

# The Wise Brain Bulletin

News and Tools for Happiness, Love, and Wisdom  
Volume 3.6 (June 2009)

*Featured Article:*

## Mindfulness and the Environment

© By Gay Watson, Ph.D., 2009

[Editor's note: This essay is excerpted from chapter 8 – "Environment" – in Gay Watson's marvelous book, *Beyond Happiness: Deepening the Dialogue Between Buddhism, Psychotherapy, and the Mind Sciences*. It's worth taking your time with her deep inquiry into what science, therapy, and contemplative practice have to tell us about being present in the world, at home in it, and replenished by it. Savoring her writing is a way into savoring your world.]

**I** see sun shining on a pond, water moving with the wind, which is blowing through wind chimes hanging from the eaves. It is spring. The air is filled with birdsong, solo voices close by in the bushes around the pond, chorus more distant all around the valley up again to individual cries of buzzards hanging and gliding high above in the air.

After dark, another whole cast of characters take over and occupy the world that human dominate during daylight hours. As we retreat inside our artificially lit shelters, or if outside, congregate together with

light and noise, around the edges of our awareness, many non-human actors take over the stage, go about their business, eating, playing, hunting and mating. In the morning only a few traces legible to those fewer and fewer folk who know how to read them, betray what happened in the night.

Rabbits come out at dusk into the upper world, around the hedge lines. Badgers come out of their sets, sometimes surprised in the lanes; they barrel along in front of the cars searching for an open gateway. Foxes

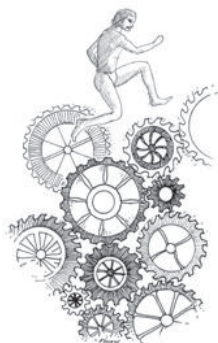
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#### **The Secrets to Financial Wellness**

By Spencer Sherman

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## Greetings

The Wise Brain Bulletin offers skillful means from brain science and contemplative practice—to nurture your brain for the benefit of yourself and everyone you touch.

The Bulletin is offered freely, and you are welcome to share it with others. Past issues are archived at [www.WiseBrain.org](http://www.WiseBrain.org).

Rick Hanson, PhD and Richard Mendius, MD edit the Bulletin, and it's designed and laid out by Brad Reynolds at [BradleyYes@aol.com](mailto:BradleyYes@aol.com).

To subscribe, please contact Rick at [drh@comcast.net](mailto:drh@comcast.net).

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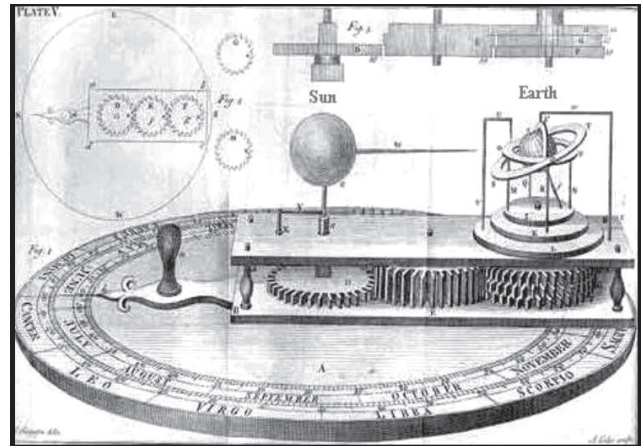
*slink along tracks, lope across the dark fields. A cry from a taken rabbit, the howl of a vixen in heat, the remains of an unfinished meal, the empty chicken run are all that tell of their passing.*

*There are thousands of different life cycles and stories in this small space. From the human perspective most of these are invisible, under the water, in the air, or taking place after dark. Each fragment is linked to every other in some way.*

Ultimately if I can sit quietly enough and long enough, a transformation may occur in my relationship with all of this. Writing of the great Japanese Buddhist teacher and poet Dogen, Steven Heine points to this, “The observer must cast off his or her status as a spectator and become fully immersed in the unfolding of impermanence.” All these worlds share our environment. Yet we so rarely acknowledge them. Or even accept that we share the world with them. Rather we tend to see both the world and its non-human inhabitants as resource for our human desires.

