

# **2021 Conference for the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE)**

**Virtual via Zoom**

**November 5-7, 2021**

**David Freeman**

I, along with faculty advisor / mentor / friend Yevgeniya (Zhenya) V. Zastavker, were presenters at the poster session of the 2021 Conference for the Association for Contemplative Mind in Higher Education (ACMHE). Our presentation focused on an ongoing autoethnographic project in which we are reflecting on and making sense of our journeys through contemplative learning environments. This ongoing project formally began in the Fall'21 semester as 2-credit research experience, and our presentation at ACMHE was only a touchpoint in the larger arc of our reflecting and sense-making.

The conference was virtual, so everything happened via Zoom. There were 5 primary forms of engagement during the conference:

- 60-minute sessions focused on a single paper, typically facilitated as a mixture of presentation and discussion
- 30-minute sessions focused on a pre-recorded presentation
- 60-minute poster sessions formatted as a panel involving 4 separate poster presentations
- 90-minute keynote presentations
- 3-hour workshop

The majority of the conference comprised of the first two formats.

In Appendix B, I have a full copy of the poster sessions program. All poster sessions occurred during a single 60-minute block on Friday, Nov 5, though they were split up among several different Zoom rooms. The structure of each (virtual) room was open-ended, depending on the preferences of the presenters, so in our room (the “Fern Room”) we decided to divide the time up into 15-minute chunks during which each poster could be presented and discussed.

Zhenya and I presented last. Appendix A, I have included a copy of the poster that Zhenya and I presented. Because our poster was primarily non-lingual visuals, our presentation gave context for the reflection and autoethnographic processes that led to the poster’s content and form. We spoke about how the images of this poster reflected our unique approach to autoethnography, in which our self-understanding is prototyped through visual, tactile representations as well as the more standard approaches of written reflection, memoing, and conversation. After we provided framing and spoke to what was on our hearts at the time, there was a question from one of the other presenters. He wanted to hear more about our path to developing the sort of mentor-mentee / friendship / co-researchers / co-facilitators relationship that was evident in the

work that we were presenting. After a brief conversation in response, the 60-minutes allotted to our panel were used up.

The majority of my experience was based around attending other conference sessions. I expand upon that, as well as more of the feelings-based impressions that I have from this experience, in my reflection below.

## Reflection

Below I have listed the workshops/sessions that I attended during the 2021 ACMHE conference, in addition to our poster session.

- “Embodying Racial Justice: Trauma-informed DEI Work for Personal and Institutional Transformation”
  - *60-min session facilitated by Anita Chari and Angelica Singh*
- “Contemplating Ungrading: Contemplative Practices for Transforming Assessment”
  - *60-min session facilitated by Christopher Phillips*
- Keynote with Dr. Ron Bell
  - *90-minute conversation between Dr. Lenwood Hayman and Dr. Ron Bell*
- “Using Contemplative Practices to Support Students with Learning Differences”
  - *20-minute recorded presentation and 30-minute session facilitated by Alyssa Simms-Clark and Avery Williams*
- “Learning From Relational Ontologies through Head and Heart: An Exploratory Collaborative Autoethnography”
  - *20-minute recorded presentation and 30-minute session facilitated by Julia Storberg-Walker, Deyang (Mike) Yu, Hermella Tekle, and Christian List*
- “Master Plants vs. Monster Medicine: Towards the Defense and Reciprocation of Indigenous Contemplative Traditions”
  - *60-minute session facilitated by Yuria Celidwen*
- “Integrative Environmental Contemplative Pedagogy: A Transformational Animist Approach”
  - *60-minute session facilitated by Leonard Cruz*
- Keynote with Dr. Angel Acosta
  - *90-minute conversation between Dr. Shelly P. Harrell and Dr. Angel Acosta*
- “Re-Emergence of Racial Healing through the Re-Connection of Mindful Allyship”
  - *3-hr workshop facilitated by Tovi Scruggs-Hussein, Sally Albright Green, and Grace Helms Kotre*

Overall, this conference experience provided space for me to grapple with the dynamics of facilitation and format in the process of learning in community, as well as the tensions between “academic”/“scholarly” work and “contemplative practices”. Additionally, several of the sessions that I attended gravitated around issues of racial equity and justice, be that through DEI (diversity, equity, inclusion) efforts within the academy or through the forces of colonization through which white, imperial culture extracts knowledge and resources from indigenous, Black, or “non-western” people.

