

leap of faith

THE NEW HOPE SANGHA NEWSLETTER

SPRING 2008

Weekend of Spiritual Inquiry and Meditation March 28–30. See page 3.

The Ever Healed Heart

John's letter from The Casa de Dom Inacio, Brazil

Dear Friends,

I'm writing from The Casa de Dom Inacio (the house of Saint Ignatius Loyola) a spiritual healing center located in the town of Abadiania in Central Brazil. The Casa, as it is known, is where the healer, John of God, does his remarkable healing work. Each time I come here I am touch deeply by this house of love. People from all over the world come to The Casa seeking healing of body, heart and spirit. This is a spiritual hospital and people come on crutches, wheelchairs and some are rolled in on gurneys of sorts. Those with cancer, MS, ALS, AIDS, the blind and the deaf all seek healing. Others come because they suffer from depression, anxiety or other mental condition. Many seek direction and clarity on their spiritual path and want to know what is their life's work at this point in time. Still others come to serve for the highest good.

This is my third trip to The Casa. I originally came here for a medical condition that wasn't responding to the allopathic medicine I was taking. Thankfully the symptoms of the colitis have gone into remission and except for a brief period have not returned in the last year and a half. However, soon after arrival I realized that there was much more healing to be found here than just the healing of my body. Since coming here I have developed a deeper connection and richer relationship with Spirit. While my many years of study and practice of Buddha Dharma has been the foundation of my spiritual life and helped me in so many ways, it has been a natural next step on my path to be more connected with Spirit. My



intention, as stated when I first came to The Casa, is to serve humanity and Spirit with a loving heart. So much of my work, this past year and a half especially, has been letting go of heavy negative emotions and trusting more fully the loving heart. On my first trip to The Casa while I was getting spiritual surgery I felt such love in the room where the surgery was taking place. A voice in my mind said, "This love is what God is" and "It is love that heals." I have heard so many wonderful stories here about the healing that people have found through their connection with John Of God and the love that pervades The Casa. Most everyone I've talked to is touched in some way by being here.

However, The Casa and the community of people who live here still reside in relative reality. As much openness of heart and love I experience while here, there are times when I feel fear, loneliness, anger and resentment. I was at The Casa for the Christmas holidays and felt particularly lonely and in pain on the evening before Christmas. Not much goes on at The Casa during Christmas as many people return to their homes in different parts of Brazil to be with their families for the holidays. On Christmas morning I went to meditate at The Casa my heart feeling closed and in pain. I then remembered my mother who died a couple of years ago and the love we shared together as a family, especially at Christmas time. I open to that love, which is very intense, and my heart begins to break. I hear a voice say, "let your heart break." I let it happen and it is both wonderful and painful. Waves of love and pain flowed through me. Over and over my heart broke open.

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**UPCOMING WORKSHOPS
FOCUSED ON MEDITATION**

FEBRUARY 23, RALEIGH, NC

“The Gift of Mindfulness”
Meredith College 10:00-5:00
Instructor: John. Call Meredith
Graduate and Professional Studies
at 919-760-8450.

MARCH 1, DURHAM, NC

Day of Meditation at the Durham
Friends Meeting House
See page 6 for more information.

MARCH 28-30, DURHAM, NC

Wisdom and Compassion Live in
the Open Heart, A Weekend of
Spiritual Inquiry and Meditation
with Barbara Brodsky, John and
Aaron
See page 3 for more information.

APRIL 13, DURHAM, NC

“Awakening the Buddha Within”
Duke Continuing Education
10:00-5:00
See page 6 for more information.

**APRIL 26-MAY 3,
EMERALD ISLE, NC**

(By invitation for old students)
Residential Retreat with Barbara,
Aaron and John at the beach.

JUNE 7, FAYETTEVILLE, NC

Day of Meditation 10:00-5:00
with John. Fee \$80. Contact:
Linda Pendleton at 910-822-6375
or mettagreetings@nc.rr.com.

JUNE 21-28, ANN ARBOR, MI

Residential Retreat with Barbara,
Aaron and John. Contact:
Pat Shalis 734-996-3743 or
pshalis@tds.net.

**OTHER UPCOMING RETREATS
IN 2008**

**OCTOBER 10-14,
SPRING CREEK, NC**

Residential retreat with Barbara
and John at the Southern Dharma
Retreat Center. Contact: SDRC
at 828-622-7122 or Pat Shalis
734-996-3743 or pshalis@tds.net.

**OCTOBER 24-26,
ANN ARBOR, MI**

Old students residential retreat
with Barbara, Aaron and John.
Contact: Pat Shalis 734-996-3743
or pshalis@tds.net.