It has taken a long time for Western man to regain a knowledge never lost by civilisations more closely and less anthropocentrically linked to their environment, a knowledge of the inter-

connectedness of all life, a knowledge of human dependence as well as human power. Following the mechanistic and dualistic ways of thinking that have dominated modern science, nature has been seen as devoid of consciousness, objectified and independent from our perceptual experience of it.



Newer disciplines and approaches contest this. Enactive Cognitive Science challenges our normal divisions of brain/body/world. Another contemporary discipline, ecology with its holistic understanding, is a particularly modern Western discourse, though it is, of course, a scientific restatement of truth intimately known by traditional societies. As we have lost personal connection with such lived knowledge, it has to be restated as theory.

To bring such theories to life, however, we also need experience and emotional engagement—love in its widest sense—to enable us as particular participants to integrate with our environment in its particularity. We need to expand our awareness of our personal embodiment to awareness of its implication within the larger ecology. We need to re-engage with practice and particularity in a move away from abstraction and generality. Wendell Berry reminds us:

*“My own experience has shown me that it is possible to live in and attentively study the same small place decade after decade, and find that it ceaselessly evades and exceeds comprehension. There is nothing that it can be reduced to, because ‘it’ is always, and not predictably, changing. It is never the same two days*

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*running, and the better one pays attention, the more aware one becomes of these differences. Living and working in the place day by day, one is continuously revising one's knowledge of it, continuously being surprised by it and in error about it. And even if the place stayed the same, one would be getting older and growing in memory and experience, and would need for that reason alone to work from revision to revision."*



**R**evision = re-vision, to see anew. As we become more connected to our embodiment and to our emotions, so we may become more connected to our environment. Following upon the discovery of the inseparability of mind, body and emotion, we find the inseparability of individual and world. As world touches body providing sensory stimulation, awareness of body and its boundaries may lead us to awareness of their permeability, to awareness of how embedded we are in world. For in noticing ourselves, we notice our limits, and becoming aware of our boundaries, we see that they are more permeable than we thought. In awareness of my skin, I become aware of the wind. Aware of the wind I feel it on my skin. Aware of my self and my thoughts, I become aware of my relationships.

Such capacities of understanding are dependent are experienced and nourished within a world. Perhaps we should say, worlds - the physical world, the world of intersubjectivity, and the world of culture and consensus. Individual experiences linked to specific environmental contexts play an important role in the development of the brain. The interactions of self and other in infancy modify the very constitution of the

living tissue. The neurological reinterpretation of attachment and developmental theory and the discovery of mirror neurons, demonstrates in scientific terms that maturation is an intersubjective process. A baby alone, will not become what we would recognise as a 'normal' adult. Self is inseparable from other.

Understanding of intersubjectivity gives a foundation for an understanding of compassion. If we are all interdependent, it behoves each one of us to feel with/for the others. Compassion is active, action taken in the understanding that we are all interconnected; it is a fearless openness to what is other, in the knowledge that at base, there is no 'other'.

Connection and lack of connection, as healing and as problem, are strong contemporary themes. As it sets the scene in early family life for future development, so it may also colour our later years. A psychiatrist writes of how, in a big hospital he was frequently requested by other colleagues to prescribe anti-depressant drugs for elderly patients returning home from various kinds of surgery. When their files appeared on his desk for his prescriptions, in place of the expected drugs, he would add his recommendations:

*"As far as her depression is concerned, the best thing for this patient would be to get a dog (a small one, obviously, to minimize the risk of a fall). If the patient considers that would be too much work, a cat would do, since it does not need to be taken out. And if a cat still seems too much, a bird or a fish. Finally, if the patient still refuses, then a houseplant."*

After many irritated responses by the other doctors, he prepared a document that summed up all the scientific studies endorsing the value of care and connection, proving that a loving relationship is in itself a physiological benefit. Whilst, as far as he was aware, his colleagues never did fill his prescriptions as written, at least they ceased their derision of his ideas. His story shows how resistant the scientific and medical world has been to accepting new ideas that show how vital, if invisible, our emotional connections are to our health and wellbeing.