The virtual format was difficult. Many of the presenters put effort into pre-recorded content or visual content, and it was common for non-presenters to not watch the videos before hand, or for presentations of visual content to take up most of the time in a session. These resulted in there not being very much space for discussion in the 30-minute sessions and the 60-minute poster sessions. Additionally, the tone of those spaces tended toward formality and

mind/brain-focused engagement, rather than holding a space of shared wonderment. It felt like the presenters were in the position of “experts.” The direction of engagement was that presenters were giving information, and the people attending each session were directing questions to presenters to get more information from them. That was disappointing to me, because I prefer to be in spaces that acknowledge that we can all learn from each other in these environments, and that reflection on the feelings that we have rather than just the thoughts leads to the development of beautiful, shared insights, developing new understandings *with* each other.

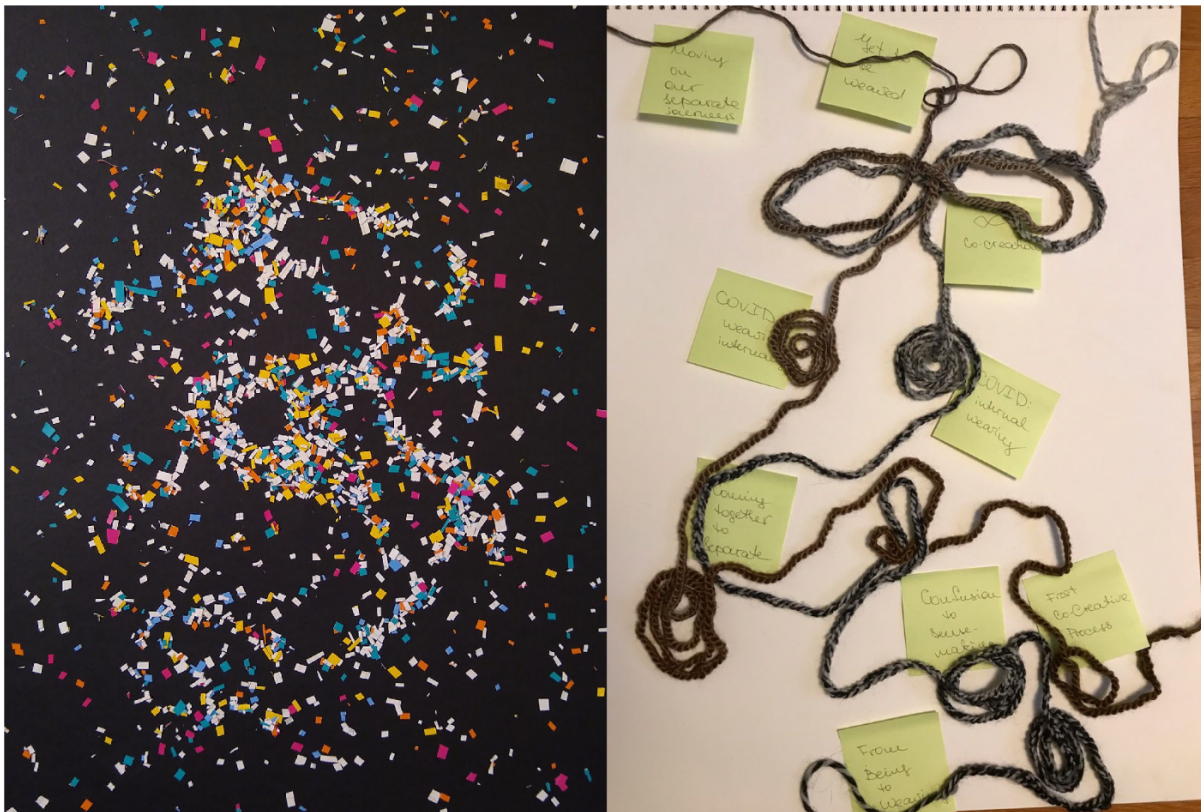
It was still a special, precious experience. I was the youngest person in attendance. I felt encouraged and affirmed. I also felt so drawn to some of the people who are in this ACMHE community, people who are following life in some very beautiful directions and who I could see glimmers of myself in and who gave me hope that deep meaning and purpose will continue to be revealed as I move through life. It is nourishing to be within a community that operates within higher-education spaces and does so from the heart and spirit and body and all else, other than primarily through the brain/mind.

