

Center for Contemplative Studies

YEAR IN REVIEW 2018-2019

We've Been Branching Out...



The Top Numbers

3,381

WCU students exposed to contemplative practice this year

490

local community members exposed to contemplative practice

735

sessions of guided practice offered

10

student leaders presented practice sessions

8

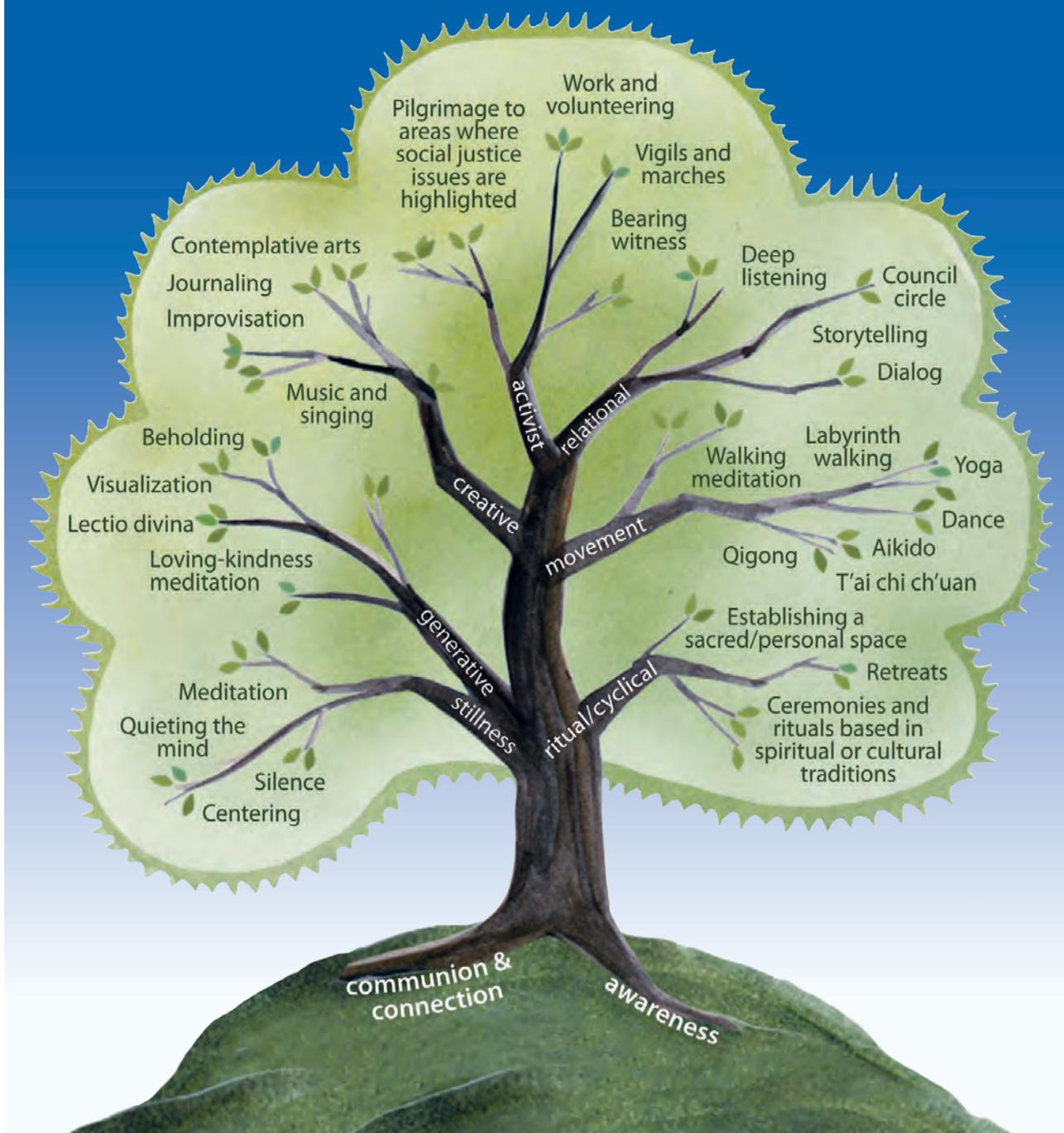
formal events with outside speakers presented to the community

18

special programs for student groups and organizations

The Tree of Contemplative Practices

This tree, developed by the **Center for Contemplative Mind in Society** (www.contemplativemind.org) is the inspiration for our logo, and it's also the guide for our efforts to branch out—to meet more students and community members with practices that fit their lives.



