



VOLUME 7, NUMBER 1

JANUARY 2009

Coming Events

LIGHT is pleased to announce our upcoming events for February to May 2009.

There is *no admission charge* for any of these events, but donations are gratefully accepted.

LIGHT Lecture Series

The talks, with discussion following, will be held on the first Tuesday of the month in February, March, April and May. Attendees are invited to a buffet starting at 6:30 p.m., with the talk to follow at 7:00.

Location: Charisma Restaurant
83D Sherbrook St.

Tuesday, February 3

Christel Kraft: "Discovering Passageways Into Your Inner Treasures"

This talk is based on the technique named *focusing*, developed by Dr. Eugene Gendlin, that enables people to find where their life is "stuck," in order to become more fully the person they have felt living inside. It is not the outer intervention that can bring about this change; a special "inner attending" leads to transforming insights and hidden treasures.

Christel Kraft, M.Ed. has been involved in group facilitation and therapeutic spiritual counselling since 1972. (See interview on page 4.)

Tuesday, March 3

Mark Burch: "Beyond Consumerism: Voluntary Simplicity and a New Local Order"

The stock market is falling and unemployment is rising. Could this be a pivotal moment for learning, re-evaluation, and re-orientation of the human experiment? This presentation offers a cultural vision of voluntary simplicity situated within a steady-state, re-localized economy as a "third way" between unsustainable consumerism and primitive barbarism.

Mark Burch is an author, educator, and group facilitator. He is Co-Director of the Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre (SPARC). (See Mark's article on page 2.)

Tuesday, April 7

Anne Nesbitt: "The Path of the Labyrinth: From Native Petroglyphs to Carol Shields"

Come and share the sacred stories and art of the labyrinth by exploring the myths of Theseus and the Minotaur, the Battle of Jericho, Troy and many others. Follow the labyrinth path from Native American creation stories and Scandinavian folklore to the Carol Shields connection. By walking this interactive mandala, we consciously create a physical environment that integrates mind, body and spirit.

Anne Nesbitt is the Executive Director of the Manitoba Labyrinth Network and coordinator of the Carol Shields Memorial Labyrinth.

Tuesday, May 5

Doug Tataryn: "Mindfulness: From Bodhi Tree to Boardroom"

The concept and teachings of Mindfulness was once an esoteric construct under the purview of Buddhist monks and advanced yogis. Today we find Mindfulness used in medicine, researched in academic institutions, integrated into many psychotherapies, and becoming part of the latest theories of leading edge business consultants. So what is Mindfulness and how does it relate to such diverse domains as physical, psychological, spiritual, and corporate health? This talk will present a conceptual and experiential overview of Mindfulness within a developmental psychology framework.

Dr. Douglas Tataryn is a clinical psychologist in private practice who works within an integral framework, acknowledging the behavioural, somatic, emotional, cognitive, and spiritual dimensions in his work with clients.

LIGHT Film Series

LIGHT will be presenting a series of films with spiritual themes once a month, starting in February.

Location: Robert A. Steen C. C.
980 Palmerston Ave. - Fireside Room
(side entrance off the parking lot)

Dates:

Sunday, February 15 - 7:00 p.m.

Two short films on Tibetan Buddhism:
Requiem for a Faith

Huston Smith narrates this portrait of a Tibetan Buddhist society "that is so close to the sky, the natural occupation of its people is to pray."

Call It Karma

This inspiring true story chronicles the spiritual journey of a young Tibetan monk from Tibet to India to Vancouver and back to his home village for an emotional reunion with his Master and family.

Sunday, March 15 - 7:00 p.m.

Finding Your Life's Purpose

Spiritual teacher Eckhart Tolle presents the essence of his teaching: full engagement with the timeless present and alignment with the natural flow of life.

Sunday, April 19 - 7:00 p.m.

Meetings with Remarkable Men

This visually beautiful film, directed by Peter Brook, is the story of G. I. Gurdjieff's search through the Middle East and Central Asia for answers about the meaning of life.

Crisis and Opportunity: The Choice for Simplicity

It is said that a single Mandarin character stands both for “crisis” and “opportunity”. But sometimes it’s hard to see the opportunity in a crisis.

2008 has featured the slow motion collapse of many corporations and institutions that underpin consumer culture. And it isn’t over yet. Many of us are losing our jobs, our homes, our savings, and our confidence both in bankers and governments. Leonard Cohen aptly captures the mood when he sings, “Everybody knows that the boat is leaking / Everybody knows that the captain lied...” In such circumstances, it takes quite a bit of brass to talk about voluntary simplicity - yet it might be just the ticket to help turn crisis into opportunity.

Voluntary simplicity is the deliberate organization of life to secure the greatest well-being attainable from the least possible consumption of time, money and

resources. The Simplicity Practice and Resource Centre (SPARC) believes that choosing simplicity begins with radical doubt about consumer culture’s claims to deliver a good life. This doubt arises in a moment of awakening that the claims of consumer culture are often overblown, its costs understated, its goals constantly receding, its promises often empty, and its economic dynamics brutally violent. From this radical doubt also arises a quest for alternatives.