I feel proud of Zhenya and I’s presentation because of how we were able to speak from our hearts. I could tell that it had a special impact on the other presenters to see how Zhenya and I showed up in the space. It seemed particularly meaningful for them to see how Zhenya and I hold our relationship. I assume that most educators strive for heartfelt, meaningful relationships with the “student” people who they work with, and Zhenya and I were able to show up and model one way that it can look for this mentor-mentee, teacher/student relationship to also be a meaningful friendship.

## Appendix A: our poster

### Contemplative Environments within Engineering Education: A Weaving of Two Auto-Ethnographies

Yevgeniya V. Zastavker, Ph.D. & David Freeman



# Appendix B: full program for the poster-session portion of 2021 ACMHE conference

## Poster Presentations

Want to learn more about these topics? Browse the materials here anytime; poster authors will be available for conversation during the **Poster Panel Discussions on Friday, November 5, 3:30-4:30pm ET**.

To attend a panel, follow the **Zoom Room link listed with each poster grouping**. Please note that these details are still subject to change.

## Fern Room Panel (Ahmed, Frasher, Hendrickson, Zastavker, Freeman)

### The Impact of Guest Speakers' Stories on Undergraduate Students' Academic Success

*Abdelhamid M. Ahmed*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Fern](#)

This longitudinal study focuses on how the success stories of guest speakers in a pioneering university in Qatar impacted Qatari undergraduate students' academic success skills. The researcher collected 83 students' written journals were collected over five years as a vehicle for their reflection on their academic success skills. Preliminary findings of this study revealed that the guest speakers' success stories impacted undergraduate students in many ways. First, these success stories developed undergraduate students' reflections on their failures and successes, leading to more determination for success despite the challenges. Second, they helped students get motivated to set their priorities in life and smart goals to achieve them. Third, they taught students to face challenges with learned optimism and a growth mindset. In addition, students reflected on how these success stories inspired their decision-making skills, evoked their critical thinking, highlighted the value of hard work, developed students'

Dr. **Abdelhamid Ahmed** is a Lecturer of Education at the Core Curriculum Program, Qatar University. He obtained his Ph.D. degree in Education (Applied Linguistics), Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, UK. He is also an Honorary Senior Research Fellow at Graduate School of Education, University of Exeter, UK. He is experienced in teaching and researching L2 English writing.

## **Pedagogy of Purpose: Utilizing Contemplative Pedagogy for supporting student meaning-making and sense of purpose**

*Christina Frasher*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Fern](#)

Contemplative pedagogy is an approach that has been developed to fill a gap in higher education that has been created through the commodification of education, losing its earlier roots as a practice that nourishes the entire human being (Slattery & Selig, 1993). Benefits include helping students develop focused learning, foster creativity, and deepen problem-solving skills (Brady, 2007). This recorded workshop with interactive conversation will explore the use of contemplative practices as tools for supporting meaning-making and purpose for students.

**Christina Frasher** received her BA from the University of Pittsburgh in English Literature and Religious Studies and her MA in Counseling Psychology from Pacifica Graduate Institute. Currently, Christina is working on her dissertation on Contemplative Pedagogy in the Counselor Education and Supervision doctorate program in the School of Education at Duquesne University. Her new role as Teaching and Learning Consultant at the University of Pittsburgh allows her to continue to support faculty.