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We've Been Branching Out...

 The CCS offered **240 sessions of mindfulness meditation** and **335 sessions of yoga** this past year. But that was just a beginning, because we've been branching out—adding new contemplative practices to appeal to other students with different ways of being in the world.

 We offered **90 sessions of mindful art practice**—contemplative drawing, painting, or crafting together in groups—thanks to our innovative graduate assistant Michelle Laurenzi and BFA candidate Emily McGuigan.

 We offered **60 sessions of Aikido**, taught by Carolyn Flechsig, laboratory coordinator for the chemistry department, and Antonio Aloia, a graduate student in history. This contemplative martial art allows you to defend yourself while ensuring the well-being of your attacker. It's a different way of thinking: harmonizing the energy of the situation.

 We've added contemplative music practice, with **drum circles** led by Dr. Angela Guerriero and music education students. This started as part of our end-of-semester "Stress

Buster" days, and it grew into two further free sessions in the spring. More is on the schedule for 2019-2020.

 This spring, Dr. McCown traveled to the UK to be trained in an **evidence-based contemplative practice known as Shared Reading**—where participants read aloud and dialogue about great literature. He led **two 4-week groups for students**, in which research showed improvements in wellbeing and increases in mindfulness.



Non-competitive games teach us to share mindfulness



Stress Buster drum circle



Therapy dogs—amazing mindfulness teachers!

 The undergraduate **minor in Contemplative Studies** closed the year with **53 students**, learning mindfulness and other contemplative skills for study and for life. It is exciting to note that their focus on calm and quiet seems to enhance academic performance: our **24 graduates** this year had an **average GPA of 3.6**.

 The **new graduate certificate in Applied Mindfulness** will ultimately touch countless folks in the community. Our first cohort of 19 students, culminate their program by teaching, evaluating,

and researching a curriculum they develop for a group they care about. Programs are being offered in summer 2019 **for parents of young children, students with reading differences, athletes in training, frail elders, and people in recovery**. And that's just the start.

 As always, we've been **eager to respond to any requests** from WCU faculty, students, and staff to **offer practice workshops or talks for specific classes or groups**, like MBA604, Components of Effective Leadership, NSG109,

Health Issues of Women, the Psychology Club, and, of course we love presenting for orientation and FYEs and for graduate student events...

...And we feel the same way about **requests from the wider community**. We created programs for ASPIRE; for elementary school counselors from West Chester schools; staff at SPIN and Networks for Training; Chester County school nurses and counselors; and we sponsored Act 48 credits for a national meeting of the Mindfulness in Education Network (MiEN).



Investigating subtle energy with Dr. Peggy Fuhs in a Fall Saturday Seminar



Meditation session in the CCS practice room



Distinguished speaker Dr. Andrew Newberg speaking on Spirituality and Mental Health

A Letter from our Co-Directors

Dear Friends,

As the quick overview on the previous pages shows, The Center for Contemplative Studies (CCS) has been taking on new strategies to fulfill our core mission of spreading the benefits of contemplative practice to our students—indeed, to the whole campus community and beyond. We've been finding more and different practices to expand our daily extra-curricular programming. We've been adding new academic programs and expanding our offerings of lectures and workshops by WCU faculty and visiting contemplative scholars. And we've been furthering our engagement with the tri-county area and beyond. The branching out that we are doing is inherent in contemplative studies. The tree of contemplative practices (on page 3) acts as a kind of map for our growth. There's plenty of room to spread out.

A demonstrated impact on student stress: *Anxiety goes down, busy minds get slower, and tense bodies relax.*

Contemplative practices are ways of being, based on skills, that help one to pause and reflect on experience rather than be hijacked by immediate reactions. The growing literature on contemplation in higher education shows that students trained in such skills can better focus their attention and regulate their emotions, can more objectively encounter new ideas and keep their minds open long enough to think critically, and—perhaps most important—can recognize their shared humanity in others and reach out to them with care and kindness. This is, we hope it goes without saying, a valuable dimension in a university education.

