nature as Spiritual Practice and/or A Field Guide to Nature as Spiritual Practice (2011). \$14.69, ISBN-10: 0802840108.

Miller, Karen Maezen. Paradise in Plain Sight: Lessons from a Zen Garden (2014). \$14.47, ASIN: B005WZ1QFW.

**Suggested Films:**

Love thy Nature, 2017 (Amazon Video, \$4.99).

Seed: The Untold Story, 2016, (Amazon Video, \$4.99).

**Week of March 12, 2018**

**TENDING TO RELATIONSHIPS**

**Suggested Books:**

Brown, Brene. Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone (2017). \$11.33, ISBN-10: 0812995848.

Schroeder, C. Call. Practice Makes PURPOSE: Six Spiritual Practices that Will Change Your Life & Transform Your Community (2017). \$13.95, ASIN: B075NPRF3D.

**Suggested Films:**

Anywhere But Here (Amazon Video rental, \$3.99).

Nebraska, 2013 (Amazon Video rental, \$3.99).

**Week of March 19, 2018**

**SOULFUL REST**

**Suggested Books:**

Niequist, Shauna. Present Over Perfect: Leaving Behind Frantic for a Simpler, More Soulful Way of Living (2016). \$8.78, ISBN-10L 0310342996.

Schaper, Donna. Sabbath Sense: A Spiritual Antidote for the Overworked (2005). \$10.89, ASIN: B0036S4DB0

**Suggested Films:**

Chariots of Fire, 2011 (Amazon Video, \$3.99).

Paris Can Wait, 2017 (Amazon, \$15.49).

**Week of March 26, 2018**

**READING WEEK**

**Week of April 2, 2018**

**PRAYER**

**Suggested Books:**

Epperly, Bruce. Praying with Process Theology: Spiritual Practices for Personal and Planetary Healing (2017). \$10.00, ISBN-10: 1940447267.

Wikstrom, Erik Walker. Simply Pray: A Modern Spiritual Practice to Deepen Your Life (2011). \$11.94, ASIN: B008MPCQN4

**Suggested Films:**

The Mysteries of the Jesus Prayer, 2011 (Amazon video, \$4.99).

Thomas Keating: A Rising Tide of Silence, 2014 (Amazon Prime)

**Week of April 9, 2018**

## **TRAUMA & SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**

### **Suggested Books:**

Tinkham, Pamela. Healing Trauma from the Inside Out: Practices from the East & West (2017). \$19.99, ASIN: B06XGGCVFM.

Vincent, Kristen. Beads of Healing: Prayer, Trauma, and Spiritual Wholeness (2017). \$10.86, ASIN: B0IMS64C17.

### **Suggested Films:**

Poetry, 2011 (AmazonVideo, \$2.99).

Of Men and War, 2016 (Amazon Video, \$3.99)

## **Week of April 16, 2018**

## **WORK, SERVICE, AND ACTIVISM**

### **Suggested Books:**

Gould, Meredith. Deliberate Acts of Kindness: A Field Guide to Service as a Spiritual Practice (2017). \$18.00, ISBN-10: 19404143X.

Harvey, Andrew and Carolyn Baker. Savage Grace: Living Resiliently in the Dark Night of the Globe (2017). \$13.99, ISBN-10: 1532030541.

### **Suggested Films:**

Raw Faith, 2012, (Amazon, \$12.99)

Time to Choose, 2016, (Amazon Prime).

## **Week of April 23, 2018**

## **PILGRIMAGE AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE**



### **Suggested Books:**

Cousineau, Phil. The Art of Pilgrimage: The Seeker's Guide to Making Travel Sacred (2012). \$13.35, ASIN: B0096Q25BI

Kujawa-Holbrook, Sheryl. Pilgrimage – the Sacred Art: Journey to the Center of the Heart. \$14.81, ISBN-10: 1594734720

### **Suggested Films:**

Sacred Journeys with Bruce Feiler, 2015, (Amazon, \$18.02).

The Way with Martin Sheen, 2012, (Amazon Video, \$2.99).

### **Week of April 30, 2018**

#### **GRATITUDE**

### **Suggested Books:**

A Network for Grateful Living. Everyday Gratitude: Inspiration for Living Life as a Gift (2018). \$12.95, ASIN: B075657895.

Lisowitz, Nina and Mary Beth Sammons. Living Life as a Thank You: The Transformative Power of Daily Gratitude (2009). \$13.97, ASIN: B0045SNPS45

### **Suggested Films:**

The Castle, 1999, (Amazon, \$12.74).

The Color of Paradise, (Amazon Video, rental \$2.99),

### **Week of May 7, 2018**

#### **CELEBRATING WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED**

DRAFT (October 23, 2017)