

Soul-Link, Inc.

"...fostering an awareness of and response to the sacred in nature, human nature and events of everyday life."

Volume 1 Issue 9
Spring 2003



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Plan to Attend the Spring Retreat - April 26, 2003

Remaking Reality: "The Power of Living Mindfully in a Chaotic World"

Whether personal, inter-personal, or international, life is often in turmoil. It is easy to feel overwhelmed when confronted with situations that are beyond our power to change. But there is power in being present to, and embracing the realities of life that can transform us and bring about change we never thought possible. Plan to join us for the spring retreat on Sat., April 26, 2003, as we focus on Remaking Reality: "The Power of Living Mindfully in a Chaotic World." This retreat will be held at a new location: The Celebration of Life Center at 977 S. Union. (On the east side of Union just north of Fountain St. and next to the 7-11 store.)

You may register by mail--using the registration form on the last page of the newsletter or you may call the Soul-Link phone number, 473-5852 and leave a message. Registration fee is \$15.00 for registrations received by April 21, 2003 and \$20.00 for walk-ins on the day of the retreat. Lunch is included.

Spiritual Literacy in Wartime - Facing Fear

Just when we thought it was safe to go back on an airplane, or down into the subways, or travel abroad, fear is back in America big-time. The government raised its "alert" status to orange and people began stockpiling emergency supplies. The media continued its nightly litanies of what we should and should not be afraid of, and millions tuned in gladiator-like "reality" shows in an effort to avoid reality.

It's not just terrorism that has us spooked. The economy is a major worry. In February 2003, U. S. consumer confidence is at a 10-year low; unemployment is higher than it's been since 1994. In the world at large, security and economic concerns are joined by fears of war, ethnic conflicts, famine, sickness, environmental disasters, and more.

Clearly, dealing with fear is a major spiritual challenge of our time. Considering all the mentions of this potent emotion in spiritual texts, it has always been so.

Fear is addictive. Once it is triggered, we keep coming back for more. Spiritual practices, however, can be used to interrupt the compulsive cycle, helping us to stand back and evaluate our fears or use them in ways that provide opportunities for spiritual growth. Sometimes the most important practice is to stay in the present moment.

--Frederic and Mary Ann Brussat, "Spiritual Literacy in Wartime," February 2003.

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SPRING 2003

Work On Soul-Link Center Nears Completion

Soul-Link participants shared their time and talent on a couple of work days in the new Soul-Link Center. There was plenty of cleaning and painting to be done and the efforts of many volunteers resulted in much being accomplished in a short time. During the next few weeks, furniture and accessories will be moved into the house and the Soul-Link Center will likely be available for activities in late March. The new site will provide space for a variety of Soul-Link small group events.



THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

Many thanks to Soul-Link participants who signed up during the winter retreat -- to volunteer their time, talent and tools; cleaning and painting in the Soul-Link Center.

Though the cleaning and painted is nearly completed, volunteers are invited to assist with other needs such as: organizing the resource center, providing clerical help, or serving in other areas as needed. Please see the volunteer opportunities insert in this newsletter for more information..



*The fastest way to know God is to serve
the God in someone else.*

--Peter Reinhart, *Bread Upon the Waters*

Upcoming 2003 Soul-Link Activities



- March 28 7:00 P.M. - "Befriending The Films" Movie Night, 914 Clinton Way. Movie to be seen: Pay It Forward. Call 630-3332 to RSVP.
- April 14 6:30-8:00 P.M. - Soul-Link
May 12 Potluck & Discussion at the
June 9 Soul-Link Center, 2413 Cascade Ave. No RSVP needed. Bring a favorite food dish.
- April 26 9:00 A.M.-2:30 P.M. - Spring Retreat at the Celebration of Life Center, 977 S. Union. *RSVP is encouraged.*
- May 9 3:00 P.M.-6:00 P.M.
OPEN HOUSE - New Soul-Link Center, 2413 Cascade Ave.
- May 10 10:00 A.M.- Noon - OPEN HOUSE, Soul-Link Center

Respect Mysteries

It is not within our grasp to explain the prosperity of the wicked or the suffering of the righteous. All we are called upon to do is to act justly ourselves.



Reality is more complex than we would like.
If we insist upon it making sense, we will find ourselves despairing.
Reality cannot be neatly packaged, bound with ribbon of morality.
Reality is greater than our ideas of good and evil;
Reality is beyond our right and wrong.
Reality is all that is, and this is often at odds with what we imagine it should be.

Where we stand up for justice, let us act.
Where we are confronted by Truth, let us keep silent.

--Rabbi Yannai in Wisdom of the Jewish Sages: A Modern Reading of Pirke Avot" by Rami M. Shapiro.

To practice this: Respect the mysteries in your life. Resist the temptation to seek explanations to the big questions or to try to make reality conform to your ideas. Rest in the riddles and just do what is yours to do.

Comfortable With Uncertainty

We can never know what will happen to us next. We can try and control the uncontrollable by looking for security and predictability, always hoping to be comfortable and safe. But the truth is that we can never avoid uncertainty. This not-knowing is part of the adventure. It's also what makes us afraid.

Wherever we are, we can use the tools of sitting, meditation, cultivating loving-kindness, compassion, joy, and equanimity.

The central question is not how we avoid uncertainty and fear, but how we relate to discomfort. How do we practice with difficulty, with our emotions, with the unpredictable encounters of an ordinary day? For those of us with a hunger to know the truth, painful emotions are like flags going up to say, "You're stuck!" We regard disappointment, embarrassment, irritation, jealousy, and fear as moments that show us where we're holding back, how we're shutting down. Such uncomfortable feelings are messages that tell us to perk up and lean into a situation when we'd rather cave in and back away.

When the flag goes up, we have an opportunity: we can stay with our painful emotion instead of spinning out. Staying is how we get the hang of gently catching ourselves when we're about to let resentment harden into blame, righteousness, or alienation. It's also how we keep from smoothing things over by talking ourselves into a sense of relief or inspiration. This is easier said than done.

Ordinarily we are swept away by habitual momentum. We don't interrupt our patterns even slightly. With practice, however, we learn to stay with a broken heart, with a nameless fear, with the desire for revenge. Sticking with uncertainty is how we learn to relax in the midst of chaos, how we learn to be cool when the ground beneath us suddenly disappears. We can bring ourselves back to the spiritual path countless times every day simply by exercising our willingness to rest in the uncertainty of the present moment--over and over again.

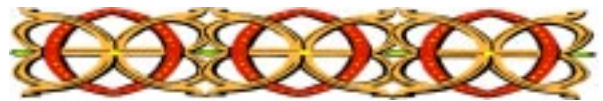
--Excerpts from *Comfortable With Uncertainty*, Pema Chodron

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TO:



Spring Retreat Registration - **Remaking Reality: "The Power of Living Mindfully in a Chaotic World.** Saturday, April 26, 2003 at the **Celebration of Life Center** at 977 S.Union. (on east side of Union, just north of Fountain St., adjacent to the 7-11).

Check-in at 9:00 a.m. Retreat from 9:30 a.m. - 2:30 p.m. Lunch included.

(Clip and return with your check made payable to: Soul-Link, Inc.)

Mail to: Soul-Link, Inc. P.O. Box 7790, Colorado Springs, CO 80933-7790

Registrations received by April 21: \$15.00 incl. lunch
Registrations on day of retreat: \$20.00 incl. lunch

No. of persons attending _____ Amount enclosed _____

Name _____ Phone No. _____

Name _____ Phone No. _____

Name _____ Phone No. _____

Please list any special dietary needs _____