Adding Extracurricular Practices

The above benefits are why, as we add to our daily extra-curricular programming, we try to appeal to students' very different ways of thinking and engaging with the world. The developing scientist, the excited entrepreneur, the impassioned educator, or compassionate clinician, the writer searching for an authentic voice, the musician camped out in the practice room, the sculptor driven to the studio, or the athlete pushing the limits—there's a way of practice to fit everyone. This year, we added regular sessions of mindful art practice, Aikido

(a contemplative martial art), drum circles, and shared reading (groups in which we read stories and poems aloud). And, of course, many new approaches are featured in our “Stress Buster Day” practice marathons that we hold before finals week each semester, in which we also include therapy dogs—some of the very best mindfulness instructors around!

All our added practices have demonstrated an impact on student stress. Student estimates of their stress levels, entered at the start and finish of each practice session and compiled through our computer system, show that *anxiety goes down, busy minds get slower, and tense bodies relax*. The measurements of those changes are not only statistically significant, they mean a lot to the students and the people they interact with, because calm feelings get shared.

The new practices will all return next year, during our 8am to 9pm, Monday through Thursday schedule. Plus, we have plans to add more music-and art-based practice sessions, a semester-long shared reading group, and a Friday series of contemplative music concerts and art shows.



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Yet another way we are reaching out to more students is through peer-to-peer delivery of our practice sessions whenever possible. When students lead the practices, they make different connections than faculty make. They use words and gestures that fit their fellow students’ experiences of the world more precisely—while still remaining deeply connected to millennia of practice in contemplative traditions around the world. Our student instructors have trained rigorously in what they offer—many are enrolled in the Contemplative Studies Minor and/or the

WCU Yoga Teacher Training program. We also provide them with additional training in CCS procedures, and they must earn certification in Mental Health First Aid®, a day-long training offered through WCU. This coming year, as we continue to build care and safety into our programming, a new CCS staff training will ensure trauma-sensitive practice.

A Letter from our Co-Directors

Branching out in Undergraduate Academics

Our undergraduate academic reach is significant. Consider that the Minor in Contemplative Studies has just completed its fifth year. We have graduated more than 70 students since spring of 2015, including 24 this year. For the past three years, we have maintained enrollment of more than 50 students in the program. And if you consider all the students in our designated courses, 1,521 students were exposed to some form of contemplative practice just this past year—that's about 7,500 across five years. A further foray into undergraduate academics this past year included Dr. McCown's participation in the team that teaches HON100, "Self-Awareness" in the WCU Honors College, reaching 80 students. In fall 2019, he will teach an Honors Seminar (HON452) entitled "Mindfulness and Leadership."

We have plans to branch out in the minor next year, proposing additions of contemplative courses in music, art, and social work, as a start. The more that our students can see the contemplative dimension in their own majors, the faster and easier the minor will grow.

Growing Graduate Academics

At the graduate level, we've branched out too. While we have long been a site for Master's degree students in Public Health and Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs to get field experience, we've not had a specifically contemplative graduate program located at the CCS. Now we do. The Graduate Certificate in Applied Mindfulness started in fall 2018, offering wide-ranging possibilities for students. Just as our undergraduate minor is interdisciplinary and reaches out to students in all majors, the new certificate program is designed to augment or integrate with many different WCU graduate programs, including public health, social work, clinical mental health counseling, psychology, nursing, exercise and sport science, educational counseling, PK-12 education, higher education policy and student affairs, transformative education and social change, human resource management, and more that we are discovering as we go. And the curriculum carries an extra benefit for WCU, as the advanced training course includes demonstration groups, in which students are participant-observers in a six-week mindfulness course that includes 10 faculty and staff members as participants. Demand for the first group was so high that we offered another—and could have filled many more!

The first cohort—19 students—came together to form a multifaceted and highly supportive learning community. Just a few of the projects they are about to roll out in their workplaces and organizations include mindfulness groups for parents, for students with reading differences, for athletes training together, for frail elders and caregivers, for people in recovery, and more.