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As so many of our lives become estranged from the natural world, the mental and symbolic cultural worlds we inhabit become ever more important and the world of social and cultural convention becomes the primary world in which we live. Here lies a danger. Buddhism calls it the danger of grasping, the cause of suffering. Buddhism points to four main types of clinging or attachment; attachment not only to sensual pleasure, but also to views, to rules and observances, and to the doctrine of the self. The last three are surely the pillars of our mental environment. It is our unfortunate habit to see our views, our beliefs and our selves as solid, real and permanent, rather than as symbolic, processual and changeable. When we identify with these solidified selves, beliefs and views, suffering arises.

What we need is a sense of participation, not of identification. However, afraid of the unknown, identification appeals to our egocentric search for control and certainty. Participation asks for a much humbler and braver exocentric attitude of implication. The distinction between compassion and pity illustrates this. Pity is something I may feel for something other than myself, compassion is suffering with, feeling with, that from which I am not separate.

A growing number of cognitive scientists are moving towards an 'enactive' view in which the mind and the world are considered to be mutually dependent. Mind is there to make a

world. Cognition is embodied; knowledge and experience are the result of ongoing interpretation that emerges from our embodied capacities of understanding through sensorimotor coupling. Perception, according to this view, is not only central to how we see the world, but also to how we create it. For example, studies have shown that colour does not adhere in things, nor is it an essence in and of itself, but it arises from interplay of circumstance and processes, within and beyond the seer. What Buddhism has long called dependent co-arising.

How we see the world influences how we live in it. These views utterly challenge our conventional divisions of inner and outer, self and other, subjective and objective. Such views could uphold another 'middle way', one between unobtainable objectivity or realism, and utterly relative subjectivity or idealism. The concern of such enactive approaches to perception is not to recover the comforting security of a perceiver-independent world, but to find and understand the linkages between sensory and motor systems that will teach us how action can be perceptually guided in a perceiver-dependent world. The message of such views is a reconnection of organism and environment as bound together in reciprocal process.

Perhaps these views may help us to rebalance our view of self and environment, even man and environment. It may encourage us to see what is there for its own sake, not for what use it can be to us. The philosopher Wittgenstein once wrote: "It is not how things are in the world that is mystical, but that it exists." In thirteenth century Japan Dogen had described the desired balance:

*'To learn the Buddha Way is to learn one's own self.  
To learn one's own self is to forget one's self. To  
forget one's self is to be confirmed by all dharmas.'*

Such a perspective informed Basho's exhortation:

From the pine tree  
learn of the pine tree  
And from the bamboo  
of the bamboo.

**M**indfulness can bring us back to the lived particularity of our environment if we can experience it from a position of embodiment and passionate engagement. It always seems so sad when hiking in glorious country where there is so much to wonder at, to stand aside on a narrow trail, as a runner comes by, eyes fixed, hands clenched, earphones clamped over ears. With sweat dripping, they are out to conquer both body and environment, senses shut down, inward, open only to their own chosen and controlled environment, closed to all that is other. The potential of the earth to invoke wonder, to heal our small and circumscribed experience is ignored. It sometimes seems an appropriate image for the way we all too frequently inhabit our bodies and the earth as instruments of our will.

*As I sit by my pond I am enworlded – not only in the physical world, but also in the world of my culture. I can only make sense of what I see according to my experience, my education and the cultural world of which I am a part. The sight and sounds of spring would have a different meaning were I a working farmer. My pleasure in the birdlife would be different were I a professional zoologist, again quite different, were I a hunter. My history, is that of a southern Englishwoman. To this has been added study and reading in other cultures in which I have travelled. Implicit in my understanding and my enjoyment of these different lifeworlds is my own cultural environment and my own emotional development. It is a continuing task to bring awareness to my own experience and also to the cultural and emotional filters through which I experience it. Such awareness can help re-vision these environments, in turn transforming future experience.*



Above all, we need to find new images to enable a new way of appreciating our implication in the world, rather than seeing it as just a mechanism or a background for our human activi-

ties. Ecofeminists and deep ecologists have put forward the idea of world as active agent, rather than passive backdrop for human life, or potential resource or threat to our cherished sense of self. Donna Haraway, resisting the appeal to a primal mother and acknowledging all the symbolic and psychological baggage that motherhood and femininity carries with it, writes of “coyote knowledge”, stating that to acknowledge the agency of the world in knowledge makes room for some unsettling possibilities, including a recognition of the world’s independent sense of humour. The coyote, a trickster figure from Southwest Native American mythology, “suggests our situation when we give up mastery but keep searching for fidelity, knowing all the while we will be hoodwinked”. This may not lead us to comfort, but it does preserve us from the seduction of false consolation. To lay down control, identification and egocentricity or even anthropocentricity, acknowledgement of the trickster would help us to concede our uncontrolling participation in both the physical and the symbolic worlds. Let us see how humble yet engaged attention to embodiment, emotion and environment may help us re-vision our selves.