## **The Collaborative for Student Success and Academic Wellness**

*Joshua Hendrickson, Olga Navia*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Fern](#)

The Collaborative for Student Success and Academic Wellness at Stony Brook University is an integrative mental health approach and an emerging model to support whole student development within Higher Education. The Collaborative utilizes social work student interns and social work field instruction as an approach for student success through a lens of academic well-being. Social work interns are trained in a 8-week program that integrates the development of mind-body skills and contemplative practices as the foundation for academic wellness through self-care and collective care perspectives. The Collaborative uses a shared supervisory model through the academic year as social work interns assume the role of academic success coaches, instructors, academic advisors, group and individual counselors, student outreach workers, and community organizers.

Dr. **Joshua Hendrickson** coordinates and supervises social students within the Collaborative for Student Success and Academic Wellness at Stony Brook University. Over the past decade Dr. Hendrickson who

holds a doctorate in Mind-Body Medicine has trained over 5,000 educators in Mind-Body skills and Contemplative practices through an Integrative Mental Health perspective. Dr. Hendrickson has also co-developed and facilitated the integration of mindfulness-based pedagogy into curriculum and student-leadership training at Stony Brook University.

**Olga Navia** is currently pursuing her MSW at Stony Brook University. She is a student intern with the Collaborative for Student Success and Academic Wellness. She is a 500-hour certified yoga instructor with additional certifications in prenatal/postnatal yoga and children's yoga. Additionally, she is a bereavement facilitator with the LI Young Widows and Widowers Network, leading 8-week support groups.

### **Contemplative Environments within Engineering Education: A Weaving of Two Auto-Ethnographies**

*Yevgeniya V. Zastavker, David Freeman*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Fern](#)

This poster presentation is a weaving of two auto-ethnographies – an engineering undergraduate and a Professor of Physics and Education. It is a narrative elucidating intricate ways in which contemplative practices have been supporting individual and collective journeys of two teachers, learners, scholars, activists, and their unique ways of knowing. This emerging work is the culmination of a reflective process through which one white queer able-bodied young man with loving parents and class privilege, and a white woman-refugee from the USSR, seek to make sense of the impact of contemplative learning environments on development of their selfhoods within engineering education context. Examples of these environments include mentor-mentee relationships, classroom teaching and learning, spiritual communities, research, and activist work. We aim to explore this contemplative co-reflective process as a way of creating powerful connections to community, compassion for self and others, empathy, and embodied knowledge

**Yevgeniya V. Zastavker** is a Physics and Education faculty at Olin College of Engineering . Her research focuses on innovative pedagogical and curricular practices in STEM education with emphasis on the issues of diversity and inclusion. With the goal of improving learning opportunities for all students and equipping faculty with the knowledge and skills necessary to create such opportunities, Recently, she has begun the process of integrating her personal and professional identities, including bringing in contemplative practices into her everyday reality as an instructor, mentor, coach, colleague, and scholar, designing new curricular and co-curricular offerings and shifting her research focus towards contemplative space.

**David Freeman:** I come from a white, professional-class family in northwest Arkansas, and am currently an undergrad student at Olin College of Engineering in Needham, MA. My experience merging



contemplative practices with the higher education environment began during my time at Olin, and I continue to wrestle how love can be a driving force in our relationships with ourselves and one another amid institutions and empires that encourage a lot of things besides love. It's been a gift to attend several CMind Summer Sessions and previous ACMHE conferences. Related but unrelated, it's also a special gift to be in an abundant world of sci-fi literature that inspire me to imagine big possibilities and celebrate big feelings. You can reach me at [davidthefree@gmail.com](mailto:davidthefree@gmail.com).

## **Daisy Room Panel (Harris, Lucas, Kano, Knight)**

### **A Story of Self-Care as Community Care**

*Jillian Harris, Roberta A. Lucas*

Friday 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Daisy](#)

This session considers how a successful community initiative promoting self-care can inspire a curriculum that incorporates movement exploration and collaborative dance-making. This curriculum was originally presented to participants in Jacob's Pillow's Curriculum in Motion Institute as a prototype of a potential approach.

An Associate Professor at Temple University, **Jillian Harris** explores intersections between dance and new technologies. Her stage choreography has been commissioned and shown at national and international venues. Producer of the award-winning film, *Red Earth Calling*, she recently released *Mud: Bodies of History*, an interactive film experience shot in Colombia.