Here's one student's experience, as an example: "I practiced mindfulness in my first-grade classroom every day this school year. By the end, the students were leading the sit. On the last day of school, a student rang the bell, suggested we get into our mindful bodies, guided

a few breaths, and then we sat in silence. I felt my tense body release a bit and soaked in the energy from the group. In his tiny, but confident voice, he suggested we think of a memory of our time together. He ended the sit with another ring of the bell, and we began an emotional wrap up of our school year and the community we created. If I had any doubts of the power of mindfulness in the classroom, they melted away. Practicing mindfulness daily connected a diverse, active group

of first graders into a cohesive learning community!" The impact of this graduate certificate will ultimately be felt far and wide.

Reaching beyond the University

The Center has been offering contemplative-based programming through a seminar series—now known as the "Saturday Seminars," since 2011. This year's series included a lecture on the latest scientific evidence on mindfulness as a clinical intervention, and a seminar on the uses of mindfulness in education and community life for people with disabilities and their caregivers. Our branching out was a new policy of adding a hands-on workshop to at least one seminar each semester to give participants a chance to deepen their experience and learn new contemplative-based skills. In seminar/workshops, participants learned how to direct and share subtle energy, work with folks with disabilities, and use drawing as contemplative practice.



**The Graduate Certificate
in Applied Mindfulness
started in fall 2018,
offering wide-ranging
possibilities for students.**

A Letter from our Co-Directors

As our three-year-long distinguished speakers series, “Science, Spirit, and Health,” supported by a generous anonymous donor, wrapped up this year, we moved from neuroscientist Andrew Newberg’s fall talk on “Spirituality in Mental Health: Just How Crazy is ‘Crazy,’” to art historian James Elkins talking this spring about “Intense Encounters with Art Works.” The move was a shift of topic and venue (the John H. Baker Art Gallery in the E.O. Bull Art Center), pulling in faculty and students we’ve not directly appealed to before. On the morning after the talk, we also added a workshop by Dr. Elkins for WCU art students. We’re now finalizing plans for the next three-year series, with talks each semester under the bigger banner, “Contemplative Living in Action,” which will incorporate at least one workshop each year. First in the series will be an evening of conversation on contemplation and action with our Center’s good friend Pat Croce, scheduled on October 16, 2019. You’ll want to save that date!

Of course, we also continue to respond to requests to teach and support contemplative programs in educational and social institutions in the larger community. We’ve continued to deepen our collaboration with the Chester County Intermediate Unit and districts and schools in the area, providing talks and workshops. In fact, right now, we are now waiting to hear about a grant for a study of the effects of teacher mindfulness on student outcomes in special education classrooms, which is an important, under-researched area. We also have been running programs for non-profit organizations—such as staff training for SPIN, which serves people of all ages with autism and intellectual/developmental disabilities in Southeastern Pennsylvania and the Lehigh Valley; and our sponsoring of Act 48 credits for the annual conference of MiEN (Mindfulness in Education Network), a national organization promoting mindfulness in K-12 schools. This work is also building bridges, for collaboration on research, and opportunity for field experience for our students. And that’s how we’re not only branching out, but also planting new trees.

Wishing you the ease of wellbeing,
Don & Chris

A Farewell from our Co-Director, Chris Moriconi

As I retire, I am looking back on the process of co-creating the Center for Contemplative Studies and it has been an honor, one I will hold dear. It has been a wonderful process of give and take, unknowing and discovery with Don McCown, my co-director. I want to thank Don for staying the course through thick and thin. Yoga mats in the car trunk and squeezing in mindfulness classes between faculty responsibilities has been a practice of balance from the start. The Center for Contemplative Studies began in 2011 as a virtual Center with a mission and vision but no identifiable space on the WCU campus until, “out of the blue”, in 2015, Pat and Diane Croce made a generous gift that has enabled Don and I to grow and develop CCS mindfulness programming for students, as well as for staff and faculty. These are efforts to grow and enhance a culture of mindful awareness within the university community.

Many thanks to Dean Scott Heinerichs, who has been a continued supporter of CCS and a believer in our vision. Gratitude also to all of the WCU students, graduate assistants, and our first administrative assistant, Patti Spackman, who have been key to our mission. I leave CCS with all the people and memories held close to my heart. The CCS story of abiding in the present moment and acting from a spirit of generosity is the legacy of contemplative living. This will be the story that carries possibilities forward at the Center for Contemplative Studies.

