

1: Sacred Art of Living Center: Workshops for Self-Care & End-of-Life Care

Sacred Art of Living & Dying is more about living than about the end of life. This series of four internationally acclaimed workshops draws from the wisdom of our ancestors that the quality of life is enhanced when we do not live in fear or denial of suffering and our mortality.

The problem is that we are decidedly out of balance today. Paradoxically, letting go of life allows us to appreciate it more deeply! Contributors control their own work and posted freely to our site. If you need to flag this entry as abusive, send us an email. Life is not measured by the number of breaths we take, but by the moments that take our breath away. One day, there was a long stretch of seasons spent in the embrace of the giant willow at the center of the world, its perfect cupola of weeping branches arcing from the sky back to the ground-- And the next day a midnight storm of the kind you get in rural Ohio had dropped a thunderbolt of the kind only a Norse god could throw so accurately at the base of the willow, blowing it into several million tears. I was six years old, stepping out the back door to see the vast fluttering presence of the willow only to find shocking emptiness. I could see the outbuilding and hills from the doorstep that had always been hidden by the tree. I could see the horizon and sky that had always been obscured by the tree. I could see the incomprehensible empty space that had all my life been filled by the tree that had always been my second home. I could see Nothing. The moment is still vivid more than half a century later. I remember precisely what I felt. As great as the giant weeping willow was, as intimate a part it had played in my life, as much as I loved it, there existed something far greater, something suddenly far more intimate, something new I loved far more. For the first time in my life, I had encountered the invisible and utterly unforeseeable power to change things forever. And it looked exactly like Nothing. What I experienced was a moment of profound clarity: I was witnessing the greatest magic act of all time. The world I had always counted on to be solid and predictable and nameable was transformed in that moment into a world of unknown causes and dreamlike effects. The reassuring world of parents and family and school was suddenly replaced by an even more reassuring world of invisible doors just waiting to open and let some miracle through. And despite its physical presence, the only name that seemed fitting for this unnamable absence was Nothing. Not because it is "nothingness" but because it is "no-thing", something so real and yet utterly impossible to turn into a "thing", a word, a concept, a description of an ineffable experience. Nothing is more real than Nothing. I step into another culture for a month, say in Mexico as I did recently, and I come face to face with the physical absence of my familiar world. As I adapt to my new surroundings and respond to people as they respond to me, I come face to face with the psychological absence of my familiar sense of self. Even the inner world of this supposedly solid and continuous sense of I, therefore, proves no more substantial than a veil ready to part and let in a different I that is no less real or authentic than the one it replaces. And I see Nothing in death. Seven years ago, I had a massive heart attack while in the emergency room and was fortunate enough to be revived after being dead for two minutes. As with many others, it was a life-changing event. How natural that has come to sound: Religious authorities and lifelong practitioners of spiritual disciplines increasingly find themselves on equal footing with a growing cadre of those with first-hand experience of the transcendental. In my previous post, I spoke about A Lifeway of Flower and Song , which presented the ancient Mesoamerican worldview of deep appreciation for all life as both sacred and dying. How do I know that loving life is not a delusion? How do I know that in hating death I am not like a man who, having left home in his youth, has forgotten the way back? What was your original face before your parents met? Likewise, Chuang Tzu asks us to suspend belief in conventional wisdom and the consensual reality of the five senses. And he asks this question a couple thousand years ago, before we had instruments sensitive enough to discern the subatomic realm of quantum physics: Yet here we are, not only mysteries to ourselves, but aware of the mystery within which we find ourselves. And the only beings we know of that are aware of their own mortality. Why should things be arranged so? And why, if we alone are so aware, why do we spend so little conscious time thinking about it? To the contrary, as we all know, we spend a disproportionate amount of time trying to repress exactly that awareness. Of all mindfulness meditations, That on death is supreme. Whether that means things I love or

