

# leap of faith

THE NEW HOPE SANGHA NEWSLETTER

FALL 2010

Two days of Spiritual Inquiry and Insight Meditation November 12 – 14. See page 3.

## Living Intentionally

By John Orr

**T**he Buddhist Eightfold Path begins with Right View and Right Intention and then proceeds through the moral awareness section of the path, which is Right Speech, Action and Livelihood, and ends with Right Effort, Mindfulness and Concentration, the part of the path which focuses on a deepening of meditation and awareness. Perhaps it is more helpful to visualize the Eightfold Path as a circle rather than in a linear fashion, as all aspects of the path interconnect and support each other. For example, the effort, concentration and mindfulness needed to be present with a thought before it is translated into a specific speech or action reveal the interrelatedness of the path.

However, Gotama Buddha did place View and Intention at the beginning, perhaps as a way of helping us to see clearly the direction we are taking on our spiritual path. If I live in North Carolina and I am traveling to Brazil, but begin my journey by heading north, then it might be a longer trip than I anticipated. Similarly, Right View gives me a clearer picture of my destination on the path, which is to learn how to be increasingly present in this moment with love and compassion for all beings and myself. I learn how to speak, act and live skillfully in this world in which I physically reside and at the same time know that I am Spirit and fully embrace both my humanness and divinity. This deepening awareness of the simultaneity of the conditioned and unconditioned realms is the essence of Right View.

Similarly, Right Intention, which is sometimes interpreted as Right Thought, will bring clarity to our present moment's experience and the direction that our path is taking. Before I

For John's letter to the sangha, see page 5.

say or do something, there's going to be a thought or intention that arises in my mind. If I decide to walk from Durham to Chapel Hill, my body doesn't just get up and start walking. There is a mental volition, thought or intention to make this particular journey that precedes my body actually doing so. Thought or intention also precedes my speech. Words aren't spontaneously expressed from my lips, although it may sometimes feel that they are. Mindfulness helps me to become aware of how thoughts first arise in my mind before they are spoken. Attending a silent meditation retreat in which participants take a vow of Noble Silence at the beginning of the retreat is helpful training in being aware of how thought or intention precedes speech. Within the vast inner experience of silence arises the intention to reach out to someone else and say something. Before I become aware of the actual thought

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**September 24 - 25  
Wilmington, NC**

*A weekend with John Orr at  
The Open Space*

**September 24**

**Public talk: "The Four Foundations of Mindfulness, Part 1"**

**Location:** The Open Space, 411 Chestnut Street, Wilmington, NC

**Time:** Friday, 7:30 - 9 pm

**Speaker:** John Orr

**Fee:** Following the Buddhist tradition, the talk will be offered on a Dana (Generosity) basis.

**September 25**

**Mindfulness session:**

**Mindfulness of Body and Feelings**

**Location:** The Open Space, 411 Chestnut Street, Wilmington, NC

**Time:** Saturday, 9 am - 1 pm

**Instructor:** John Orr

**Fee:** The fee for this session is \$40, and no one will be turned away for financial reasons. Preregistration is encouraged. To hold a space, please send a nonrefundable deposit of \$20, made payable to The Open Space, 411 Chestnut Street, Wilmington, NC 28401.

**To Register:** For more information and registration, contact Elena Pezzuto at 910-763-8813.

**October 9  
Raleigh, NC**

*Half-Day Retreat Sponsored  
by The Raleigh Meditation  
Group*

**Location:** Unity Church of the Triangle at the Long View Center. The center is on the northeast side of Moore Square in Raleigh, and the address is 118 S. Person St., Raleigh 27601.

**Time:** Saturday, 10 am - 1 pm

**Instructor:** John Orr

**Fee:** There is a registration fee of \$15 payable the day of the retreat to cover expenses. Following the Buddhist tradition, John Orr's

teachings will be offered on a Dana (Generosity) basis. Participants will have the opportunity to practice generosity to the teacher, so he can continue to offer such retreats.

**To Register:** Please register by Wednesday, October 6, by contacting Tom Barrie at tom\_barrie@ncsu.edu. Registrants will receive information on parking, access to the building and directions to the meditation hall.