A Special Lecturer at Oakland University (MI), **Roberta A. Lucas** (M.A., L.L.P.) teaches both dance and education majors. In addition to working with communities as a professional teaching artist with the Wolf Trap Institute, she is a licensed psychotherapist using somatic and expressive arts in her therapeutic practice.

### **Contemplative ways to overcome internal distress at the workplace**

*Tomoko Kano*

Friday 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Daisy](#)

The experience of being misunderstood and perceiving prejudice against contemplative education has caused strong emotional distress within the members of our educational group. Therefore, we collaboratively developed ways to overcome this experience through contemplative practices. With approximately three years of meditation, dialogue, and practice, the method has been continuously improved. It comprises (1) meditation, (2) practice of “harmlessness,” (3) improvement of physical fatigue, (4) purification of emotions, (5) restructuring of thoughts, and (6) devotion. Meditation refers to being mindful of oneself (body, emotions, and thoughts), and based on this awareness, actions (2) through (5) were practiced. Devotion means to keep the mindful object in awareness, pointing it to the source of life; in this state of awareness, non-attachment to the object is realized. The formation of a spiritual culture to overcome internal distress at the workplace through contemplative practices will be elucidated.

**Tomoko Kano** is an Associate Professor of the Educational Anthropology major of the College of Letters, Ritsumeikan University in Japan, where she teaches yoga and mind-body intervention. Executive director of Japanese Association for Transpersonal Psychology/Psychiatry and Japanese Society of Hypnosis. She has 30 years of personal experience in contemplative practices.

### **Equity-based approaches to community-university partnerships**

*Aimée Knight*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Daisy](#)

This poster session presents an intentional guide to fostering an equity-based approach to community-university partnerships. The power dynamics that uphold systemic oppression are embedded, in fact, designed into the very systems we want to change. When we center equity and justice in our projects and partnerships, we begin to do the work of understanding why our current systems perpetuate inequity by design. Part of this work is about how “systems of oppression, inequality, and inequity are by design; therefore, they can and must be redesigned” (Creative Reaction Lab). Intentionally centering equity and justice when co-creating with communities requires us to redesign both mindsets and infrastructures — from actively developing empathy and humility — to sharing power and decision-making with our partners. The seven equity-based approaches include:

- Building empathy
- Framing inquiry
- Co-creating knowledge
- Re-searching
- Composing and recomposing
- Testing and revision
- Evaluating capacity

**Aimée Knight** is an Associate Professor of Communication and Media Studies at Saint Joseph's University where she teaches writing, design, and nonprofit communication. She is the founder and director of the Beautiful Social Research Collaborative, a community writing program where students partner with nonprofits and community-based organizations.

## **Ocean Room Panel (Dorman, Pedersen, McLaughlin)**

**“No Mud, No Lotus”: Growing through Difficulty in Zoom Teaching**

*Elizabeth Dorman*

Friday 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Ocean](#)

Teaching pandemic Zoom classes created multiple opportunities for faculty to stretch into new skill sets and ways of being, creating unexpected pathways for growth. These unfamiliar modes have been challenging, causing faculty to face their own difficulties and trauma while simultaneously holding space for student challenges. The presenter teaches educators in a racially, ethnically, socioeconomically diverse college. Themes were identified from analyzing critical incidents that illustrate various difficulties of pandemic Zoom teaching through the lens of trauma-informed practice, and how contemplative practices were used to respond to the emotional challenges, both in the moment and through post-incident meaning making. Key findings include how the Zoom environment made it difficult to enact relational, embodied pedagogy – the core of trauma-informed practice – and the roles of reciprocal vulnerability, double binds, and making amends. The findings have implications for educators at all levels as they engage in various delivery modes with diverse student populations.

**Elizabeth Hope Dorman**, Ph.D., is Professor of Teacher Education at Fort Lewis College, a Native American-serving institution in Durango, Colorado, where she teaches graduate and undergraduate students. She is author and co-editor of a three-book series on *Contemplative Pedagogy, Practice, and Research in Education*, published by Rowman & Littlefield.