Love to all,
Chris



Envoi – Contemplating the Future

As I am thinking through the potential challenges and delights of the coming academic year at CCS, I know that I will reach out, as has long been my practice, for the support of my friend and co-director. Although I may no longer find her close by, I trust that her kindness, compassion, and very practical wisdom will be right here with me. Or, there’s always the telephone!

In friendship,
Don

Our Formal Events

Our *Saturday Seminar Series* (ongoing since 2012) explores dimensions of contemplative life, both scientific and social. Our *Distinguished Speaker Series* (Supported by a wonderful anonymous donor!) brings leading thinkers to campus to educate us on "Science, Spirit, and Health."

Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

Meet us at the Mather Planetarium for

**Looking Up:
Fall Stars Evoke Wonder**

Enjoy star gazing the fall sky.
Use this time for exploration - and as a reminder to be present in the moment.

**Wednesday, October 10
2:30-3:30pm**

Plan to arrive 15 minutes early - doors close at 2:50pm sharp!

FREE with Student ID

WCU WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

Saturday Seminar Series Presents:

Dr. Peggy Fuhs – "Investing in Subtle Energy"

Saturday October 13th, 10am-12pm - Free with Student ID, \$30 all others
Center for Contemplative Studies, 700 S. Church St.

Register here: www.wcupa.edu/centerforcontemplativestudies/investinginsubtleenergy/

Dr. Margaret (Peggy) Fuhs, PhD, CCRP, practices as a transpersonal psychotherapist, nurse practitioner, consultant, teacher, and healer. She maintains a private practice with individuals, couples and groups, and facilitates seminars and trainings internationally, using a synthesis of traditional and alternative healing methods as vehicles for personal growth and transformation. Peggy is Director and cofounder of The Institute for Therapeutic Touch and Integrated Modalities in Paoli PA, and practices at the Mindfulness Institute Treatment Center in Paoli, PA, and Psych Choices of the Delaware Valley in Drexel Hill PA. She is also adjunct faculty at the University of Pennsylvania School of Nursing.

The focus of Peggy's expansive work is to assist people to grow into a more accepting and loving sense of themselves and others, bring healing to body, mind and spirit, create energy for recovery, health or peaceful death, and transform unneeded patterns so that new creative life can emerge. She has worked extensively with people across the spectrum of need, including those with physical illnesses, episodic and/or long-standing emotional difficulties, those in major transitions, as well as those who desire greater self-actualization. She has particular interest and experience in the areas of mind-body integration, healing chronic pain, abuse-related recovery, synchronic/unintentional disorders, the use of touch in psychotherapy, and the use of the "Healing Fallows."

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Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

"Being with art and its creation: a contemplative approach"

Saturday, February 6, 10am-12pm
Kristopher Benedict: Artist Talk and Workshop

Kristopher Benedict will present an overview of his work and experiences as a contemporary painter with a focus on themes of transformation, belief, community, and isolation. The talk will address how the artist's view of his painting practice as a means of understanding the self and the world both runs counter to and reflects the complexities of modern life. He will also lead a brief drawing workshop.

Kristopher Benedict's paintings have been widely exhibited in solo and group exhibitions across the nation, including New York, Miami, Chicago, Minneapolis, Houston, and Philadelphia. His work is in the public collections of the B&O Museum, Ford Institute of Art, and The Daniels Museum of Art. He holds a BFA from The Cooper Union, and an MFA from Colorado University. He lives outside of Philadelphia and is an Assistant Professor of Painting and Drawing at West Chester University.

Some artists, like van Gogh, and others like Picasso, have been able to create art that is both a reflection of their inner world and a window into the world around them. Kristopher Benedict's work is a testament to this. His art is a powerful expression of his inner world, and it is a window into the world around him. He will be presenting a talk and a workshop on his work, and we are excited to have him on campus.

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Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

Saturday Seminar Series Presents:

**Mindfulness and Disability:
A Day of Talk and Action**

Saturday November 10th, 10am-2:30pm
Center for Contemplative Studies, 700 S. Church St.

Mindfulness is NOT a therapy or technique for fixing people. It is, rather, a way of living that emphasizes the ways we ALL depend upon each other for support and friendship. It is a way of building community to include everyone.

Join our panel of speakers for a day of exploration. In the morning (10-Noon), our presenters will help us consider how mindfulness generates an atmosphere that is supportive for everyone—across the lifespan—in a family, school, or organization. Then we'll have lunch and share in the community we are building for ourselves. In the afternoon (1-3), we will ground our understanding, as we practice mindfulness in workshops offered by each presenter.