**What to Bring:** Participants should bring a cushion to sit on. Chairs are also available.

**October 22 - 24  
Brighton, MI**

*Practicing Vipassana and  
Dependent Origination with  
Barbara Brodsky, Aaron and  
John Orr*

**To Register:** To register or for information, contact Mary or Terry Gliedt at 734-369-2628 or retreat@hps.com.

**October 30  
Durham, NC**

*Learn Mindfulness  
Meditation*

**Location:** Duke University East Campus: Bishop's House, Room 107.

**Time:** Saturday, 10 am - 5 pm

**Instructor:** John Orr

**Fee:** \$85, early enrollment \$76.50.

**To Register:** Register online through Duke University Continuing Studies at www.learn-more.duke.edu/weekend/courses or by phone at 919-684-6259. Have the following information ready: Class ID 0331 and MC/Visa information. Advance registration is recommended.

**What to Bring:** A bag lunch if you wish. A folded blanket and cushion if you want to sit on the floor. Chairs are available.

**Recommended reading:**

*Mindfulness in Plain English* by Henepola Gunaratana, ISBN#0-86171-064-9.

**November 12 - 14  
Mebane, NC**

*Residential/Nonresidential  
Insight Meditation Retreat*

**Instructors:** Barbara Brodsky, Aaron and John Orr

**Location:** Stone House, a beautiful center on 70 acres near Chapel Hill

**To Register:** See page 3 of this newsletter for details.

**December 27 -  
January 2  
Hot Springs, NC**

*New Year's retreat with  
John Orr*

**Location:** The Southern Dharma Retreat Center near Asheville.

The winter season is a beautiful time of year to be on the side of the mountain at Southern Dharma, where the center will hold the space for our retreat. Join us for a week of quiet practice that will include instruction in insight meditation (vipassana), loving kindness meditation, evening dharma talks, chanting from various spiritual traditions, optional yoga, group discussion and individual meetings when requested. People from all meditation and spiritual traditions are welcome.

**To Register:** For registration and information, contact the Southern Dharma Retreat Center, 1661 West Road, Hot Springs, NC 28743. Call: 828-622-7112 or go to [http://www.southerndharma.org/retreat\\_newyears.shtml](http://www.southerndharma.org/retreat_newyears.shtml)

**Retreats in 2011-  
Mark your calendars**

**April 23 - 30  
Emerald Isle, NC**

*Residential Retreat*

This retreat for senior students experienced in meditation will be held at a large house overlooking dunes and a quiet beach. It is led by Barbara, Aaron and John. If you would like more information about this retreat or are not sure what constitutes being a senior student, contact John at john@newhopesangha.org or call 919-943-0438.

**June 3 - 5  
Mebane, NC**

*Residential /Nonresidential  
Retreat*

Weekend retreat held at Stone House. This retreat can be done as residential or nonresidential and is open to everyone.

**June 18 - 25  
Brighton, MI**

*Residential Retreat*

Weeklong residential retreat with Barbara, Aaron and John, open to everyone.

*Introduction to Insight  
Meditation Classes*

If you are interested in learning more about our introduction to meditation class, please email [nhsx@newhopesangha.org](mailto:nhsx@newhopesangha.org). Once the class location and dates are determined, we will be in contact with you.

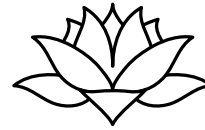
**Dana** (pronounced "dah-na") is a Pali word meaning "gift" or "giving." It is closely related to the virtue of generosity and is expressed in many forms—the offering and sharing of our time, energy, knowledge/expertise, material items and financial resources. Dana is a purely volitional act of giving in which we develop our ability to let go, convey our compassion and caring, demonstrate our commitment, and acknowledge our interdependence and connectedness.

# New Hope Sangha Fall Meditation Retreat



November 12–14, 2010

STONE HOUSE, MEBANE NC



**A** weekend retreat is an opportunity to develop calmness, wisdom, and compassion in a supportive environment. Beginners as well as experienced meditators are welcome. The weekend will include meditation instruction, silent meditation practice, dharma talks and chanting. Emphasis will be on developing mindfulness in sitting, standing and walking to access our innate understanding, joy and peace.

## THE TEACHERS

**Barbara Brodsky** is a Quaker and trained dharma teacher in the Buddhist tradition. She is the guiding teacher of Deep Spring Center in Ann Arbor Michigan. Barbara has been deaf for 35 years. She is the channel for the discarnate entity, Aaron. **Aaron** is a being of light who has evolved beyond the need to return to the physical plane. We have a special page on Aaron at our web site, [newhopesangha.org](http://newhopesangha.org).

