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# Living in the Balance

## August 2014

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### THE GUEST HOUSE

This being human is a guest house.  
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,  
some momentary awareness comes  
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!  
Even if they are a crowd of sorrows,  
who violently sweep your house  
empty of its furniture,  
still, treat each guest honorably.  
He may be clearing you out  
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the malice.  
meet them at the door laughing and invite them in.

Be grateful for whatever comes.  
because each has been sent  
as a guide from beyond.

*Rumi*

I never used to take my turn. I always gave my turn  
away. I helped others have a great turn. I must have  
had a clipboard by the time I was six, because by then I  
had a whole caseload of people to keep track of. After  
they had all gotten a turn, then maybe I could go, if  
there was time and it didn't bother anyone.

Now I take my turn...as a radical act.

*Anne Lamott  
Stitches*

“Darkness is shorthand for anything that  
scares me—either because I am sure that I  
do not have the resources to survive it or  
because I do not want to find out. If I had my  
way, I would eliminate everything from  
chronic back pain to the fear of the devil  
from my life and the lives of those I love. At  
least I think I would. The problem is this:  
when, despite all my best efforts, the lights  
have gone off in my life, plunging me into the  
kind of darkness that turns my knees to  
water, I have not died. The monsters have  
not dragged me out of bed and taken me to  
their lair. Instead, I have learned things I  
could never have learned in the light, things  
that have saved my life over and over again,  
so that there is really only one logical  
conclusion. I need darkness as much as I  
need light.”

*Barbara Brown Taylor  
Learning to Walk in the Dark*



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## *Calendar considerations.....*

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### **The Sophia Institute**

Heart Callings, Carolyn Rivers, September 6

Mindfulness, Henk Brandt, September 20

Jean Shinoda-Bolen, October 3 and 4

A Spirituality for the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, Matthew Fox, October 24 and 25

The Awakening Heart, the Contemplative Alliance, November 7 and 8

Charleston, SC

[www.thesophiainstitute.org](http://www.thesophiainstitute.org)

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### **E-Courses**

**Forgiveness: A Growth in Love** -- August 4 - August 29

Many others on demand

Offered by Spirituality and Practice

[www.SpiritualityandPractice.com](http://www.SpiritualityandPractice.com)

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Consider doing a quiet retreat alone at the Hermitages at the Valle Crucis Conference Center near Boone, NC or with the Poor Clare Nuns in Travelers Rest, SC or with the Trappists at Mepkin Abbey in Moncks Corner, SC.

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### **Southern Dharma Retreats, Hot Springs, North Carolina**

Touching the Unconditioned: A Vispassana Retreat, August 13 – 17

Buddhism and the Twelve Steps, August 28 – September 1

Concentration and Insight, September 11 – 21

Vispassana: Wise Understanding and Joy, September 29 – October 5

Awakening the Bodhisattva Within, October 10 – 13

The Many Facets of Vispassana Practice, October 12 –24

For more information about retreats and the schedule

<http://www.southerndharma.org>

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### **Mountain Top Lectures**

Rabbi Rami Shapiro, November 7 and 8

Davidsonville, GA

[www/mountaintoplectures.org](http://www.mountaintoplectures.org)

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### **The Emergence Retreat**

November 7 – 9

Outdoor Lab in Clemson, SC

Providing a space where LGBTQ young adults can come together with their families and supportive faith communities for the purpose of promoting love, acceptance and understanding.

Sponsored by Peace Congregational Church UCC Pendleton

<http://emergenceretreat.com>





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## *Calendar considerations.....*

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### **Abbey of the Arts E-courses**

Novena of Resurrection, Earth as our First Monastery, September 8 – 17  
Other courses available on line including Monk in the World  
[www.abbeyofhearts.com](http://www.abbeyofhearts.com)

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### **Kanuga**

FACE: Faith, Art, and Creative Expression, August 17 – 22  
Lansing Lee Conference, Experiencing Eternity, Dr. Eden Alexander,  
October 26 – 28  
[www.kanuga.org](http://www.kanuga.org)

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### **The Cathedral of St. Philip**

The New Emerging Spirituality with Dr. Lauren Artess, October 25  
Atlanta, GA  
[www.stphilipscathedral.org](http://www.stphilipscathedral.org)

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### **AwakeningSoul**

Seeking the Sacred Thread – Celebrating the Heart of Life  
John Philip Newell and Barbara Brown Taylor  
November 6 – 9  
Lutheridge Conference Center  
Asheville, NC  
<http://www.awakeningsoulpresents.org/>

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### **Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons**

Dr. John Philip Newell, November 9, 2014  
Speaking at 3:00 and at 7:00 p.m.  
For more information <http://astlonline.org>

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### **Valle Crucis Conference Center**

Advanced Intensive Centering Prayer Retreat  
November 30 – December 7  
Valle Crucis, NC  
<http://www.highsouth.com/vallecrucis/events.php4>

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Just finished reading Barbara Brown Taylor's Learning to Walk  
In the Dark.....appreciating the darkness in a whole new way.





## About Spiritual Direction —

- Offers a space and time for you to explore, reflect upon, and deepen your relationship with God.
- Provides a haven from the daily busyness of the outer world and opens a time to be still and to reflect on your inner journey.
- Is a companioning relationship grounded in dialogue and discernment.
- Explores ways you may integrate spirituality into your daily life.
- Is not limited to any one spiritual practice or tradition.
- May involve one or two meetings or multiple meetings over time.

## You may wish to consider spiritual companioning if you are —

- Longing for a deeper relationship with the Divine
- Looking for a place to dialogue about spiritual questions
- Seeking ways to connect with the Spirit in a more intentional way
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a crossroads in your life
- Exploring new or fresh ways to be in relationship with God

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For more information about Spiritual Direction, please feel free to contact me by phone  
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*The photos in this month's journal are my work. They were all taken at or walking to the Eastern Market in Washington, D.C. Crab cakes are the specialty on the menu!*