**OCTOBER 31-NOVEMBER 2,
CHAPEL HILL, NC**

Residential/Non residential
Meditation Retreat with
Barbara, Aaron and John at
Val Halla Retreat Center.
Contact: Janice Marie Durand
at 919-563-4454 or e-mail
retreat@newhopesangha.org.

**SPIRITUAL COUNSELING
& MEDITATION INTERVIEWS**

Spiritual Counseling addresses both psychological and spiritual issues, honoring the wisdom of many paths. It is helpful for people who are just beginning to explore their psychological and emotional experience. This counseling can also be relevant for those who have been in psychotherapy and now wish a more transpersonal counseling perspective that helps them know more fully their divinity. Sessions may also include instruction in mindfulness meditation. Rates for counseling meetings are on a sliding scale.

Meditation interviews are also offered and are similar to interviews given at retreats. The content of the session is about your meditation and what you are experiencing in your practice. Meditation interviews are available on a dana (generosity) basis. John is welcoming new clients at his Durham office and also does telephone consultations. He can be reached for more information or to make an appointment at 919-286-4754 and at john@newhopesangha.org.

N E W S L E T T E R

The newsletter is usually published three times each year and is offered freely. You donations allow us to continue to publish the newsletter. If you would like to contribute to the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, then please make a check out to the Durham Meditation Center and mail to 1214 Broad Street #2, Durham, NC 27705.



Insight and Healing

JANUARY 11 - 25, 2009

Possible trip July 13 to 27, 2008. Please inquire.

Travel with two senior
vipassana teachers to be with

John of God

at his Healing Center
in Abadiânia, Brazil

www.vipassanahealing.com

To contact John Orr:
John@vipassanaHealing.com

For Barbara Brodsky:
Barbara@vipassanaHealing.com

Wisdom and Compassion Live in the Open Heart



A Weekend of Spiritual Inquiry and Meditation

March 28 – 30, 2008

Practicing is the junction of wisdom and compassion. The wisdom mind and the open heart are not separate. In practice we learn to rest in the space that contains both. Join us for this unique weekend of spiritual inquiry and meditation. Our primary meditation practice will be Vipassana Meditation, also known as Mindfulness or Insight Meditation. Derived from the Buddhist tradition, this practice requires no special religious beliefs. During the course of the weekend there will be opportunity for instruction and practice. Participants may choose any number of sessions that are appropriate.

THE TEACHERS **Barbara Brodsky** is a Quaker and trained dharma teacher in the Buddhist tradition. She is the guiding teacher of Deep Spring Center in Ann Arbor Michigan. Barbara has been deaf for 35 years. She is the channel for the discarnate entity, Aaron. **Aaron** is a being of light who has evolved beyond the need to return to the physical plane. We have a special page on Aaron at our website, newhopesangha.org. **John Orr** received Theravada Buddhist ordination and training for eight years while living in Thailand and India. He has been teaching meditation and leading retreats since 1980. John is the guiding teacher of New Hope Sangha and teaches at Duke University.

LOCATIONS AND TIMES The Friday night event will begin at 7:30 at the Durham Friends New Meeting House at 404 Alexander Avenue in Durham (next to the Ronald McDonald House). There will be a talk given by Aaron as well as meditation practice. We will end at 9:30 p.m. The Saturday workshop will also be held at the Durham Friends New Meeting House and will begin at 10 a.m. The workshop will include periods of meditation, chanting from various spiritual traditions, and instruction from all three teachers. We will end at 5 p.m. The Sunday day of meditation will be held at the home of John Orr in Hillsborough and is offered to more experienced students of meditation. We will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. Directions will be provided for registered participants.

REGISTRATION The fee for Friday's talk is \$15. The fee for Saturday's workshop is \$75. Attending both Friday and Saturday the fee is \$80. We will not turn away participants who feel they are unable to pay the fee. Barbara and John will offer the Sunday day of meditation on a "dana" generosity basis. Please bring a bag lunch for Saturday's workshop and Sunday's day of meditation. Teas and light snacks will be provided. For more information call Cindy Selkirk at 919-932-3637 or e-mail retreat@newhopesangha.org.

N E W H O P E S A N G H A

Spring 2008 Workshop & Retreat

REGISTRATION FORM

To register for the weekend, return this form to Durham Meditation Center, c/o 212 Glade Street, Chapel Hill, NC 27516.

Name(s) _____

Address _____

Telephone _____

Email Address _____

Please check appropriate boxes. Please make checks payable to Durham Meditation Center.

Friday, March 28 only (\$15) Saturday, March 29 only (\$75)

Friday and Saturday, March 28–29 (\$80)

Sunday, March 30 (dana basis, for experienced students)

AMOUNT ENCLOSED _____



“THE EARTH IS SICK”

By Anna Louise Reynolds

What is the purpose of our practice? Liberation. Liberation from what? Greed, hatred, and delusion. Liberation for what? To be clothed in compassion and wisdom, to awaken. We long to become beings whose actions cause no harm to self or to others, whose actions benefit self and others. We want our good will to spread out over an ever-widening circle of care.