**John Orr** received Theravada Buddhist ordination and training for eight years while living in Thailand and India. He has been teaching meditation and leading retreats since 1980. John is the guiding teacher of New Hope Sangha and teaches at Duke University.

Barbara and John follow an age-old tradition of freely and open heartedly offering the dharma. They receive no payment from the registration fees. Your dana (generosity) allows the teachers to continue their work of sharing the dharma. During the retreat there will be baskets available for your offerings.

## SCHEDULE AND FEES

The retreat will begin with check in at 5:00 PM Friday. Following dinner at 6:00 PM, the weekend program will begin and continue until closing at 4:00 PM Sunday. The evening programming will end at 9:30 PM on Friday and Saturday. Breakfast will be served at 8:00 AM on Saturday and Sunday.

Fees include lodging, dinner on Friday, three meals on Saturday, and two meals on Sunday. The fees are based on your lodging preference.

RESIDING ON SITE .....	\$225
TENTING ON SITE (bring your own tent) .....	\$200
COMMUTING .....	\$175

For early registrations received before October 15, subtract \$20 from your fee. For registrations received after October 23, include the full amount. There is also an option for a nonrefundable deposit which is due at the time of registration, with the balance due on November 12.

*Return the form below and a check made out to Durham Meditation Center, 1214 Broad St. #2, Durham, NC 27705. Confirmation will be emailed to you along with detailed directions to Stone House. Space is limited. Please contact Donna Deal if you have any questions: email [donnadeal@aol.com](mailto:donnadeal@aol.com) or call (919) 667-5906.*

## *New Hope Sangha Fall Retreat, November 12–14, 2010*

### REGISTRATION FORM

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_ Preferred roommate if residing on site (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

How did you hear about our retreat? \_\_\_\_\_  This will be the first retreat I have attended

- If you are residing on site check one:**  Early registration, received before 10/15 (\$205)  Registration after 10/15 (\$225)  Deposit (\$125)
- If you are tenting check one:**  Early registration, received before 10/15 (\$180)  Registration after 10/15 (\$200)  Deposit (\$100)
- If you are commuting check one:**  Early registration, received before 10/15 (\$155)  Registration after 10/15 (\$175)  Deposit (\$75)

OUR TEACHERS DO NOT RECEIVE ANY FUNDS FROM THESE REGISTRATION FEES. PLEASE BE MINDFUL THAT THEY RELY ON YOUR DANA FOR THEIR LIVELIHOOD.

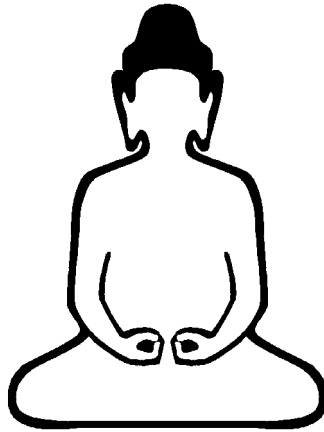
## NEW HOPE SANGHA

# Twice Monthly Meditations & Dharma Discussion

Our community, the New Hope Sangha, will be holding meditations and dharma discussion the 1st and 3rd Tuesdays of each month, at the Eno River Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Garrett Rd. in Durham. We will meet from 7:00–9:00 pm in the Chapel, which adjoins the main Sanctuary. This is an ideal location, which is accessible from anywhere in the Triangle. The first hour will be sitting and chanting followed by a walking meditation period. The second hour we will have a dharma talk and/or discussion. Any questions about your meditation practice or spiritual life are welcomed. If you are late arriving and you hear chanting you may enter quietly. If you arrive late and the chapel is quiet we ask you to wait or sit in the sanctuary or other areas. The chapel door will be opened again during the walking period. We will conclude the evening by 9:00.

Please plan on arriving by 6:50 so we can be in our seats by 7:00. This is an open group and all are welcome to attend. If you are new to meditation and need meditation instructions please come to the Chapel by 6:50 pm and one of the group leaders will meet with you separately to give you instructions and guidance in the practice. If you have any other questions concerning the group please call Jim Jarvis at his office 309-2922 or e-mail him at [jjjarvis@mindspring.com](mailto:jjjarvis@mindspring.com). There is no fee charged. There will be a dana (gift) basket available to help pay the cost of the room rental and a dana basket for the teacher.

