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# Living in the Balance

March 2010

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How good it is  
to center down!

To sit quietly  
and see one's  
self pass by.

The streets of  
our minds seethe  
with endless  
traffic; our spirits  
resound with  
clashings, with  
noisy silences,  
while something  
deep within  
hungers and  
thirsts for the  
still moment and  
the resting lull.

*Howard Thurmond*

Give me order over spontaneity any day. I want to organize my calendar, make a "to do list" and work my plan. Fun has to be scheduled in that organizer just like a "dental checkup." And it has to be "safe, predictable" fun. No bungee jumping for me. My motto is "proceed with caution and know the outcome....well in advance." And to enforce that slogan I have these little committee members who live in my head who can become completely unglued by anything that even remotely resembles "stepping out" or not following THE PLAN.

I recognize these particularly anxiety driven, "fraddy cat" committee members. We're good friends. Each one has a name and an ensemble. There's Agnes Angst wringing her hands and walking in circles. Viola with the Vapors holding her head and moaning, "Whatever will become of us!?" Shirley Shaming resurrecting numerous failed events from the long ago past. Gladys Guilt NEVER comes alone, arriving with her entire entourage too numerous to mention. The ever skeptical Celina the Cynic arrives sneering and smirking. And leading the group are Judge Julia and Paula Perfectionist constantly worrying about what other people will think or say or do.

And these committee members can drive me to distraction with their "crazymaking" drowning out the part of me that wants to step out into the unknown.....to grow....to stretch and to be in love with the "process" of life rather than the "products." And I think deep down, that the real message from the committee is, "Yes, we'd like to step out, too, but we have to know that it's safe and that it's going to turn out OK in the end. And we want to have something to show for the effort..... and an award would be nice, too." The call for "safety" is strong, yet I know at some deep level that I have to be willing to take chances, to stretch myself, and to listen deeply so that I will not lead a cramped little life that limits my gifts and sucks the life out of my being. Jesus asked the man at the pool, "Do you want to be healed?" I ask myself the same. If healing means letting go of fear and breathing free, my soul yells, "Yes! Yes! Yes!" But the mere mention of that possibility and my fear based committee members want to batten down the hatches.

The committee all wants to talk at once, jockeying to state their positions, "Do this....NO, do that." For the "turn loose" healing to happen, there needs to be a daily truce and a place where I can sit, take a breath, and listen deeply to the Spirit. If "all of me" is going to walk together on this journey, I must take time to seek and hear Wisdom's council. There are many "quieting" practices of silent prayer and meditation that will help still the committee members and my mind.

Theologian Howard Thurmond talks about the fruits of the practice of centering prayer in his prose, *How Good It Is to Center Down*. Thurmond reminds me to continue to sit....to *be* in the Quiet.....to be present to Spirit in an ongoing, intentional way. Healing is about letting go and living free into whatever the day offers, learning to marry all the voices that are me with the Voice of Spirit. For me, this essential reconnection begins *again* and *again* and *again* each day when I "center down" to listen, to hear.....to let go....

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*Open Mind, Open Heart* by Fr. Thomas Keating. About centering prayer

