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# Living in the Balance

## May and June 2018

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The last few weeks have been way too busy and things....as they do....have taken ten times longer than I had planned and were fueled by worries and concerns. So rather than s.....l.....o.....w down, I do what I like to do, I accelerate. Pedal to the metal and I was not even in the car. Zero to 70 in a nanosecond. This typically leads, as it did this time, to a wakeup call I answer only when I do something stupid and am thankful that no one was looking. And no, I am not going to elaborate. Each of us has our own, "What the hell was I thinking?!" So take a moment to ponder yours as I am still pondering mine. And at the crux, I know in my gerbil spinning mind that this wheel whirling begins when I convince myself that if I just keep moving at high speed I can control it or outrun it....whatever "it" is.

I see a great blue heron almost every day on my walk around Furman. And yes....a cardio speed walk....unlike the heron that stands quietly and balanced as I pass. No hurry. Just waiting. I remember as a child taking time to look at the moss that grew around the back of the garage. Laid on my back and looked at the clouds and imagined the shapes. Waited for dusk and the fireflies. Stared at the moon. Listened in the dark. And smelled the flowers grown by my grandmother. I was in the now of childhood. Alive. Awake. Those moments are memories hard to replicate now. The ground seems shakier and the moon obscured.

Spiritual practice 101... "Breathe." "Let go." "Take a minute." Jumping gerbils meet that idea with total resistance! I recall being on a mindfulness retreat and our leader saying, "It is easy for me to open my hands and let go of something and then I realize that I have snatched it up with my teeth before it hits the ground!"

I turn to the wisdom of others when my tires spin on the hard road. Pema Chodron offers hers....

*"Life is a good teacher and a good friend. Things are always in transition, if we could only realize it. Nothing ever sums itself up in the way that we like to dream about. The off-center, in-between state is an ideal situation, a situation in which we don't get caught and we can open our hearts and minds beyond limit. It's a very tender, nonaggressive, open-ended state of affairs. To stay with that shakiness—to stay with a broken heart, with a rumbling stomach, with the feeling of hopelessness and wanting to get revenge—that is the path of true awakening. Sticking with that uncertainty, getting the knack of relaxing in the midst of chaos, learning not to panic—this is the spiritual path."*

*"When you're like a keg of dynamite about to go off, patience means just slowing down at that point—just pausing—instead of immediately acting on your usual, habitual response. You refrain from acting, you stop talking to yourself, and then you connect with the soft spot. But at the same time you are completely and totally honest with yourself about what you are feeling. You're not suppressing anything; patience has nothing to do with suppression. In fact, it has everything to do with a gentle, honest relationship with yourself."*

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## *Calendar considerations.....*

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### **Silent Retreat Weekends**

June 1 – 3, 2018

Order of Saint Helena, North Augusta, South Carolina

<https://www.osh.org/events.html>

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### **Valle Crucis Conference Center**

Short Introduction to Centering Prayer, Friday, May 6 - Sunday, May 8

Using the Enneagram for Spiritual Growth, June 3 – 5

Women Writers Workshop, September 13 – 16

Advanced Centering Prayer Retreat, November 25 -- December 2

<https://vcconferences.org/programs>

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### **Kanuga Conference Center**

Faith, Art and Creative Expression, August 19 – 24, 2018

Icon Writing, November 10 – 16

[www.kanuga.org](http://www.kanuga.org)

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### **Southern Dharma Center**

Pathway to Freedom: Walking the Eightfold Path, May 5 – 9

The Marriage of Yoga and Meditation, May 15 – 20

Zen Mind/Zen Body, May 25 – 28

Unfettering the Natural Mind, June 2 – 9

True Refuge: The Heart of Wise Action, June 26 – July 1

Realizing Freedom from the Unwholesome Roots, July 6 – 10

Seeing Clearly, Opening Up, July 18 – 22

These programs fill quickly!

[www.southerndharma.org](http://www.southerndharma.org)

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### **Lake Junaluska**

A Weekend with Dr. Jerry Wright, September 7 – 9

Interfaith Peace Conference, November 21 – 24

Lake Junaluska, North Carolina

<http://www.firstlightproductions.org/new-events/>

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### **Center for Spiritual Wisdom**

An Enneagram Journey, June 3 – 5

For more information and for other offerings

<https://center4spiritualwisdom.org/>

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## *Calendar considerations.....*

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### **The Sophia Institute, Charleston, SC**

The Gift of Deepening and the Radiance of All Things with Mark Nepo, May 18 – 20

Knowing yourself on a deeper level with Connie Numbers, June 22 – 23

Soul Saturation with Sera Beak, July 6 – July 7

More Together than Alone: Pathways that bring us together, Mark Nepo, Sept 14 – 16

See the website for these and other one day events. [www.thesophia institute.org](http://www.thesophia institute.org)

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### **St. Mary's Sewanee**

Three Day Centering Prayer Retreat, June 1 – June 3

Eight Day Centering Prayer Retreat, June 22 – June 29

Clear and Calm Meditation Retreat, July 20 – 22

Eight Day Centering Prayer Retreat, September 7 – 14

A Labyrinth Journey: Connecting with your Creativity Through Walking and Writing, September 28 – 30

Mindfulness on the Mountain, December 7 – 9

Three Day Centering Prayer Retreat, December 14 – 16

St. Mary's Retreat Center, Sewanee, TN

<http://www.stmaryssewanee.org/about/events>

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### **The Anchorage**

Greenville, South Carolina

Offering desert days and contemplative events

<http://www.theanchorage.org/>

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### **Anderson Forum for Progressive Theology**

Jungian analyst, Dr. Jerry Wright

Reimagining God and Religion

Sunday, October 14

Anderson, SC

<http://astlonline.org/>

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### **Haden Institute Summer Dream and Spirituality Conference**

Featuring Jean Shindoa Bolen, Alan Jones, and Pittman McGee

May 27 – June 1 at Kanuga Conference Center

<https://www.hadeninstitute.com/summer-dream-conference>

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For online workshops see Spirituality and Practice

<http://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/ecourses/>





## 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 a more intentional way
- Discerning ways to live in a more integrated and whole way
- Standing at a 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)

Wanda Meade, M.Ed.  
Completed Haden Institute in Spiritual Direction Program  
PO Box 14940  
Greenville, SC 29610



*The photos in this journal are my work. I chose them to remember the full speed on the opening page and the others remind me that I can't hurry things to their full ripeness. All of life unfolds when and as it will.*