The New Hope Sangha is a resource for anyone who wishes to learn and practice the dharma. This is a nondenominational community that respects the wisdom of various spiritual traditions. Our meditation practices are grounded in three Buddhist practices:



Vipassana (Mindfulness) Meditation, Metta (Lovingkindness) Meditation and Dzogchen (Non Dual Awareness) Meditation. To facilitate this process we have set up a web site (see: [www.newhopesangha.org](http://www.newhopesangha.org)) that will give up-to-date information about the meditation programs we are offering, as well as dharma talks by various teachers and other useful information. Our newsletter, “Leap Of Faith” is available online and in hard copy for those who request it. Send requests to [office@newhopesangha.org](mailto:office@newhopesangha.org).

Beginning this fall and continuing into the New Year, we will be exploring the Buddha’s most foundational discourse on meditation, the Satipatthana Sutta, which is translated as, The Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The four foundations of mindfulness include awareness of body, feelings, mind and dhammas (the truth of how things are.) We will be using as a guide the book, *Satipatthana: The Direct Path To Realization by Anlayo*. The book is available through Windhorse Publications. Along with this excellent book, we will be studying other Buddhist suttas related to the four foundations of mindfulness as well as, using exercises and practices to help us reap the fruits of mindfulness

### DIRECTIONS TO ERUUF AT 4907 GARRETT RD.

Raleigh/Cary (east), Charlotte/Greensboro (west) via I-40: Exit 270 (15/501). Go north toward Durham. At Garrett Road, turn right continuing 7/10 mile. Turn left into the entrance. Raleigh/Wake Forest via I-85/70 After Rt.70 merges with I-85, Exit from the left lane onto 15/501 toward Chapel Hill. At Garrett Road (BP Station), turn left and go 7/10 mile to entrance on the left. Greensboro/Hillsborough via I-85/70 Exit Rt. 147 and Exit onto 15/501 toward Chapel Hill. At Garrett Road (BP Station), turn left and go 7/10 mile to entrance on the left. As you enter the church grounds, bear to the right, and park in the lot next to the sanctuary. The chapel adjoins the sanctuary. For detailed maps visit [www.eruuf.org](http://www.eruuf.org).

### ***Raleigh Meditation Group***

The Raleigh Meditation Group, which is an affiliate of the New Hope Sangha, meets on the 2nd and 4th Thursdays of the month from 6:30 – 8 pm at the Unity Church of the Triangle. The church is located at 118 S. Person Street, Raleigh 27601, and is on the northeast side of Moore Square. Please contact Tom Barrie at 919-605-1476 or e-mail [dharma55@aol.com](mailto:dharma55@aol.com) for information.



## NEWSLETTER

The newsletter is usually published twice each year and is offered freely. Your donations allow us to continue to publish the newsletter. If you would like to contribute to the cost of printing and mailing, please mail a check to: Durham Meditation Center, 1214 Broad Street #2, Durham, NC 27705.

**If you would like to receive a printed copy of this newsletter, please email your request and a mailing address to: [nhsxc@newhopesangha.org](mailto:nhsxc@newhopesangha.org).**

## *Greetings, Dear Ones,*

I am writing you from the Casa de Dom Inacio in the Central Highlands of Brazil. It is the winter season in the Southern Hemisphere, but the air is warm and dry and it's a beautiful time of year to be in South America.

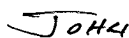
I have been coming to the Casa since 2005, and it has become a precious spiritual home for me. I have found healing of my body, spiritual guidance and now love in my heart here at the Casa. Because I usually come here during July and August I have made many friends who either live here year round or come during this time of year. It is always a joy to see them, and they have become part of my sangha, just as you are. We live, eat, sing, pray and meditate together. And above all we love each other. Indeed the Casa, also known as, the house of love, has shown me what it means to serve and to love. I don't teach here, like I do in the States, instead I chop vegetables, help in the soup kitchen area collecting bowls as people are finished with their midmorning soup, bring photos from people in the USA seeking the support of the Casa Entities, and share the song "All I Ask of You Is Forever to Remember Me as Loving You," at the Sunday morning prayer and song service. I am also a Casa Guide, which enables me to take people to the Casa and guide them through the process of being there.