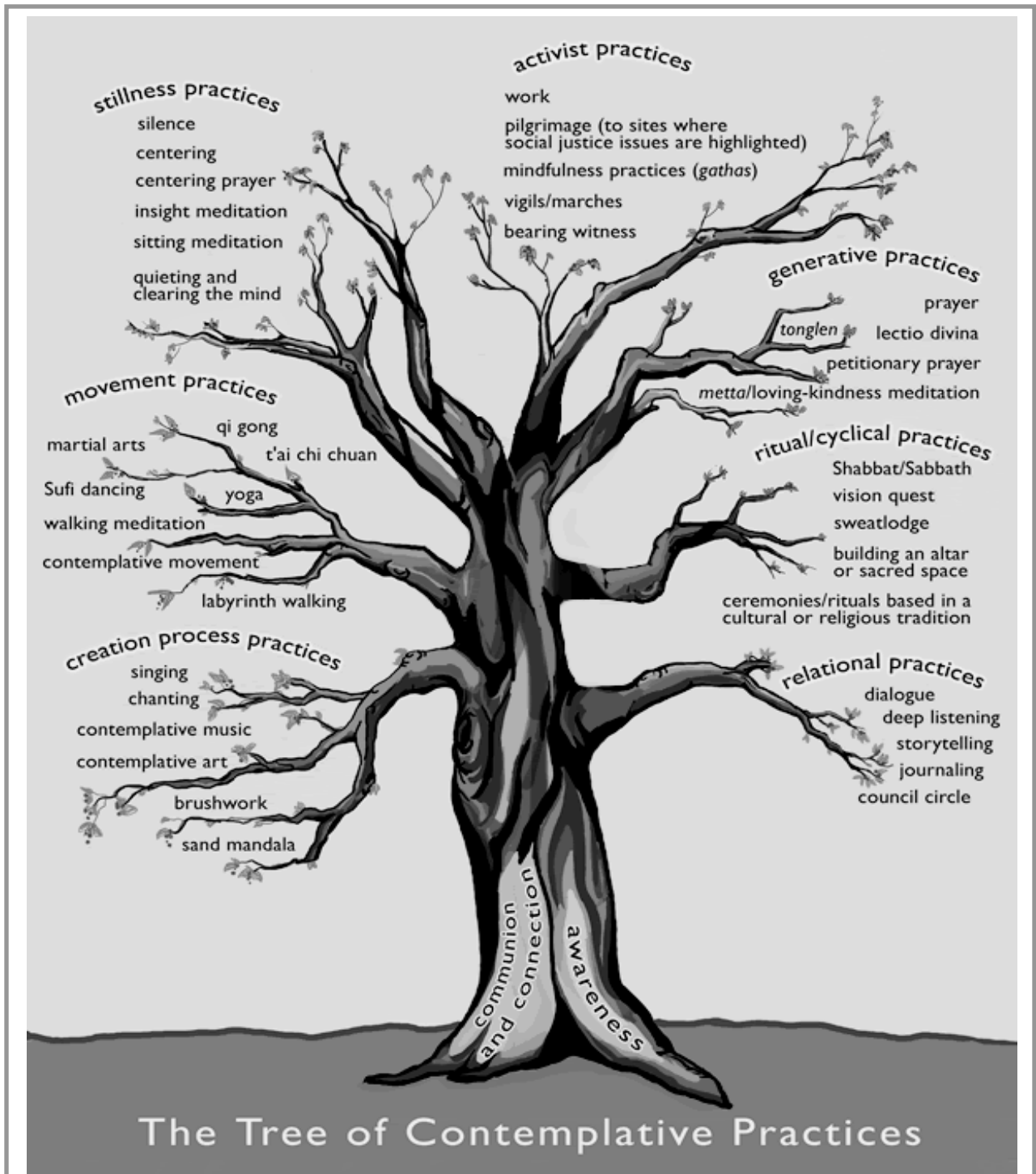
*A Taste of Silence* by Fr. Carl Arico. About centering prayer

*Sadhana: A Way to God Christian Exercises in Eastern Form* by Anthony de Mello

*Peace is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life* by Thich Nhat Hanh

*The Best Guide to Meditation* by Victor Davich.

*Wherever you go; There you are – Mindfulness Meditation in Everyday Life* by Jon Kabat-Zinn



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Anderson School of Theology for Laypersons  
Spring Lectures, Sunday, March 14, 2010

Theme: "Seeking a God Sufficient for the Soul's Passion"

Speakers: **Jerry R. Wright, D. Min.,**  
Jungian Analyst, Pastoral Counselor, Licensed Professional Counselor

Times: Session One (3:00 p.m.) When Our God is Too Small  
Session Two (7:30 p.m.) God Beyond Reason and Religion

Location: Boulevard Baptist Church, Christian Activities Center (behind the church). The Church is located at the corner of Greenville Street and Boulevard in Anderson, SC



Quiet Day with Barbara Crafton  
Saturday, March 20, 2010

St. James Episcopal Church  
Greenville, SC  
Details and registration information will be posted at  
<http://saintjamescenter.org>

Introduction to Centering Prayer  
Saturday, March 20, 2010 – 9:00 until 3:00  
The Reverend Tom Ward

Grace Episcopal Church  
1315 Lytleton Street  
Camden, SC 29020  
803-432-7621



Haden Dream Conference  
May 31 through June 4, 2010

Haden Institute  
[www.hadeninstitute.com](http://www.hadeninstitute.com)  
Kanuga Conference Center  
Flat Rock, North Carolina



## 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 daily life
- Questioning how the Spirit is working in your life
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a difficult 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  
864-246-3960 or via email at [wmeade@meadellc.com](mailto:wmeade@meadellc.com)

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