## Author Bio

**Gay Watson** PhD. trained as a psychotherapist with the Karuna Institute of Core Process Psychotherapy, a Buddhist-inspired psychotherapy training in the UK. She has a first class honours degree and a doctorate in the field of Buddhist Studies from the School of Oriental and African Studies of London University. She is the author of *Beyond Happiness*, (Karnac 2008); *Resonance of Emptiness* (Routledge Curzon 2001) and co-editor of *The Psychology of Awakening* (Samuel Weiser 2001). She lives in Devon, UK and Fairfax, CA.

# In a Crisis: The Secrets to Financial Wellness

© By Spencer Sherman, 2009

**T**he financial crisis is a spiritual and personal growth test. Will we see this moment as an opportunity to practice living a life of equanimity regardless of the circumstances? Or will we succumb to panic and fear? It's not so difficult to kayak in still and calm waters. But when the rapids rise, how will we navigate the challenge?

The financial crisis threatens our survival, our confidence to make the right decisions about money, and our faith in our ability to foresee danger ("Why didn't I see this coming?"). It threatens our sense of fairness ("I worked so hard for this money and this job and they're gone!"), and our trust in our government, capitalism, and the world economy. It feels like a betrayal and a loss. And it awakens the volcano of fear that lies dormant in us most of the time.

What is this primal fear and where did it come from? This question is the silver lining in the crisis. Here is our chance to transform our relationship to money: to experience financial wellness, a sense of freedom and clarity around our finances regardless of how much we have (or how much we had).

Begin by recalling your earliest childhood memories about money. Were your parents arguing about money? Was there not enough for the things you or they wanted? Did they ignore money and hope for the best? Did they covet material wealth? Did it leave you with powerful messages about money, e.g.: "You can never have enough money." "You have to own your own home." "Money makes the world go round." Or "What will the neighbors think?"



When I was 8 years old, I asked my father how much money he made. He didn't answer. But the glare he gave me produced intense feelings of terror and shame within me. The 8-year old boy's feelings combined with his distorted perceptions led to three conclusions: 1. Money is security. 2. You can never have enough. 3. Don't ever talk about money. Many years later, I received an MBA in finance from Wharton Business School. But even with a distinguished higher education, it was the childhood perceptions of money that really drove my financial decisions and my ability to communicate about money.

**T**hankfully there's a way to temper the effects of childhood money conditioning. We can penetrate this fear, open to it and resolve it. With more awareness of, and spaciousness around, our fear, we gain access to our wisdom and equanimity. Without old fear and anxiety guiding us, we regain the possibility of stepping into our financial power and wisdom. Conversely, we can allow fear to drive us to unwise or impulsive action, or we can retreat and ignore money like an ostrich with its head hidden in the sand. But we now know that it was impulsive action, coupled with that kind of head-in-the-sand denial that got many of us and our financial leaders into this crisis.

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In addition to transforming our emotional relationship with money, we all have the chance to seize real economic opportunities. As people flee the stock and real estate markets and businesses fail, fortunes will be made by clear-seeing, centered people who are able to act even while fear and uncertainty are ever-present. Many people prospered by buying businesses and commercial real estate during the Great Depression of the 1930s. We can take advantage of this financial crisis to mine and transform our financial fear and then learn new methodologies for spending, saving, investing, earning, borrowing, giving, and communicating with friends and one's inti-

mate partner. We have the ability in this moment to develop a peaceful relationship with money, realize sufficiency, and free-up enormous energy and time for all the other things that matter in our lives.

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### **Author Bio**

**Spencer Sherman** is the author of *The Cure for Money Madness* [www.curemoneymadness.com](http://www.curemoneymadness.com) and the CEO of Abacus Wealth Partners. [www.abacuswealth.com](http://www.abacuswealth.com).