Each visit is different, as I am, where I am, when I arrive here. I have learned not to come on my annual retreat to the Casa with expectations. I arrive as present and open as I can be and see what happens. Last year it was about experiencing lofty states of meditation and telepathic communication. This trip was about opening the heart, plain and simple. The advice that my teacher Aaron gave was to feel gratitude and the love in my heart. Which is what I did. I felt immense gratitude to all those in my family who helped raise me. Gratitude to my dear friend Barbara Brodsky and our teacher Aaron. Gratitude to the Brazilian people and their openness to Spirit. Gratitude to the Casa and all the people who staff this place and keep it open and running. Gratitude for the places where I stayed here and the food I ate. Gratitude for the healing that I have found and the opportunity to serve others.

The first time I came to the Casa in May 2005, I had a chronic illness called ulcerative colitis. The medications and other alternative treatments that I had in the USA didn't help it much. The first day that I went to the Casa, they scheduled me for spiritual surgery that afternoon. I had no idea what they were going to do as I sat in chair in the surgery room with perhaps 30 other people who were also having spiritual intervention, as it's called. I closed my eyes and felt the deep love and peace that pervaded the room. Spirit then said, "This love is what God is," and then moments later, "It is love that heals." Perhaps this was the first lesson in love that the Casa Entities offered me, and there have been many since. This visit to the Casa, I have felt so much love in my heart that perhaps I was afraid to let myself feel before. Intense pain can sometimes feel like the experience of intense love, and I had been running from pain forever. But at some point I knew that I had to let myself feel and know both. This feels like the time to open my heart to the 10,000 sorrows and joys of life, and I am grateful that all of you in the New Hope Sangha are a part of my life.

We have a full schedule of meditation offerings this fall. Jim Jarvis and Jane Dyer will be leading a series of Insight Meditation classes. Perfect for those who want more instruction and feedback about the basics of practice. Beginning this fall and continuing into the New Year, during our semimonthly Tuesday evening sangha meditations we will be exploring the Buddha's most foundational discourse on meditation, the Satipatthana Sutta, which is translated as the Four Foundations of Mindfulness. The Buddha said that the study and practice of these foundations of mindfulness "is the direct path to realization." We will also have a sangha picnic on Sunday, October 17, at Lake Crabtree, which is an opportunity to be together when we aren't in silence! I hope you will be able to join us for one or all of these New Hope Sangha events.

With love,

JOHN

# Living Intentionally CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

that I wish to express, there may be a simple impulse to speak. This impulse can be experienced as more of an energetic feeling than a mental formation, as an urge to speak. This urge to reach out to others and break the silence can be a reaction to an uncomfortable feeling that I may be experiencing such as boredom, restlessness, negativity or simply a desire to connect with someone else. As I became aware of the urge to speak, I may also become aware of what it is I wish to say.

At this point an area of choice begins to open up where I have the choice to say something or not. At a silent retreat it is almost always more skillful to observe the silence and not say anything. However, in the context of my daily life there are many times when I need to express myself. Here the present, focused clarity of mindfulness will serve me well. The ability to be present in the moment with the intention to speak and a clear awareness of what it is I am about to say will enable me to be aware of the space or pause which exists before I actually say something. This space or aperture is the same space that exists between my inhalations and exhalations and the same space that I find between my thoughts. Momentarily resting in this space allows me to be cognizant of a number of considerations such as: What am I about to say? Will it be helpful or not? Is my present speech coming from a place of fear or love? What effect will my present speech have in this moment and in the future? Is this the right time and place to be expressing this? What is the most skillful way to express myself for the benefit of everyone involved?

I realize that this practice of intentionality as it relates to skillful speech can be challenging, especially when I find myself engaging with someone else and I am experiencing stronger fear, anger or stress. At these times, it is especially important that I use the tools of mindfulness and clear comprehension and apply them to the present moment's experience. If I am feeling stronger fear and anger and I am in a reactive mode, then it may be best to momentarily excuse and remove myself from the situation until I cool down. Due to the circumstances, if this isn't possible, then focusing my attention more inwardly on

what I am feeling, breathing with it, and being present with the sensations I am experiencing in my body will help to mitigate the tendency to get caught up in projecting the stronger emotions onto someone or something else. I also become aware of the contracted emotional or mental energy that I may be feeling. If the contracted mental/emotional body is predominant in this moment, then I simply shift my focus to this and if helpful