A pressing question of our day in this context is: Can we include the earth, its marvelous ecosystem, all beings now living, and the generations to come after us in our circle of care? To do no harm to them? To benefit them?

John Daido Looi, Roshi, Abbot of the Zen Mountain Monastery in Mt. Tremper, New York, in a recent address to his sangha, addressed this question through a commentary on a ninth-century Zen kōan, “The Whole Earth is Medicine (CD available from www.dharma.net).” The earth is dying, Roshi asserts, a situation caused by human action and that can be remedied only by human action. We are all doubtless aware of the manifestations of global climate change, which by all accounts appears to be caused by human action (see www.climatechoices.org for details). A question that looms is: Are we, individually and corporately, on the side of the sickness or the side of the healing? That is the challenge we face, and each person can do something about it. A majority of carbon emissions come from automobiles, electricity, and residential heating and cooling. One’s personal carbon footprint can be calculated, and steps taken to reduce it (www.climatecrisis.net).

The situation is daunting but not hopeless. Roshi notes that early in the 20th century, we went from gas lights and horse-drawn vehicles to electricity and automobiles in two decades. Recall, also, that the US went from a domestic to a war economy in 90 days at the beginning of World War II. It is possible. Our practice empowers us in the time of need. Will we, thus armed, respond skillfully?

The Ever Healed Heart

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Then the no-see-ums (small flies that are bothersome, but don’t bite) which have infiltrated the current rooms landed on my face. I then heard Spirit say “can you love them to?” My heart opened further to embrace the no-see-ums (which I felt only aversion towards up to that point). I realized that if I could love the no-see-ums, then I could love anything. Ironically when I embraced the no-see-ums, they went away.

I then saw the unconditioned. I was looking at it from a distance, as though I was looking through a portal. There wasn’t full body and ego dissolution and I wasn’t fully in the unconditioned. I was more in relative reality looking at the unconditioned. Spirit said, “This is the realm of love.” And then, “The realm of love is within your heart.” Earlier in this stay one of my guides said, “Your practice is very simple, just rest your attention in your heart. While sitting, walking, eating and loving rest your attention in your heart.” Now I see why.

A number of times during this present trip of winter 2008 situations arose that caused the heavy emotions of anger, resentment and defensiveness to arise. However, I see the negativity and anger clearly. I have a choice to further contract around the negativity and suffer or bring attention back to the heart and let go. I see how much of this “retreat” is about releasing heavy emotions. First there is awareness and acceptance of them and then letting go through forgiveness. Forgiveness is the key. One by one as people’s faces appeared before me, I said, “I forgive you.” A parade of people in my life, who I have experienced pain with in our relationship...I forgive...I forgive. Included in this is forgiveness of my self. I wasn’t so much forgiving a person as much as opening to the forgiving heart. Experiencing forgiveness as a Brahma Vihara (divine abode), as a place of letting go, love and peace. It is through forgiveness that I can let go. It works! I’ve experienced the heavy emotions long enough. At this point in my life, they aren’t serving me any longer. It’s time to let go of them and forgiveness seems to be an effective way of doing this.

It’s later in my stay at The Casa in the late afternoon. I enjoy being at The Casa around 6:00 pm because most people are at their hotels having dinner. The grounds are quiet. I’m sitting in the Meeting Hall my mind quiet and spacious. I then reflect on how this visit has been about healing the heart, when Spirit said, “Your heart is already healed, rest your attention in the Ever Healed Heart.” I rest my attention there and know this to be true. My practice now is to be present in the Ever Healed Heart.

I’ll be returning to the United States at the end of this week. I’m looking forward to being home even though I’ll be leaving summer to return to the North American winter. I look forward to being with you and sharing the Dharma of Love.

Wishing you Love and Peace,

JOH4

NEW HOPE SANGHA

Twice Monthly Meditations & Dharma Discussion

Our community, the New Hope Sangha, will be holding meditations and dharma discussion the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month, at the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Garrett Rd. in Durham. We will meet from 7:00–9:00pm in the Chapel, which adjoins the main Sanctuary. This is an ideal location, which is accessible from anywhere in the Triangle. The first hour will be sitting and chanting followed by a brief fellowship or walking meditation period. The second hour we will have a dharma talk and/or discussion. Any questions about your meditation practice or spiritual life are welcomed. If you are late arriving and you hear chanting you may enter quietly. If you arrive late and the chapel is quiet we ask you to wait or sit in the sanctuary or other areas. The chapel door will be opened again during the walking and fellowship period. We will conclude the evening by 9:00.

