CONTEMPLATIVE INQUIRY

Rev. Jim Burklo
Associate Dean of Religious Life, USC
burklo@usc.edu -- orl.usc.edu

For information about the USC Contemplative Pedagogy Faculty Interest Group, and to get on its email list, contact Dana Coyle, coyle@usc.edu, at the USC Center for Excellence in Teaching
FIGHT ON! TO CONQUER SELF
Arthur Zajonc, Amherst College professor of physics

He currently directs the Academic Program of the Center for Contemplative Mind which supports appropriate inclusion of contemplative practice in higher education. Out of this work and his long-standing meditative practice, Zajonc has authored *Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love*. He has co-authored a book with Parker Palmer, *The Heart of Higher Education: A Call to Renewal*. 
Arthur Zajonc’s Method

Birth of the Silent Self

Focused Attention

Open Attention

Integration

Inner Well-Being

Journey Home

Humility

Gratitude
from HUMILITY --

I am not here for me.

Dan Rauker
Interlude for Gratitude by Jim Burklo

- Thankfulness is the fruit of humility
  - and gratitude plants the seed of deeper humility
  - that opens hearts and minds to more
  - for which to be grateful
- Giving thanks to another human being
  - ennobles the giver and the receiver
  - dignifies everyday exchanges
  - and clears the way for love
- Giving thanks for what is received
  - from a source beyond human beings
  - invokes a personal relationship with the universe:
    - humanizes the cosmos
    - divinizes the human
- Thanksgiving transforms -
  - transsubstantiates -
    - that which is given and received:
      - dead matter
      - expresses living spirit
- The first "thank you"
  - marked a revolution...
  - a turning point
    - in the evolution of consciousness:
      - the moment when "it" became "you"
- Because there is no "thank"
  - without "you"....
Zajonc: 4 Part Bell Exercise

• Sound of bell
• Memory sound of bell
• Let go of bell sound
• Let come – whatever comes next – “echo” of bell sound

• http://blog.onbeing.org/post/724957186/bell-sound-meditation-shubha-bala-associate
Triangle Meditation - Zajonc
Triangle Meditation

• Movement from:
• 1. Sense image/symbol of triangle
• 2. Static mental image of triangle
• 3. Triangular image in movement
• 4. Triangle as pure thought
• “Pure mathematics is religion.” – Novalis
• “The concept triangle doesn’t ‘look’ like a triangle.” – Zajonc
Cultivating Attention

• “The faculty of voluntarily bringing back a wandering attention, over and over again, is the very root of judgment, character, and will... An education which would improve this faculty would be the education par excellence. But it is easier to define this ideal than to give practical directions for bringing it about.”

William James
Cultivating Attention

• “Imagination is a very high sort of seeing, which does not come by study, but by the intellect being where and what it sees.”

• “Never did any science originate, but by a poetic perception.”

-- Ralph Waldo Emerson
Inner Knowing

• “Look at the unknown!” – George Polya, mathematician ("How to Solve It")
• “Human being, know yourself!” – Thales, at the Temple of Delphi
• “For we ourselves are chisel and statue, conquerors and conquered at the same time – it is a true continued ‘self-conquering’.” – Erwin Shrodinger, physicist
• “The first and best victory is to conquer self.” – Plato
• “We meditate on the way things are.” – A. Zajonc
Henry David Thoreau

• “Time is but the stream I go a-fishing in. I drink at it; but while I drink I see the sandy bottom and detect how shallow it is. Its thin current slides away, but eternity remains. I would drink deeper; fish in the sky, whose bottom is pebbly with stars.” - Thoreau

• “When we meditate a sense-object, its thin, conventional nature ‘slides away’, but its eternal nature remains behind.” - Zajonc
Point and Periphery

Pick a point in the picture and stare at it for a few minutes, then release that focus to look at the whole picture. What do you experience?
Opening to the Peripheral

- “Sometimes far more interesting and intelligent things happen if we drop the attempt to plan everything centrally and become attentive instead to the periphery. Other people may have something to offer me; they also have ideas and intentions, after all... The next time you step into a meeting, turn to others; attend to them first, asking what the world has in store for you. The teachings of Socrates and Jesus seem almost exclusively to occur in response to sudden chance meetings or events... All the great sages seem to have been peripheral planners, not central planners.”
Relational Reality

• “Nature is understood now to be relational, ecological, and interdependent. Reality is constituted by events and relationships rather than separate substances or separate particles. We are now compelled to see nature as ‘a historical community of interdependent beings’.” Ian Barbour
Busca el tu’ que nunca es tuyo.
Seek the you that is never yours.
Antonio Machado
Relational Reality

- Evelyn Fox Keller, on Barbara McClintock, Nobel Prize winner in genetics: “Over and over again she tells us one must have time to look, the patience to ‘hear what the material has to say to you,’ the openness to ‘let it come to you.’ Above all, one must have ‘a feeling for the organism’.”
Relational Reality

• “We must be aware of what I will call ‘inert ideas’ – that is to say, ideas that are merely received into the mind without being utilized, tested, or thrown into fresh combinations…” Alfred North Whitehead
RESOURCES

- Resources for Contemplative Teaching and Learning:

  **The Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education** is an initiative of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society, promoting the emergence of a broad culture of contemplation in the academy by connecting a network of leading institutions and academics committed to the recovery and development of the contemplative dimension of teaching, learning and knowing. [http://www.acmhe.org](http://www.acmhe.org). It conducts workshops and trainings in contemplative pedagogy techniques.

  **Reading:**

  **The Heart of Higher Education** by Parker Palmer (author of The Courage to Teach) and Arthur Zajonc, professor of physics at Amherst and director of the Center for Contemplative Mind in Society -- “for all who are new to the field of integrative education, all who want to deepen their understanding of its challenges and prospects, and all who want to practice and promote this vital approach to teaching and learning on their campuses.”

  **Meditation as Contemplative Inquiry: When Knowing Becomes Love** by Arthur Zajonc - “(he) developed his orientation toward meditation through working with hundreds of university students and professors...” This book is full of techniques of contemplation and meditation that can be used to enhance learning in all sorts of classrooms.

  **Encouraging Authenticity and Spirituality in Higher Education** – Chickering, Dalton, Stamm – A sourcebook of policies and programming used in colleges and universities to integrate and deepen students’ educational experiences.