*Focusing inwardly as much as outwardly, while experiencing stronger habit energy, will help me find that ever-present spaciousness, which is always available to me.*

mentally note tension, tension or contraction, contraction. As I am present with the physical, emotional and mental phenomena that are present and hold all of this in my loving attention, I find a stronger footing and more balance in the moment in which all of this is happening. Focusing inwardly as much as outwardly, while experiencing stronger habit energy, will help me find that ever-present spaciousness, which is always available to me. This is key to finding increasing equanimity in challenging situations. The essence of Sila (pronounced See-la), which includes Right Speech, Action and Livelihood on the Buddhist Eightfold Path, is the intention to live with non-harm to other humans, the Earth and all that exists and lives upon it. Sila is not only to live with non-harm, but increasingly with kindness and compassion. This includes having kindness for myself or someone else, when experiencing a heavy emotion or habit energy. Being human isn't always easy! Opening my heart to the present moment's situation this way can soften the edges around the contracted energy and may allow me to respond more compassionately.

And what about intention as it relates to Right Action and Livelihood? Every year for the past five years I have traveled south to the Casa de Dom Inacio (House of Saint Ignatius of Loyola), which is in the Central Highlands of Brazil. This is where the healer John of God does his remarkable and compassionate healing work. It is my annual retreat, and after a year of teaching and counseling it allows me to rest and restore and deepen my meditation and other spiritual practices. I always look forward to it and learn so much in being at the Casa, as it is affectionately called. However, going to the Casa yearly isn't an

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inexpensive endeavor, when you consider the cost of the flight, room and board and other related expenses. Being a dharma teacher and for the most part living on the generosity of others, called in the Buddhist tradition Dana, isn't always easy. In fact, one of the habit patterns that I have chosen to work with in this lifetime relates to feelings of scarcity and unworthiness. I grew up in a working-class family where our basic needs of food, clothing, shelter and medicine were met. However, we didn't have some of the extras such as a telephone and a car that others in our neighborhood had. I remember in elementary school, the teacher had a list of all the students in the class and the telephone number next to each name. I was the only student in the class who didn't have a telephone number. I remember seeing the list and feeling embarrassed. I now realize what a blessing it can be to not have a telephone, but when you are a kid, you don't want to stand out as being different from the others in your class. This is one example of how the feelings of scarcity and unworthiness began arising at a relatively young age. I became aware of this particular habit pattern early and have continued to work with it throughout my life.

People who visit the Casa and appear before John of God are asked to state what they are seeking help or support with. This can be a medical issue, such as, cancer or heart disease, or it can be spiritual guidance, or support in working with a particular habit energy, such as unworthiness or a fear of one's needs not being met. During my visit to the Casa last year, a primary intention was to work with the limiting beliefs that there won't be enough for me and it's because I'm not good enough and undeserving. Just before traveling to the Casa last year, I spent some days with my dear friend and colleague Barbara Brodsky and the disincarnate being that she channels, our teacher, named Aaron. For more information on Aaron please visit our website at [www.newhopesangha.org](http://www.newhopesangha.org). I asked Aaron how the Entities at the Casa could help me with this kind of intention, and he said that they will create situations that will enable me to look at the fear of scarcity and unworthiness. They will show me where I am still stuck. I was curious as to how this would unfold once I was in Brazil. One of the practices or treatments that is commonly used at the Casa is to sit in meditation in the current rooms. There may be anywhere from 50 to 200 people sitting in the current rooms at any given time when the Casa is in session. The current sessions last 2 to 5 hours, and during this time participants sit with their eyes closed on benches that look like padded pews. It was during one of these current sessions that I began having

thoughts of a man who is in a wheelchair. He had spent a lot of time at the Casa in the previous three years that I had been coming, and we have become friends. He does periodically return to his country. He has multiple sclerosis. During the 10 o'clock morning soup line, when everyone has a bowl of vegetable soup, which is blessed by the Entities of the Casa and which is also part of the treatment offered to all who go there, I saw my friend get out of his chair and use the parallel bars to do some walking exercises. It required a lot of effort on his part, but he was able to go back and forth a few times on the bars. It was inspiring, and I realized how much courage it takes to be physically limited this way and be willing to work with such a handicap with the intention to heal on some level, whether that be an actual physical healing of the disease, spiritual healing or both. As I was sitting in meditation that afternoon, I realized that I needed to give this man a gift. As soon as the thought of giving a present to this man arose, I also knew the exact amount that I needed to give, which was \$200. Now considering my financial situation and the fact that I am having difficulty paying my bills back home and not earning wages the month I am away in Brazil, it is crazy to give away \$200, but it became abundantly clear to me that this



#### **Introducing the New Hope Sangha Board of Directors**

A Board of Directors has been formed to support John Orr, our guiding teacher, and the community of the New Hope Sangha. Some of the things we're working on include creating a mission statement, establishing non-profit status, exploring a teacher training program, and providing more social opportunities. We look forward to working with all of you to support our practices and sangha.