Please plan on arriving by 6:50 so we can be in our seats by 7:00. This is an open group and all are welcome to attend. If you are new to meditation and need meditation instructions please come to the Chapel by 6:50 pm and one of the group leaders will meet with you separately to give you instructions and guidance in the practice. If you have any other questions concerning the group please call Jim Jarvis at his office 309-2922 or e-mail him at jpjarvis@mindspring.com. There is no fee charged. There will be a dana (generosity) basket available to help pay the cost of the room rental and a dana basket for the teacher.

The New Hope Sangha is a resource for anyone who wishes to learn and practice the dharma. This is a non-denominational community that respects the wisdom of various spiritual traditions. Our meditation practices are grounded in three Buddhist practices: Vipassana (Mindfulness) Meditation, Metta (Lovingkindness) Meditation and Dzogchen (Non Dual Awareness) Meditation. To facilitate this process we have set up a web site (see: www.newhopesangha.org) that will give up to date information about the meditation programs we are offering, as well as, dharma talks by various teachers and other useful information. Our newsletter, "Leap Of Faith" is available online and in hard copy for those who request it. Send requests to office@newhopesangha.org.

DIRECTIONS TO ERUUF AT 4907 GARRETT RD.

Raleigh/Cary (east), Charlotte/Greensboro (west) via I-40: Exit 270 (15/501). Go north toward Durham. At Garrett Road,



turn right continuing 7/10 mile. Turn left into the entrance. Raleigh/Wake Forest via I-85/70 After Rt.70 merges with I-85, Exit from the left lane onto 15/501 toward Chapel Hill. At Garrett Road (BP Station), turn left and go 7/10 mile to entrance on the left. Greensboro/Hillsborough via I-85/70 Exit Rt. 147 and Exit onto 15/501 toward Chapel Hill. At Garrett Road (BP Station), turn left and go 7/10 mile to entrance on the left. As you enter the church grounds, bear to the right, and park in the lot next to the sanctuary. The chapel adjoins the sanctuary. For detailed maps visit www.eruuf.org.



Raleigh Meditation Group

The Raleigh Meditation Group, which is an affiliate of the New Hope Sangha, meets at the Long View Center, on the 2nd and 4th Tuesdays of the month, from 7:00–8:30pm.

The Long View Center is located at 118 S. Person Street, Raleigh, NC 27601 and is on the northeast side of Moore Square, right next to Exploris and the Exploris Middle School.

There is parking on the street and also in lots behind the Long View Center and Exploris. Enter at the front (Moore Square side) of the building through the door on the far left. Inside a stairway leads to the second floor meditation space.

Bring a cushion to sit on. There will also be chairs available. There is no cost to participants. Registration is not required. There will be a donation bowl to contribute to the cost of the space (which is being provided free of charge).

If you have questions, contact Tom Barrie at tom_barrie@ncsu.edu. If you need further directions, contact Tom Barrie or go to www.mapquest.com and type in the address above. If you wish to be placed on our email list, please contact Tonie Wheelock at toniewheelock@bellsouth.net.

Day of Meditation

SATURDAY, MARCH 1, 10AM-5PM, DURHAM, NC

Held at the Friends Meeting House, 404 Alexander Avenue (the smaller meeting house next to the Ronald McDonald's House)

We will begin at 10 a.m. and end at 5 p.m. You are encouraged to attend the full day, but if you want to attend just the morning or afternoon sessions, then please plan on arriving or leaving during the lunch period, which is from 1:00-2:00. Suggested donation to cover overhead is \$15 for partial or full day. John will be available to give beginning meditation instructions at 10:00, so if you are new to the practice please plan on arriving then to receive instruction in sitting and walking practice. He will also be available during the course of the day to speak with you individually about your practice. John will offer his services on a dana (generosity) basis. No preregistration is required. Bring a cushion to sit on and a bag lunch if you wish. Teas and chairs will be made available.

Awakening the Buddha Within

SUNDAY, APRIL 13, 10AM-5PM, DURHAM, NC

Fee \$75. Instructor: John. Held at the Bishop's House Room 107 (Duke East Campus).

Register online at www.learnmore.duke.edu/register/shortcourse or by phone 919-684-6259. Have the following information ready: Class ID 11331 and MC/Visa information. Advance registration is recommended. Registration is possible at the class site, space permitting. Bring: A bag lunch if you wish. A folded blanket and cushion if you want to sit on the floor. Chairs are available. Textbook: Recommended: *Awakening The Buddha Within* by Lama Surya Das. Available at the Regulator Bookshop.

leap of faith
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Weekend of Spiritual
Inquiry and Meditation
March 28-30
See page 3.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

DURHAM MEDITATION CENTER
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(919) 286-4754

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