# Biochem Corner:

## Nutritional Supports for Your Memory

© By Jan Hanson, M.S., L.Ac., 2009  
[Janhealth@comcast.net](mailto:Janhealth@comcast.net)

**K**eeping your memory in tip-top shape is important for the highest functioning in life. Also, a good memory is a diagnostic indication that your brain is in good condition. This means that taking good care of your brain will help your memory, and doing things to improve your memory will tend to help your brain as a whole.

### **General Brain Health**

There are lots of ways to take good care of your brain in general and your memory in particular. For example, do what you can to avoid head injuries! Like, wear a helmet if you ride a bike. Don't drink too much – that nice buzz from alcohol is the feeling of neurons drowning for lack of oxygen – eat protein with every meal and lots of leafy green vegetables every day, minimize sugar, and avoid saturated fats.

### **The Molecular Machinery of Memory – Built from What You Put in Your Mouth**

Now that we've gotten the basics out of the way, let's drill down a bit. Memory is still not well understood, but it is increasingly clear that it relies, in part, on an intricate network of busy little molecular machines that help stitch synapses together in order to register your experiences and other things you want to remember. These memory molecules are built from the foods or supplements you consume each day. This means that you can actually build up the supply train of good molecules going into your brain – and maybe even improve your memory.



### **Acetylcholine**

For example, the neurotransmitter, acetylcholine, is a key player in memory. And good news: there are several foods you can eat or supplements you can take that can help your brain make more acetylcholine.

Let's start with foods. Acetylcholine is made from the amino acid, choline. You need rich sources of choline in your diet, such as egg yolks (possibly the best source), beef, liver, or dairy fats. Obviously, you have to balance other considerations in your consumption of fats, but scientists are increasingly recognizing the important place for "good fats" in our diet. Taken to an extreme, a "low fat" orientation may actually work against optimal brain health.

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Now, in a perfect world, we'd get all the nutrients we needed from the foods we eat. But you've probably noticed that the world is not perfect. Our fast-paced lifestyle, factory farming, depleted soils, etc. make it essentially impossible for the typical person to get all the nutrients he or she needs from diet alone. On top of this ubiquitous, baseline condition, many people have longstanding specific nutritional deficiencies or specific conditions – such as a poor memory – that could well benefit from a targeted surge of wholesome nutritional molecules.

So let's consider several targeted nutritional supplements that you can use to enhance acetylcholine production or function. If you decide to try supplementation, introduce one supplement at a time. Find the individual supplement or combination (potentially including all three below) that feels best for you. For the references that back up these suggestions, as well as other information about nutritional neurochemistry (e.g., how to lift mood), please see my appendix in the forthcoming (November, 2009, new Harbinger).

### **Phosphatidylserine**

Phosphatidylserine (PS) is a phospholipid that is a key component of the brain's cellular membranes. Phospholipids play an important role in communication between brain cells. PS supports acetylcholine, and seems to aid memory. Try taking 100–300 mg per day. PS is best taken with meals.

### **Acetyl-L-carnitine**

Acetyl-L-carnitine seems to help with memory problems and Alzheimer's disease, perhaps through its effect on acetylcholine pathways. Try 500–1000 mg per day on an empty stomach in the morning. Some practitioners recommend even higher levels. If you're sensitive to stimulating nutrients you may want to try this one last.

### **Huperzine-A**

Extracted from Chinese club moss, huperzine-A slows the metabolic breakdown of acetylcholine and thus appears to enhance memory and attention. Try 50–200 mg per day.

## **Conclusion**

I always recommend that when you use nutritional supplements with a narrow focus (like increasing acetylcholine) that you do it on top of an excellent high potency multi-vitamin, fish oil, and a great diet. Following these steps can yield a noticeable improvement in memory and attention. If you try these supplements, I hope you will send me an email, and let me know how they worked. To your health!



## **Author Bio**

**Jan Hanson, M.S., L.Ac.**, is an acupuncturist and specialist in clinical nutrition whose private practice focuses on women's health and temperament issues in children. She is co-author of *Mother Nurture: A Mother's Guide to Health in Body, Mind, and Intimate Relationships* (Penguin, 2002). While working at the Neurochemistry Research Laboratory at the Veteran's Hospital in Sepulveda, California, she co-authored a research paper when she was 18 years old. She went on to receive a B.A. from UCLA and an M.S. from the Academy of Chinese Culture and Health Sciences.