**Creating Community when the Zoom is Down: experiences in creating connection online in a first-year seminar during a global pandemic**

*Alice Pedersen*

Friday 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Ocean](#)

This poster shares my experiences teaching a cohort-based first-year course during Fall 2021. The theme of the course, “The Politics and Practices of Yoga,” allowed us to explore and practice some tools for self-care, but the experience of building community amongst those who had never stepped foot on campus is what I will focus on in this poster. In particular, I will discuss an instance where a student, thinking that her wifi had gone out, began screaming and swearing at her computer – but, as the class experienced it, she it seemed she was swearing at me, the professor. I will share how I used principles a from restorative justice and contemplative practice to process what happened as a community, as well as to integrate the student back into our community and create a more solid foundation from which our online, decentered classroom could coalesce, if not flourish.

**Alice Pedersen** is an Associate Teaching Professor at The University of Washington Bothell, where she teaches literature and writing courses with a focus on questions of representation, equity, and justice. Over the past five years, she has turned her research focus to questions of what it means to teach literature in a way that is ethical, embodied, and authentic, especially during these times of compounding and ongoing crises.

### **Mindfulness, Resilience, and Social Justice**

*Rochelle McLaughlin*

Friday 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Ocean](#)

Welcome to Mindfulness for Resilience, Stress Reduction, & Social Justice! These are intense times. We don't know what the future holds. We are living into a whole new reality for ourselves and the world. Throughout this live interactive session, we will be working with the practice of mindfulness defined as the steady, intentional gathering of non-judgmental awareness into the present moment as we use the circumstances in which we find ourselves to develop and deepen a robust and practical mindfulness meditation practice capable of supporting us in the face of enormous change. Through the cultivation of mindfulness as a practice and a way of being, we can encourage our minds and hearts to function more effectively for our benefit and that of our families, our work, our communities, and our world and help us focus on real-life approaches to potentially maddening dilemmas, social contradictions, structural injustices, and real personal, work, and family challenges.

**Rochelle McLaughlin** is a certified Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction (MBSR) teacher and has taught MBSR and Mindfulness-Based Social Justice at San Jose State University since 2008. Rochelle is the founding director for SJSU's Certificate in Applied Mindfulness. Her work teaching mindfulness to a few thousand folks in academia and healthcare both nationally and internationally has allowed her to witness the impact of stress on people's lives and mindfulness as a healing antidote to these dynamics. Her work

is trauma and culture-sensitive and embodies the transformative power of mindfulness and the present moment.

## **Tulip Room Panel (Wolf, Song, Bishop, Alvarez, Kirby, Ortega, Manantan)**

**Playing with Prompts, Visual Images & Paired Sharing to Deepen Connection to Self, Others & a Sense of Purpose**

*Maura Wolf*

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Tulip](#)

In this session, attendees will engage with each other as we move through a series of exercises (used in a variety of classes including Living a Purpose Driven Life, The Future of Leadership, and Facilitating Individual & Group Change).

We will begin with the use of creative Prompts, attendees will be paired for conscious connection in a playful and connective way. Then we will move into another interactive activity which is based upon visual images that speak to a person's sense of purpose or values. Choosing, reflecting upon, and sharing with the visual image being the 3rd thing that enables contemplation and sharing. Lastly, we will move into a dance of reflective writing and paired sharing that brings attendees to deeper layers of exploration about their sense of purpose and knowing.

Come to connect, play, reflect and see what's alive for you in this moment.

**Maura Wolf** is a professor of Leadership who has spend the past decade teaching the Masters of Leadership program at Saint Mary's College. She also teaches on many Management-related topics in the workplace, as the College's head of Training & Professional Development effort. She has co-created and co-taught an innovative liberal arts undergraduate course called, Living a Purpose Driven Life, bringing a wide range of contemplative practices into the classroom. Inside and outside of academia, she coaches people on their next steps in the process of navigating life in the 21st century in a way that is integrative and practical. Author of *What Matters Most: Leadership at Home at Work and in the World*, and *Exploring Realities: Young Women Making Decisions & Finding Meaning*, she is a Kripalu trained yoga teacher, a New Ventures West certified executive coach, and a leader within her college's Diversity, Equity & Inclusion training effort.