SPARC is a community-based, worker-owned cooperative whose mission is to offer a research and adult education

resource to people wishing to explore simple living as an alternative to consumer culture. We believe this alternative is gradually built up from the elements of mindfulness, material streamlining, community interdependence, ecological trusteeship, nonviolence and self-reliance. These elements we believe are highly relevant to meeting the challenges that lie ahead. More information about the courses, workshops, presentations and study circles offered by SPARC can be found at: www.simplicitycentre.org, by emailing info@simplicitycentre.org, or by calling 2044754233.

Mark A. Burch

To further explore the spiritual dimensions of voluntary simplicity read Mark Burch’s article “Simplicity and Spirituality” on the *Writings* page of our website.



LIGHT Book Donation

LIGHT is planning another donation of spiritual books to each of the twenty branches of the Winnipeg Public Library in May. The gift will feature four titles by Sufi author and teacher Idries Shah: *Tales of the Dervishes*, *Caravan of Dreams*, *Wisdom of the Idiots* and *The Dermis Probe*. The contents of the books are drawn from the rich oral and written tradition of Sufi teaching spanning the last thousand years. The teaching stories which form the basis of these books act as a form of ‘food’ or ‘nutrition’ to the inner being. Sufi teachers claim that the stories have a structure and design which mirrors higher levels of reality ~ a sort of blueprint of the spiritual realm. The various figures that appear in the tales (merchant, King, thief, jester) represent different aspects of the personality and

illustrate common psychological processes and patterns of behaviour.

The non-linear, oblique nature of many stories activates the right brain hemisphere and produces a shift in consciousness. Teaching stories are ingenuous and sophisticated works of art which have to be “lived with” and “worked with” in order to release their transformative power. Repeated readings reveal more and more subtle levels of spiritual knowledge and wisdom.

Seeing Double

A father said to his double-seeing son:

“Son, you see two instead of one.”

“How can that be?” the boy replied. “If I were, there would seem to be four moons up there in place of two.”



Carol Shields Memorial Labyrinth

Labyrinths have exerted a fascination on human beings throughout history. The archetypal labyrinth symbol occurs in countless cultures spanning the globe from Iceland and Scandinavia to Europe, North Africa and the Middle East to North and South America. For centuries labyrinths have been used for meditation, contemplation and spiritual and physical healing. The labyrinth is a quintessential sacred space that depicts symbolically the nature of the spiritual journey and provides a doorway into other dimensions.

Winnipeg is now blessed with a beautiful outdoor labyrinth situated in one of the city's finest urban parks, King's Park close to the University of Manitoba. The Carol Shields Memorial Labyrinth commemorates Manitoba author Carol Shields, who often featured labyrinths and mazes in her books as an essential fabric of the narrative.

In 2003 City of Winnipeg officials met with the Manitoba Labyrinth Network and representatives of **LIGHT** to explore the possibility of organizing a committee to supervise the building of a labyrinth in memory of Carol Shields. The project was supported by Random House, Shields' Canadian publisher, the Manitoba Writers Guild, the University

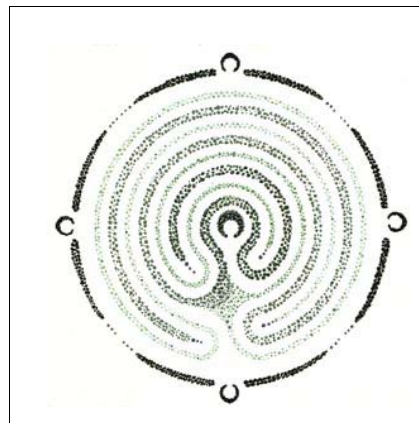
of Manitoba School of Architecture and other community organizations, including **LIGHT**. Anne Nesbitt, Executive Director of the Manitoba Labyrinth Network, spearheaded the project and the committee subsequently proposed an outdoor labyrinth situated in one of Winnipeg's public parks that would be "permanent, lasting and participatory."

The initial design proposal grew in scope and complexity as generous financial support from multiple sources emerged. Phase 1 of the project is now complete with the creation of an outdoor garden labyrinth, approximately 150 by 150 feet. Pathways of fine gravel are bordered by hedges and flowers, creating a magical visual effect when the elaborate design is viewed from an airplane above. Recently the University of Manitoba and

the Manitoba Labyrinth Network unveiled two quote walls which display quotes from the works of Carol Shields. Phase 2 of the project will include interpretive signage, reading circles, a herb and healing garden and a gathering area.

The official opening of the Carol Shields Memorial Labyrinth will be Sunday May 10, 2009. On Sunday May 24 - the day of the new moon - beginning at 1:30 p.m., **LIGHT** and the Manitoba Labyrinth Network are presenting *Journey of the Spirit: A Multi-faith Labyrinth Experience*. The central focus of the afternoon's proceedings will be the opportunity to walk the labyrinth with individuals from a broad spectrum of cultural backgrounds, religions and spiritual beliefs. A number of other complementary activities are planned, including music, prayer, meditation, reflection, theme discussion and a guided procession around the labyrinth.