*Tom Barrie, Chair, back row center; Kathleen Gleiter, Vice Chair, front row far right; Bill Smith, Treasurer, back row right; Beth O'Brien, Secretary, front row right; Pam Chastain, front row left; Jim Jarvis, back row left; John Orr, Ex Officio, front row far left*

is what I needed to do. Earlier in the day I counted the money I had left for the trip and realized that while \$200 is a large amount of money, it would not make me totally broke. However, there was a definite letting go in this act. Spirit told me that this man could use the money. As soon as I made the decision to offer the money, my heart opened to deep love. Tears came to my eyes, and I felt waves of love moving through me.

However, it was a week before I would be leaving Brazil and I had a number of things to attend to, one of which was to figure out a way of giving the money anonymously. I began to have some conflicting feelings of letting go of the money. At one point during the week, I thought that \$100 would be enough, and perhaps it would have been. Certainly I wouldn't have felt the pinch in my pocket quite so acutely if it were only \$100. When I was in the current rooms and meditating, I felt at peace with letting go of \$200. At other times while going about my daily business or shopping, I thought that \$100 would have been more than enough. So I wavered back and forth that week with the intention to give the \$200. But letting go is letting go, and I saw how my ego was coming into play in terms of fear dictating how much I should give. I was clinging out of fear. I bought a card, put \$200 in it and gave it to him anonymously. I realize that I needed to do this as a way of letting go of my fear of scarcity and not having enough. This is one of the intentions I was working with during that visit to the Casa. I also had a sense that by offering the money I was balancing karma from the past. I can't say that there was very much joy in giving the money, but I did offer it with love. I keep hearing Aaron's teaching of "do it with love, or don't do it all," not just in relation to offering the money but in regard to other events that had transpired during my visit to the Casa.

A number of times I saw money issues arise, and the fear that my needs would not be met and I wouldn't have enough. On one occasion I was meditating at the overlook, a favorite place to sit and watch the sunset, when the fear of scarcity arose.

Spirit said, "Be aware of the tension and notice how it is affecting your breathing." I could feel some tension in the upper part of my diaphragm muscle and felt the breath as more constricted there. The old pattern of the arising of fear of my needs not being met and the accompanying tension was obvious. I had never felt the connection of the arising of fear and physical tension and its impact on my breathing to this degree of subtlety before. Spirit said, "This is what happens when fear arises for you; simply watch any contraction around the fear or the physical sensations that are arising." There were times when I could even see the impulse energy to contract before there was any real contraction. This helped me to not contract, and the fear and sensations dissolved. All the meditations that I had been doing the previous three weeks helped me to see this piece of conditioning more clearly.

As an aside, the day I was leaving Brazil I saw the recipient of my generosity sitting at a table talking with some other people. I overheard him mention how grateful he was for the Casa and the support that he feels from people there. A little later, I approached him and asked him how much longer he would be in Abadiania, the town where the Casa is located, since he told me initially that this would be a relatively short trip for him and that he had only planned to stay three weeks. He said that he would stay a while longer and that there wasn't anything pulling him back to his country. Perhaps the gift that I gave enabled him to remain at the Casa longer, and maybe this will also contribute to his healing.

There is a practice in the Buddhist tradition called clear comprehension and suitability of purpose. Clear comprehension and suitability of purpose means that I clearly comprehend what I'm about to say or do in any given moment and consider whether this is aligned with my highest intentions. For example, if my highest intention is to live with as much kindness as possible and what I'm about to say to someone else is coming from a place of anger and reactivity, then I consider whether saying something harsh or demeaning is in alignment with my inten-

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tion, which is kindness. If it isn't in alignment, then I may use restraint and consider other more skillful options in my communication or simply not say anything. If I have developed a strong desire to look at pornography and my intention is to live a sexually healthy life, then in the moment that I am experiencing the pull to explore pornography on the Internet, I reflect on what my highest intention is and consider whether surfing for porn is really what I want to be doing.