dislike, it drives home the ephemeral nature of my relationship to the world. It makes me question just how important many of the things in my life are. Death, in other words, clarifies my feelings by revealing the truly important things in my life, allowing me to concentrate my energies on what is truly valuable. And let go all the rest. Treating it as a real physical presence that is with us always allows us to let all the meaningless nonsense pass without raising a ripple--and reminds us to treat each moment as if it were our last. It is not just that everything else is passing away before my eyes--so too is my own life, and that awareness drives me to make the most of every moment. Death is not the greatest loss in life. The greatest loss is what dies inside us while we live. Is there any real justification for our open-hearted innocence and curiosity to be buried beneath a social veneer of self-interest and competition? What will it take for us to create a civilization that treats the true self arising from childhood as sacred? What will it take for us to recognize that this artificial self of big-fish-eat-little-fish, dog-eat-dog is a trivialization and waste of human life? Being and Nothing give birth to one another. The problem is that we are decidedly out of balance today, ignoring the good advice of mystics and philosophers and spiritual adepts and great artists by trying to consciously avoid contemplating our own death with real sincerity and curiosity. While I thought that I was learning how to live, I have been learning how to die. I found that the spiritual studies I had undertaken for most of my life were actually preparing me for the moment of dying. From where I stand today, it seems that the art of living and the art of dying are indeed the same thing. Death is just infinity closing in. Whatever name we choose to give it, it surrounds us on all sides, bringing us into this world and taking us back again without our knowing where or when. The art of living consists, in large measure, of seeing each moment as the site of our dying. In this way, we experience each moment as a springboard into the Beyond, a set of circumstances that, paradoxically, can be let go of more easily even as its meaningfulness impacts us more profoundly: Today I wander round a pond in a wildlife preserve. The cacophony of hundreds of Canadian geese honking from their nest sites is nearly deafening. Red-wing blackbirds flit between cottonwoods and blackberry vines. A pair of green-wing teals drift to shore, sifting the mud expertly for breakfast. A great blue heron glides by, dragging one foot across the surface of the mirror pond. I am six years old again and the world has become a weeping willow My second home. And it constantly blinks in and out of sight, the greatest magic act of all time: My deepest gratitude extends to my co-author, Martha Ramirez-Oropeza and our enlightened publishers, Larson Publications. It recasts the I Ching in the symbology of the Native Americans of ancient Mexico and includes original illustrations interpreting each of the hexagrams. Its subtitle, 64 Keys to Inspired Action in the New World hints at its focus on the ethics of the emerging world culture. [Click here](#) to go to the main site to see sample chapters, reviews and the link to Larson Publications for ordering the book.

2: Classes | Sacred Crossings

Sacred Art of Living & Dying is more about living than about dying. These workshops draw from the wisdom of our ancestors that the quality of life is enhanced when we do not live in fear or denial of suffering and mortality.

It discusses how death is everywhere in India. Kramer says that "Death is at most minutes from any airport, train, or bus station in any large city in India. Along the Ganges river bodies are regularly cremated, and the odor of burning flesh fills the air. This description of India shows a colossal difference in Indian and American culture. However, although Americans are not literally surrounded by death, they are exposed to violent movies and video games such as Call Of Duty, which also creates a relative comfort with seeing death occur. In the reading there were also two stories that explained the Hindu view of death. In the first story, "Nachiketas and Yama", Nachiketas is rewarded for having patience with Yama, the king of death. Interestingly, Yama is described as, "splendid like the sun, of faultlessness,, blackness and beautiful red eyes. This was an interesting description of death that is very unique. Nachiketas wished for his relationship with his father to be restored, to be lead to the realm of immortality, and finally, he asks Yama the question, "Does one live after death or not? Yama responds with a very profound answer. Unborn is he, eternal, everlasting and primeval. Should the killer think "I kill" or the killed "I have been killed". He kills not, is not killed. It described the Hindu belief in the soul or "The Self" and how it lives on even after the body dies. It also discussed how in order to conquer death, one must accept and surrender to death and to the fact that it surrounds us at all times. In other words, he means that if one surrenders to death and accepts it, the are able to live a life without fear, or an "immortal life". I found the story of "Nachiketas and Yama" very intriguing and I felt that it adequately described the Hindu perspective on death in general. Works Cited Kramer, Kenneth. The Sacred Art of Dying: How World Religions Understand Death.

3: Carpe Diem: The Sacred Art Of Dying Chapter 2

*The Sacred Art of Dying: How the World Religions Understand Death [Kenneth Kramer] on www.enganchecubano.com *FREE* shipping on qualifying offers. Examines how each of the major religions looks at death by including stories, teachings and rituals that present a comparative religious meaning of death and afterlife.*

4: The sacred art of dying - Poem by joanna smith

The Sacred Art of Dying has 57 ratings and 7 reviews. Emily said: This book helped me through a lot of my grief this year while also teaching me about so.

5: Sacred Art of Living & Dying -

Examines how each of the major religions looks at death by including stories, teachings and rituals that present a comparative religious meaning of death and afterlife.

6: The Sacred Art of Dying: How World Religions Understand Death by Kenneth Paul Kramer

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9: The Sacred Art of Living and Dying | HuffPost Life

Dear Jo, I just read your poem, The Sacred Art of Dying, and I'm pleasantly surprised. This is one of the better poems that I've seen in Poetrysoup. Sometimes I read poetry that I don't enjoy, but this poem was a pleasure because you have a real gift.

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