## **Contemplative Journaling: Writing as a way to know ourselves better**

### ***Grace Song***

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Tulip](#)

I explore contemplative journaling as a method to discover and reflect on how we use our minds in every day situations. The prerequisite for this type of journaling is to establish a formal practice in both rest (eg. seated meditation, chanting) and action (eg. pausing during difficult situations). These formal practices enhance present-centered awareness, so that when we sit to journal we have content to reflect on. Contemplative journaling allows us to reflect on how we used our mind that day by choosing a particular situation and recording the incident as-it-happened without self-editing. This type of reflection helps us to identify habits, destructive patterns, or repeated reactions. With contemplative journaling we can start incorporating more self-compassion in our lives and set intentions that can enhance well-being. Journaling can be done individually, but it can also be a community experience by inviting people to share their entries with each other. This is a great way to learn from each other.

**Grace Song**, Won Buddhist Studies Department Chair at the Won Institute of Graduate Studies and Buddhist Chaplain at the University of Pennsylvania, is an ordained Kyomu in the Won Buddhist tradition. Her research interest includes women in Buddhism, Buddhism and social justice, and contemplative studies in higher education. She serves on the Advisory Committee for the GenX Buddhist Teachers Sangha, a member on the Mayor's Commission on Faith-Based and Interfaith Affairs in Philadelphia, and a board member of Presence Collective, a community dedicated to personal transformation, social justice and collective liberation.

## **Teaching Art and Mindfulness as Healing Tools for Counseling Professionals**

***Orlando Alvarez, Robin Bishop, Kristie Kirby, Ricardo Ortega and Catherine Kaila L. Manantan***

Friday, 3:30-4:30pm ET

Zoom Room: [Tulip](#)

This poster will share qualitative data collected about the experiences of graduate counseling students who took part in a 1-unit elective course on "Art and Mindfulness." While students entered initially planning to gain skills to utilize with clients, they also discovered tools to cultivate their own self-compassion and self-care. Various art mediums were utilized as ways to cultivate non-judgmental present moment awareness. During the course, students and instructors explored the idea giving oneself permission to play, as a contrast to the idea of self-worth tied to constant productivity. In narrative interviews, students described how they had incorporated these realizations into their lives, including

utilizing these practices beyond the course even as they continued to navigate cultural expectations around productivity.

**Orlando Alvarez** is a lecturer of Psychology, and the coordinator of the ¡Enlaces! bilingual Marriage and Family Therapy master's program, at Mount Saint Mary's University. He is also a doctoral student at Antioch University, where he studies critical pedagogy and mindfulness.

**Robin Bishop** is an Associate Professor of Psychology at Mount Saint Mary's University, where she serves as the co-coordinator of the General Counseling Psychology master's program. Her research interests encompass racial equity issues in higher education, mindfulness as a critical pedagogy tool, and the enactment of students-as-codesigners of curricular programs.

**Kristie Kirby** is a recent graduate of the Counseling Psychology master's program at Mount Saint Mary's University, where she is also pursuing a certificate in Publishing and Editing. This is Kristie's second year as a research assistant in mindfulness-based research. She is also a writer, therapist, and educator.

**Ricardo Ortega (aka Bhante)** is a third-year student in the Counseling Psychology master's program at Mount Saint Mary's University Los Angeles and holds a BA in Religion. He is also a Theravada Buddhist Monk at Sarathchandra Buddhist Center in Los Angeles. He served 9 years in the United States Air Force Reserve where he was deployed to both Iraq and Afghanistan. He is a certified Mindfulness-based Substance Abuse Treatment Facilitator and a Mindfulness in Recovery Certified Facilitator. His interest is in the dialogue between the Buddhist traditions and science.

**Catherine Kaila L. Manantan** is a graduate student in the Counseling Psychology master's program at Mount Saint Mary's University. She earned her bachelor's degree in Psychology at the University of California, Riverside. In addition to being a graduate student, she works with Bumble where she focuses on dating culture developments.