### **Perspectives on Self-Care**

Be careful with all self-help methods (including those presented in this Bulletin), which are no substitute for working with a licensed healthcare practitioner. People vary, and what works for someone else may not be a good fit for you. When you try something, start slowly and carefully, and stop immediately if it feels bad or makes things worse.

# Words of Wisdom

## *The Brain and Beyond*

*Men ought to know that from the human brain and from the brain only arise our pleasures, joys, laughter, and jests as well as our sorrows, pains, griefs and tears.... It is the same thing which makes us mad or delirious, inspires us with dread and fear;....brings us sleeplessness, inopportune mistakes, aimless anxieties, absent-mindedness and acts that are contrary to habit.*

*~ Hippocrates*

*The Brain --- is wider than the Sky ---  
For --- put them side by side ---  
The one the other will contain  
With ease --- and You --- beside ---*

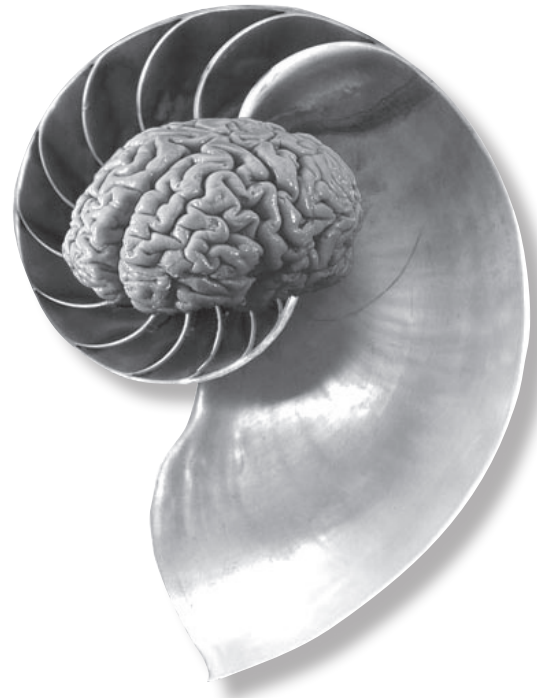
*The Brain is deeper than the sea ---  
For --- hold them --- Blue to Blue ---  
The one the other will absorb ---  
As Sponges --- Buckets -- do ---*

*The Brain is just the weight of God ---  
For --- Heft them --- Pound for Pound ---  
And they will differ --- if they do ---  
As Syllable from Sound ---*

*~ Emily Dickinson*

*Every time I see an adult on a bicycle, I no longer despair for the future of the human race.*

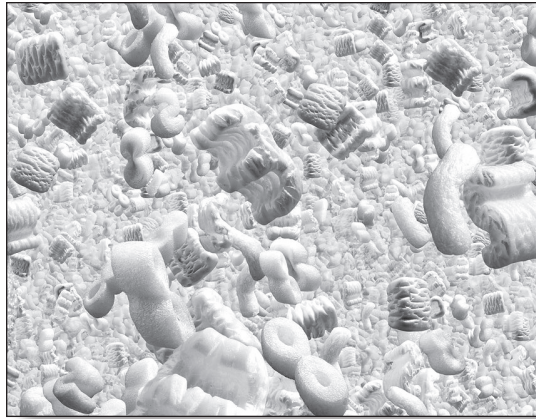
*~ H. G. Wells*



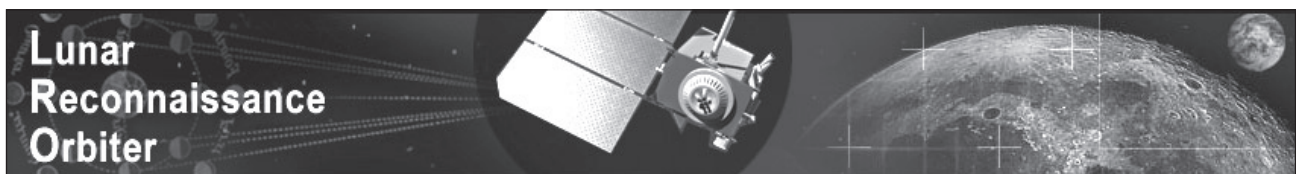
*Our priceless pure heart is not something that can be purchased at a pharmacy, poured into our body, or obtained through a cure. If we went to a major city looking to buy it, we could not purchase this pure heart no matter what price we were willing to pay. How do we find it? With the sincere wish to discover it, we discipline our mind with our mind.*