Feel free to attend the whole day, or just the morning talks or afternoon workshops by themselves. However the day might work for you, you are welcome.

\$20 - Free with student ID
Register at www.wcupa.edu/ccs

Participants:

- Dr. Don McCown, Center for Contemplative Studies
- Brenda Eaton, Chester County Intermediate Unit
- Dr. Charles E. Gallagher, Occupational Therapist
- Pat Amos, MA, Consultant and Autism activist
- Dr. Chris Martorel, Center for Contemplative Studies

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Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

"Literature and Health"

Wednesday, March 6, 5:00-6:00pm
700 S. Church St., Ehinger Annex
Dr. Josie Billington
Research and Deputy Director, Centre for Research into Reading, Literature and Society
University of Liverpool

This event is FREE and open to the community.
TO REGISTER - go to www.wcupa.edu/ccs/CRS/CRS%20index.htm

Dr. Billington specializes in Victorian literature and in research on reading and health. Dr. Billington has published extensively on the power of literary reading to influence mental health and well-being, particularly in the areas of depression, dementia, and chronic pain, and has engaged in research on reading in prisons, reading with children and families, and the psychology of reading.

WCU WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

presents

Are You Mindful? The Science Linking Mindfulness, Stress & Health

Saturday, April 13, 10am-12noon
Jeffrey M. Grossman, Ph.D.
Assistant Professor of Psychology
Kean University, College of Science & Mathematics
Department of Psychology, Kean University, 1000 Morris Ave., Union, NJ 07081

Mindfulness – widely practiced through meditation and yoga – has become a major health trend. Books, magazines, websites, and social media all claim that mindfulness alleviates stress and promotes health & well-being, while keeping us in a state of present-moment bliss. But, do you buy it? Do you know the science? Just how good is the research, and how strongly do studies back these claims? Join Dr. Jeff Grossman to separate fact from fiction. Learn how mindfulness is currently being studied in health care, and how practicing mindfulness yourself MIGHT just improve your health.

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Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

Thursday, March 28, 6:30-8:30pm
Distinguished Speaker Series Presents:
James Elkins, PhD
John H. Baker Art Gallery, E.O. Ross Art Center
11 E. Bayshore Ave., West Chester University

"Intense Encounters with Artworks"

People talk about having intense encounters with artworks; they are hypnotized, transfixed, lost in the artwork, they have immersive or absorptive experiences. These same words are used to describe religious experience. Over the last several decades, I have studied the misunderstandings between the artwork and people of faith; religious themes remain unexamined in the artwork, unless the art is critical of religion; and equally religious scholars are mistreated in mainstream academe.

I will propose two reasons for this strange relationship between art and religion. First, there's the very close coincidence between the language describing religious experience and the words for aesthetic experience – a closeness some people may find uncomfortable or misleading. Second, academics and religious practitioners have different forms of conversation: the former tend to begin conversations with specifics about the artwork, and the latter may prefer to begin with general talk about the viewer's knowledge and experience of faith. I think this second reason can help a great deal in interesting conversations between the fields.

James Elkins grew up in Ithaca, New York, graduated from Cornell University in a graduate field of art history, and then worked for the National Endowment for the Arts. He spent his early career as a curator at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, and then worked for the National Endowment for the Arts. He is currently a professor at the University of Chicago. He has been teaching in the Department of Art History at West Chester University since 2008. He is the author of the book "Intense Encounters with Artworks" (University of Chicago Press, 2014).

WCU WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Join Us! The Center for Contemplative Studies

Thursday, November 1, 2018, 6:30-8:30pm
Distinguished Speaker Series Presents:
Spirituality and Mental Health: Just How Crazy is "Crazy"?
Andrew B. Newberg, M.D.
West Chester University, Brandywine Hall, Room 004
Register for this FREE event at www.wcupa.edu/ccs/centerforcontemplativestudies

ritical, psychological, neurological, and theological. We will consider all of these issues and try to determine how study, religious and spiritual experiences and beliefs actually are.