It can be a helpful practice for each of us to reflect on the highest intentions that we have for ourselves. Presently in my life, is my highest intention to be compassionate, to experience more gratitude, to serve others, to be free from suffering or to live in peace and harmony? Personally, at present, my highest intention is to serve humanity and spirit with a loving heart for the highest good of all. I state this intention frequently, often out loud, as a reminder to myself what my purpose is in being here and what is the most skillful way of living and fulfilling my highest intention in any given moment. There are times when I am presented with opportunities to serve that are by no means glamorous, but they

are opportunities to serve, and when I recognize them as such and work with any resistance then I am able to meet my highest intention. I am reminded of the words of Mother Teresa, who

lived during our time and served the most destitute of people in India. She said, "We can't do great things, just small things with great love."

During my latest visit to the Casa in August 2010, volunteers were needed to help in the soup kitchen. My job was to collect the empty soup bowls from the tables after people were finished eating and return them to the kitchen so they could be washed and reused. It was a joy to serve in this way, and I felt so much love and gratitude from the people I came into contact with as I weaved my way around the tables collecting the bowls.

Living our lives with increasing awareness and intention is a wonderful practice that has many benefits. It helps us to be more present with the "to say or to do" moment.

It opens up a space in which we can rest and consider what is the most skillful way of relating at any given time. It protects us from getting caught up in habit energies and reactivity. It prevents us from creating more messes in our lives and causing

more suffering for others and ourselves. And lastly, it helps us to fulfill our highest intentions and aspirations while we walk this Earth. I leave you with these wise words of Gotama Buddha, "The thought manifests as the word. The word manifests as the deed. The deed develops into habit. And the habit hardens into character. So watch the thought and its ways with care, and let it spring from love born out of respect for all beings." ❀

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Barbara Brodsky: [Barbara@vipassanaHealing.com](mailto:Barbara@vipassanaHealing.com)

# *New Hope Sangha's Fall Picnic*

OCTOBER 17 • 3 PM • RAIN OR SHINE

**Lake Crabtree County Park, 1400 Aviation Parkway, Morrisville 27560, Dogwood Shelter**

Let's celebrate cooler weather and our great community. Pack a picnic dinner and join us for an afternoon outdoors at Lake Crabtree in Raleigh, just 1 mile from RDU. Drinks and chips will be provided. It's a wonderful wooded spot with a beautiful lake, large picnic shelter, grills, playground, restrooms (next to the shelter) and, for those wanting adventure, fantastic hiking and mountain bike trails. All are welcome, so please bring your family and friends and maybe even a kite.... It's time we all relax a little outdoors. There will be an opportunity to contribute to the rental fee on a dana basis.

**Directions: From Raleigh:** Take I-40 West to Aviation Parkway. At the top of the exit, turn left (south) onto Aviation. Drive about a quarter mile and the park entrance will be on your left at the second stoplight. **From Chapel Hill/Durham:** Take I-40 East to Aviation Parkway. At the top of the exit, turn right (south) onto Aviation. Drive less than a quarter mile and the park entrance will be on the left at the first stoplight. The shelter will be on the right; look for a New Hope Sangha sign. For information, contact Kathleen at 919-402-1039 or [j.gleiter@earthlink.com](mailto:j.gleiter@earthlink.com), or Beth at 919-490-9092 or [dbio6700@gmail.com](mailto:dbio6700@gmail.com).

# *New Year's Retreat with John Orr*

DECEMBER 27 – JANUARY 2, SOUTHERN DHARMA RETREAT CENTER NEAR ASHEVILLE, NC

The winter season is a beautiful time of year to be on the side of the mountain at Southern Dharma, where the center will hold the space for our retreat. Join us for a week of quiet practice that will include instruction in insight meditation (vipassana), loving kindness meditation, evening dharma talks, chanting from various spiritual traditions, optional yoga, group discussion and individual meetings when requested. People from all meditation and spiritual traditions are welcome. More information on page 2; for registration and information contact the Southern Dharma Retreat Center, 1661 West Rd., Hot Springs, NC 28743. Call: 828-622-7112 or <http://southerndharma.org/descriptions/Orr.htm>

leap of faith  
FALL 2010

Two days of Spiritual  
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See page 3.

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