*When such a motivation is born within us, we and others are benefited and so our lives become meaningful. With a pure motivation that does not wane and with great courage that does not despair, may each one of us endeavor to make our lives meaningful.*

*~ From the 17th Karmapa Ogyen Trinley  
Dorje's Music in the Sky,  
trans. by Michele Martin*



## Grateful Wonder



## Amazing and Alarming Technology – and none at all

This issue of the Bulletin has just three links – because they speak volumes:

- Japan's Kagayū spacecraft crashes into the moon – the movie:  
<http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap090629.html>
- Graphic images from the artist, Chris Jordan, that represent key quantities in American life – like a landscape with a hundred million toothpicks, equal to the number of trees cut in the U.S. yearly to make junk mail:  
[http://www.chrisjordan.com/current\\_set2.php?id=7](http://www.chrisjordan.com/current_set2.php?id=7)
- The world's best rock climber, Chris Sharma, climbing probably the world's hardest route – with no rope, high above the sea [starts 30 seconds in]:  
[www.veoh.com/browse/videos/category/sports/watch/v5678052gY2xdgZp](http://www.veoh.com/browse/videos/category/sports/watch/v5678052gY2xdgZp)

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### San Rafael Meditation Group

Open to beginners and experienced practitioners, we meet on Wednesday evenings at the A Sante day spa in downtown San Rafael at the corner of Brooks and 3rd. "Early-bird" meditation starts at 6:45 with formal instruction at 7:00; meditation ends at 7:30, followed by a brief break, and then a dharma talk and discussion, ending at 8:30. It is led by Rick Hanson (with occasional guest teachers), and for more information, check out [www.WiseBrain.org/sanrefaelmeditation.html](http://www.WiseBrain.org/sanrefaelmeditation.html). Newcomers are always welcome!



# Offerings

Rick Hanson, PhD, and Rick Mendius, MD

1. Sounds True offers *Meditations for Happiness* by Rick Hanson, Ph.D. It's 3 CD's worth of talks and brain-savvy exercises for increasing your happiness, with an emphasis on experiential practices and practical tools. It is offered as an inexpensive download to your computer, where you can listen to it or burn it to CD's or transfer it to an iPod.

This program truly turned out to be pretty great, and here's a comment about it from the author, Annie Spiegelman:

*On his new "Meditations for Happiness" program, benevolent Rick Hanson guides me to sit down and face my inner critic – and then actually see it as a form and shrink it. Being a Master Gardener, I see the critic as a gnome who tiptoes into my brain when no one is looking, with those tiny pointy shoes, and makes me doubt myself. I shrink him down to the size of a snail and toss him out. He knows nothing. The shoes are a dead giveaway.*

Here's the link to this program at Sounds True: <http://shop.soundstrue.com/shop.soundstrue.com/SelectProd.do?prodId=1715&manufacturer=Sounds%20True&category=Exploring%20the%20Psyche&name=Meditations%20for%20Happiness>

2. Rick also has a chapter, "7 Facts about the Brain That Incline the Mind to Joy," in *Measuring the Immeasurable*—which is chock full of essays from luminaries like James Austin, MD, Larry Dossey, MD, Daniel Goleman, PhD., Candace Pert, PhD, Marilyn Schlitz, PhD, Dan Siegel, MD, Charles Tart, PhD, and Cassandra Vieten, PhD. Check it out at [www.amazon.com/Measuring-Immeasurable-Scientific-Case-Spirituality/dp/1591796547](http://www.amazon.com/Measuring-Immeasurable-Scientific-Case-Spirituality/dp/1591796547).