Andrew B. Newberg, M.D., is currently the Director of Research at the Mount Sinai Center of Integrative Medicine at Thomas Jefferson University and Hospital in Philadelphia. He is also a Professor in the Departments of Emergency Medicine and Radiology at Thomas Jefferson University and is an adjunct professor in the Department of Psychology at the University of Pennsylvania. Dr. Newberg has been particularly involved in the study of mystical and religious experiences, a field referred to as "neuropsychology." He has published over 200 peer reviewed articles and chapters on brain scans, brain imaging, and the study of religious and mystical experiences. He is the author of the new book entitled, "Mystical Experiences Change Your Brain: The New Science of Transformation," and co-author of the best-selling books, "How God Changes Your Brain" (Ballantine), "Why God Won't Go Away: Brain Science and the Biology of Belief" (Ballantine), "Words that Change Your Brain" (Plunkett Street Press), and "Sensory Deprivation, Science, and the Origin of Ordinary and Extraordinary Experiences" (Free Press).

Is God a delusion? Is a mystical experience just the brain having a seizure? Is a near death experience just the brain dying? Over the past 20 years, a great deal of research has explored the relationship between spirituality, mental health, and the brain. This data provides new insights into what religious and spiritual experiences mean. How they may or may not be related to brain activity, and how they may contribute to physical mental health. By reviewing the current research on neurobiology – the field linking the brain with spiritual experiences – we will consider how the brain and its health is related to spirituality. This information will be relevant on multiple levels, including:

WCU WEST CHESTER UNIVERSITY

Scholarship

Professional Development

Congratulations to Dr. Moriconi on completing the Psychiatric-Mental Health Nurse Practitioner program at University of Pennsylvania, and becoming licensed and certified!

Dr. McCown was on sabbatical leave for the spring semester and traveled to Liverpool in the UK, where he trained as a "Reader Leader" and received advanced mentorship training in the shared reading program of The Reader Organization, a national charity that runs reading groups in more than 500 locations in the UK. The program is evidence-based, with ongoing research through the University of Liverpool. Dr. McCown, with the help of MPH graduate students Garrett Skelton and Michelle Laurenzi is adding to the evidence base, through a pilot study at the CCS, and ongoing research involving Homeless veterans at the Coatesville VA Medical Center. He will present on the work with students this coming November at the annual conference of the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education, in Amherst, MA.

Dr. McCown completed the three-day "First Do No Harm" meditation safety training from Brown University that includes five modules: informed consent, screening, monitoring, mechanism, and management. The training covers the potential adverse effects of meditation, methods to ensure safety, and, particularly, trauma-informed methods of teaching. This material will be included in training student instructors for CCS programs, and in the Graduate Certificate in Applied Mindfulness courses.

Publications

McCown, D. (in press). Contemplation. In A. Possamai, & A. J. Blasi (Ed.), *The Sage Encyclopedia of Sociology of Religion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

McCown, D. (in press). Meditation. In A. Possamai, & A. J. Blasi (Ed.), *The Sage Encyclopedia of Sociology of Religion*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Mamberg, M.H. & McCown, D. (2018). Mindfulness-based programs de-reify self: DST clarifies a new therapeutic voice. In A. Konopka, H. Hermans, & M. Gonçalves (eds.) *The Dialogical Self in Psychotherapy: Across Schools and Cultures*. Abingdon: Routledge.

Reibel, D. & McCown, D. (2019). Mindfulness-based stress reduction: Theory, practice, and evidence base. In I. Ivtzan (ed.), *Handbook of Mindfulness-Based Programs: Every Established Intervention, from Medicine to Education*. Abingdon: Routledge.

International Presentation

Giorgino, V. & McCown, D. (2018). Opening a Contemplative Commons During the Great Transition: Reorienting the MBIs, *International Conference on Mindfulness (ICM) 2018*, Amsterdam, NL, July 10-13.

Posters

Moriconi, C., & McCown, D. (2018). Mindfulness practice within a psychiatric BSN clinical curriculum: A pilot study with substance use clients. *10th Annual Conference of Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education*, Amherst, MA, 5-7 October.

Moriconi, C., & McCown, D. (2018). Mindfulness practice within a psychiatric BSN clinical curriculum: A pilot study with substance use clients. *32nd American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) Conference*, Columbus, OH, 25 October.

