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Teachings in 2018

Saturday, February 3, 2018
The Human Journey

We are all on a Path. This daylong workshop at Spirit Rock will introduce a model of spiritual practice and development based on Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey and stories from the life of the Buddha. Our time together will weave talks, meditation, reflection, interactive exercises and ritual. You will leave with a fresh vision of your personal journey, a clear articulation of your aspirations, and new insights, practices and

Staying Awake

2,600 years ago, the newly enlightened Buddha was strolling along, enjoying his peace and contentment. A wanderer saw him and was struck by his radiance and serene demeanor.

"Who are you?" he asked. "Some kind of deva or celestial being?"

"No," the Buddha, replied, "I am not a God."

"Then what are you?"

"I am awake."

What does it mean to be awake?

One of the Buddha's big insights when he woke up was the truth of *anatta*, the absence of a separate, solid, self. He looked and looked, but couldn't find a permanent "I" or "me." What he found instead, was a fluid, ever-changing, river of life he called *paticca samupadda*, the dynamic web of interconnectedness.

This suggests that our suffering is the result of ignorance; that it is a case of mistaken identity.

We mistake ourselves to be some *thing*. But we are not a thing at all. Who we are is an impermanent, un-solid, always changing stream of experience. When we cling to our firmly held ideas and beliefs, our roles, or identities—we freeze-frame reality, turning fresh water into frozen ice cubes. Then our cold, sharp edges become a prison, with me in here, and everything else out there.

The Zen master Suzuki Roshi described waking up as "seeing things as it is." He is also reported to have said: "enlightenment is not an experience."

This always stops me in my tracks. Because, for us, *everything* is an experience. Every sight, sound, smell, taste, touch, and the vast cacophony of thoughts, feelings, images, stories and beliefs that stream forth from the constantly churning heart-mind...all register for us as experiences we know.

So if waking up is not a known experience, then what is it?

One of my favorite descriptions of awakening is as a radical shift in perspective; seeing the familiar world with new eyes. The poet Rumi describes it this way: *We are not a drop in the ocean. We are the ocean in a drop.* When our orientation shifts like this, we come to see and understand ourselves, each other and the world in entirely new ways.

One of the most radical shifts we can make is from presuming that awakening is an event, to understanding awakened life as the expression of beneficial qualities of heart-mind. The teaching of the Paramis (or Paramitas) offers such a list, beginning with the quality of *dana*, or generosity.

Generosity is the opposite of clinging. It's about giving ourselves to each moment; meeting life with openness, curiosity and kindness, especially in those moments when we feel cranky, sad, bewildered, alone.

According to Buddhist psychology, generosity is the proximate cause of happiness. We

perspectives to inspire you. All are welcome.

[Click here for more information.](#)

Friday, April 13, 2018 *The Mindful Leader*

The Buddha was a great leader. This daylong workshop at Spirit Rock will use Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey as a framework for exploring the life of the Buddha and understanding leadership as a path of practice. Our time together will weave talks, guided meditation, reflection, and interactive exercises. You will leave with a clear map forward for your personal leadership journey, and new practices and perspectives to support you. Open to anyone in a formal or informal leadership role.

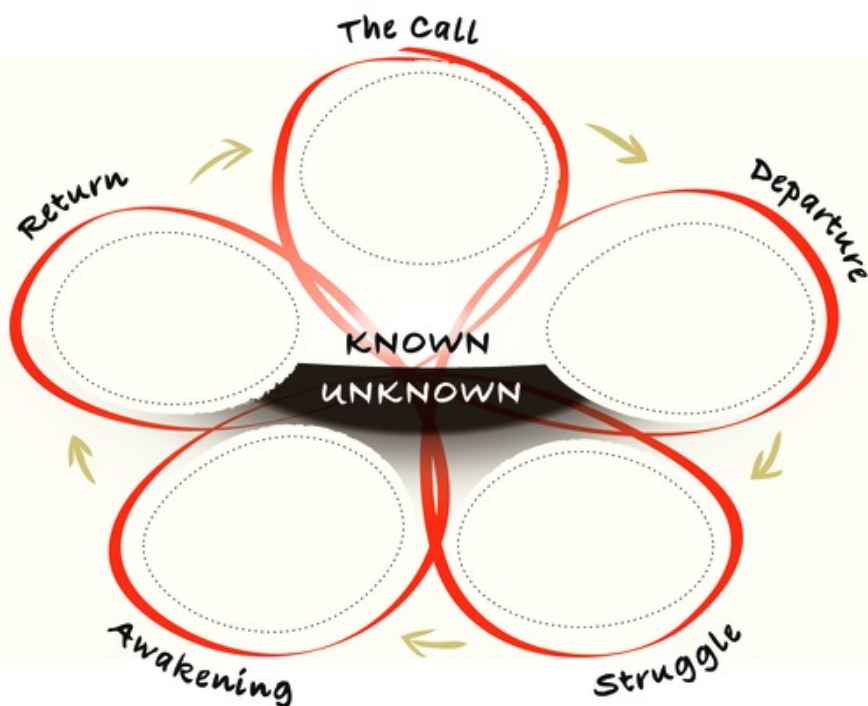
[Click here for more information.](#)

may imagine that if we are happy, then it will be easy for us to be generous. But it works the other way around: it is giving that makes us happy. As the Buddha said: *"If you knew what I know about generosity, you would not let a single day go by without giving away part of each meal."*

So how might we actively cultivate generosity? How can we notice and appreciate everything that is already given: the sky, the scent of eucalyptus, the sound of rustling leaves-and our astonishing capacity to see, smell, hear, taste, touch? And from there, engage in the practice of giving (food, money, things, our care and attention) and of cultivating the capacity to generously meet each moment with fearlessness and with love?

The Human Journey *November 24th - 26th*

Joseph Campbell's Hero's Journey lays out a universal pattern of human development and expression found in myths and stories across the world. This weekend workshop will use Campbell's model as a framework to help unearth your authentic calling and contribution.



Our time together will weave talks, guided meditation, reflection, interactive exercises, and ritual. We will work from the inside out, exploring the stages of the Human Journey to support your wholehearted engagement with work and life.

[For more information or to register visit 1440 Multiversity](#)

Pamela Weiss is the founder of Appropriate Response. She is a coach, meditation teacher and recognized pioneer in integrating the principles and practices of mindfulness into leadership development and organizational transformation.