3. At Spirit Rock, in 2009, these daylongs with Rick Hanson and Rick Mendius are scheduled:

- **The Neurodharma of Love**, on Saturday, July 12. The emphasis will be on relationships in general and love in the broadest sense, integrating deep teachings on compassion and lovingkindness with a clear-eyed understanding of how we evolved to be caring toward "us" and often wary and aggressive toward "them." ([www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RR3D09](http://www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RR3D09))
- **Resting in Emptiness: The Evolution of Awareness and the Transcendence of the Self**, on Saturday, November 7. This workshop will address the thorny and fundamental question of . . . "me, myself, and I." The self – with its tendencies to grasp after possessions and take things personally – is perhaps the premier engine of suffering. We'll explore the evolution of the apparent self in the animal kingdom, and the ways in which the self is real and is also not real at all, coming to rest more and more in the underlying spacious awareness in which self appears and disappears. ([www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RR4D09](http://www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RR4D09))
- **The Hard Things That Open the Mind and Heart: Practicing with Difficult Conditions**, led with James Baraz, on Sunday, December 13. This is for people grappling with difficult conditions – both internal and external – and for caregivers and friends who support those individuals. These include challenges with the body, mind, and life circumstances. We'll cover Buddhist perspectives and practices for difficult conditions; lovingkindness for oneself and for any being who suffers; brain-savvy ways to strengthen your capacity to be with the hard stuff; and methods from the intersection of the dharma and neuroscience for lifting mood and cultivating joy. ([www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=JB3D09](http://www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=JB3D09))

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## *offerings continued...*

4. Also at Spirit Rock, Fred Luskin, Ph.D. and Rick Hanson, Ph.D. will offer a daylong benefit on Sunday, August 23 on **"Forgiveness and Assertiveness."** These two subjects, which are often seen as at odds with each other, actually support each other. This workshop will cover how we form grievances, healthy forgiveness, and healthy assertiveness. Dr. Luskin is a world-renowned expert on forgiveness, and we will get into the nitty-gritty of how to work through difficult issues with others. ([www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RF1D09](http://www.spiritrock.org/calendar/display.asp?id=RF1D09))

*Also in 2009, there are these additional offerings:*

5. With the Dharma Zephyr Insight Meditation Community in Nevada, Rick will be leading a two day workshop September 12 and 13 on using brain-savvy methods to steady the mind, quiet it, bring it to singleness, and concentrate it, following the road map of the Buddha. See [www.nevadadharma.net/zephyr.html](http://www.nevadadharma.net/zephyr.html) for more information.

6. Through R. Cassidy Seminars, Rick will be teaching continuing education workshops to mental health professionals in San Francisco and Oakland (September 25 & 26), and in Los Angeles and San Diego (November 13 & 14). The workshops will focus on translating neuroscience research, informed by contemplative practice, into tools and skills that therapists can offer their clients. See [www.ceuregistration.com](http://www.ceuregistration.com) for more information.

7. At the **Science and Nonduality Conference** in Marin County, California, during October 23-25, Rick will be a plenary speaker as well as chair a panel on nonduality from the perspective of the three main Buddhist lineages: Theravadan, Tibetan, and Zen. See [www.scienceandnonduality.com](http://www.scienceandnonduality.com) for more information

8. At the University of East London, the conference on **Mindfulness and Well-Being: From Spirituality to Cognitive Neuroscience** will be held on November 20 and 21. Rick will be giving several talks and a workshop. Contact Dr. Patrizia Collard at [drcollard@stressminus.co.uk](mailto:drcollard@stressminus.co.uk) for more information.

9. At London Insight Meditation center, Rick will be leading **"The Neurology of Awakening"** on November 22. See [www.londoninsightmeditation.org.uk/programme/schedule/](http://www.londoninsightmeditation.org.uk/programme/schedule/) (click on Daylong Retreats) for more information.

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### ***The Wellspring Institute for Neuroscience and Contemplative Wisdom***

The Institute is a 501c3 non-profit corporation, and it publishes the Wise Brain Bulletin. The Wellspring Institute gathers, organizes, and freely offers information and methods – supported by brain science and the contemplative disciplines – for greater happiness, love, effectiveness, and wisdom. For more information about the Institute, please go to [www.WiseBrain.org](http://www.WiseBrain.org).

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## ***Fare Well***

***~ May you and all beings be happy, loving, and wise ~***