LIGHT hopes that the event at King's Park will become an annual celebration of the human spiritual journey so aptly symbolized by the winding paths leading to the centre of the labyrinth.



Carol Shields Memorial Labyrinth Design

LIGHT Lending Library

The invasion of Tibet by China in 1959 was a disaster for the people of Tibet but, ironically, had unexpected beneficial consequences for the rest of the world. The vast stream of refugees included many great Tibetan lamas and gifted spiritual teachers who brought with them powerful esoteric teachings largely unknown beyond the borders of Tibet. These teachings included the three major vehicles of Buddhism - the 'hinayana,' 'mahayana' and 'vajrayana' or tantric transmission of direct enlightenment.

LIGHT has assembled some of the most important books on Tibetan Buddhism published during the last forty years. The writings include works by respected Tibetan teachers such as the Dalai Lama, Chögyam Trungpa, Tarthang Tulku and Tulku Thondup. Other titles are written by Westerners who studied intensively with Tibetan teachers and have a unique ability to convey the essence of Tibetan Buddhism in terms comprehensible to a Western reader. These include contemporary spiritual teachers Pema Chödrön,

Lama Surya Das, Namgyal Rinpoche and Ken McLeod.

This valuable resource can be accessed by selecting **About Us** from the home page of our website www.lightwinnipeg.org.





LEARNING INSTITUTE FOR
GROWTH, HEALING AND
TRANSFORMATION

980 Dorchester Avenue
Winnipeg, Manitoba
R3M 0S1

Phone: (204) 453-2717

E-mail: info@lightwinnipeg.org

Website: www.lightwinnipeg.org

Directors

Richard Bredsteen
Tim Freeman
Douglas Staley
Ernie Strauss
Sharon Wisemyn

Newsletter Editor:

Ernie Strauss

Contributors to this issue:

Mark Burch
Christel Kraft
Doug Staley

LIGHT Interview: Christel Kraft

Christel Kraft received her M.Ed. in Educational Psychology from the University of Manitoba. She is a Certified Trainer and Manitoba Coordinator for the New York-based Focusing Institute. Her areas of expertise include crisis intervention, marriage enrichment, dream exploration, relaxation, the application of Bio-Spirituality and Focusing. Her emphasis is on communication, interpersonal relationships, decision making, personal growth, creativity, and empowerment through inner spiritual wisdom. In 1999 Christel self-published *Energy Flow Focusing Explorations - Passageways Into Your Hidden Treasures*.

What sort of personal experiences led to your interest in inner growth and spiritual wisdom?

During my initial religious/spiritual upbringing, I questioned everything and listened to an inner guiding sense into what seemed to be "Truth" for me. I could not accept anything unconditionally. I observed people in their professed beliefs and actual living examples. I read anything I could get my hands on and gradually formed my own "knowings" through living into the answers to my many questions.

I always knew that there is something inside that would guide me into a forward moving life-giving right way of being. I could sense and feel issues in my body and make decisions from that sensing/feeling place. I used to stay with and accept all my sensations, "good, bad or indifferent," allowed them to go deeper and open up to their "stories." That led me to new discoveries and ever fuller life experiences. At some point I realized that what I was "doing inside" was not a common experience for many people who seemed to accept and follow some externally imposed constructs. Could this way of being/living be taught? I found the answer in Dr. Eugene Gendlin's book *Focusing*.

Have there been any particular individuals who have strongly influenced your approach to therapy?

One person in particular has influenced not only my approach to therapy but my whole direction in life: For about six years during my late teens and into my 20's I was fortunate in having a "Wise Woman" counsellor/therapist. Her "presence" and non-judgmental, accepting listening allowed me to develop a trust in my own inner body wisdom, and integrate my personal search for wholeness and individual spirituality.

What types of methods do you employ in your therapeutic work?

When I sit with a client, I have all my "tools" beside me, clear my mind and "tune in" to the person in front of me, being a human presence to another human being. I listen and listen some more, not only to the words but to the underlying challenges/feelings/sensings each person brings into the session. In acknowledging everything that is there, together we allow the inner forward moving wisdom/life giving process to evolve. My many tools are useful but secondary. In short, this *is* the Focusing approach.

What are your core spiritual beliefs?

God/Spirit/Universe/All That Is lives in everyone and can be experienced in an ongoing evolutionary process.

The title of your February 3 LIGHT talk, "Discovering Passageways Into Your Inner Treasures," is intriguing. What to you hope to convey and share with the audience?

I want to share my joy and ever growing excitement about a process that I have explored and lived for 50 years, and that is still expanding in my own understanding, partly through the philosophy of Gene Gendlin who has put some fresh

word meanings to a natural but often hidden process.