Moriconi, C. (2018). Rapid-fire session: "Kids First: A pilot study of mindfulness and emotional well being for preschool children." *13th Annual Nursing Research Day*, Christiana Hospital, University of Delaware, 2 November.

Moriconi, C. (2019; accepted). *Holistic care in the community health setting: How do we get there?* *33rd American Psychiatric Nurses Association (APNA) Conference*, New Orleans, Louisiana, 4 October.

Much Gratitude to our Staff

It takes so many people to make the CCS run so efficiently. Thanks to all these folks for their dedication and kindness!

Graduate Assistants and Interns

King Frayneld is a graduate student in the WCU Master of Public Health program and a graduate assistant at the Center for Contemplative Studies, with an anticipated graduation date of spring 2020. He'll be with us again in 2019-20.

Michelle Laurenzi is a graduate student in the WCU Master of Public Health program and a graduate assistant at the Center for Contemplative Studies, graduating in spring 2019. She hopes to help bring mindfulness and contemplative practices to our student body as well as show everyone how easy it is to incorporate into their lives. Mindfulness has greatly helped Michelle as a student, and she believes it can be beneficial to everyone else as well.

Garett Skelton is a graduate student at WCU Master of Public Health program, and a graduate assistant on campus. His work at the Center for Contemplative Studies was in conducting research as part of the Applied Learning project for the MPH Program. Garett will graduate in spring 2019.

Yoga Teachers in Training

Abigail Kennedy is a Professional Studies major with a focus on Geography and Communication, with an anticipated graduation of spring 2020. She joined the WCU Yoga Teacher Training program fall of 2018 and has found it to be one of the most impactful experiences in her academic career. She completed the program this spring and hopes to focus her practice on helping children learn healthy ways to move their bodies.

Victoria Maurone is a senior Psychology major at WCU. She is in the Contemplative Studies minor program and

a candidate for yoga teacher certification. She teaches gentle yoga/mindful movement at the Center.

Upasna Singh is a dual-degree candidate working towards a BS in Cell and Molecular Biology and a BA in Spanish Language and Cultures, with anticipated graduation in 2022. She completed the Yoga Teacher Training program this spring.

Cheri Turnquest is a yoga instructor here at the Center of Contemplative Studies. She is currently in her third year of the Yoga Teacher Training program at WCU.

Mindful Art Instructor

Emily McGuigan is a Senior BFA student with a concentration in drawing and painting, and Psychology and International Business minors. Her future goals include a Master's degree in Art Therapy. Emily is passionate about mental health and believes in the power of creative expression to heal. She has led Mindful Art sessions at the Center, Monday through Thursday, during the spring semester.

Meditation Leader

Jules Hedrick is a first-year graduate student in the Master's program for Higher Education Policy and Student Affairs. She graduated Bloomsburg University with an Organizational Communication Studies degree and a minor in Professional Writing. Her hobbies consist of traveling, attending Zumba classes and practicing mindfulness and meditation.

Aikido Instructors

Antonio Aloia is currently a West Chester History graduate student and a graduate assistant for the History Department.

Carolyn Flechsig is the laboratory coordinator for the Chemistry Department, and a highly skilled practitioner and teacher.

About the Center for Contemplative Studies (CCS)

The CCS was developed in 2011 and was based on the WCU Stress Reduction Center, which it superseded. The new name was not so much inspiration as aspiration: to create a place and, even more importantly, an atmosphere on campus in which the benefits of all the great contemplative traditions could be explored and experienced by students and the whole community—for health and wellness, self-regulation, self-awareness, and, ultimately, for friendship and solidarity. Our overall goal is to clear a path for students to engage in contemplative educational experiences and personal practices that can promote their wellbeing during their educational career and throughout their lives. Because contemplative practices are relational and engender an attitude of friendliness towards all experiences, we hope that, over time, this attitude will grow to affect the entire West Chester University community.

Vision

To wake up our neighbors and ourselves to the eternal possibilities of the present moment.

Mission

Our mission is three-fold:

1. Deliver educational opportunities in contemplative studies for students, professionals, clinicians, and educators, both locally and internationally;
2. Support the West Chester University community and local institutions and organizations in applying contemplative practices to improve wellbeing for leaders, members, employees, clients, and constituencies;
3. Add to the research base about contemplative practices in clinical and educational applications, while training the next generation of teachers and researchers.



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