

THAT BOOK STORE... and THAT ANTIQUE CENTER

Used and Antiquarian Books, Antiques and Collectibles Multi-Dealer Shop
Used and Out-of-Print Books, VT and NH Books, Post Cards, Paper Ephemera, Glass, Linens, Vintage Clothing, Coins, Primitives, Pottery and more... Something for Everyone!

Usually...Mon-Sat 10:00-8:00, Sun 11:00-8:00
Railroad Street, St Johnsbury, VT 05819
802.748.1722 • email:tbs@plainfield.bypass.com
http://www.allroutes.to/thatbookstore

The Civil Union and Gift Registry

Let THE STORE in Waitsfield help you make the decision of a lifetime...

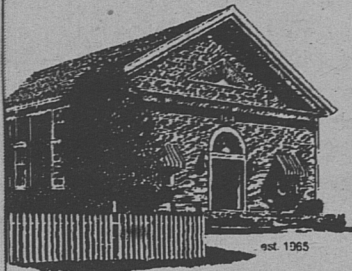
Our experienced staff will assist you with care and guide you in making your important choices.

A wide selection of quality china, glassware, flatware, Wilton, Calphalon, Le Creuset cookware, All Clad, Cuisinarts, Wusthof knives, housewares, linens, antiques, pottery, table settings, gifts for the bath and gifts for your attendants.

We will display in our store a special table, just for you. Beautifully set with the sumptuous choices from your registry.

Our Civil Union Consultants can help you with your invitations, rehearsal dinner, flowers, catering, cake, photographers, hair styling...and all the important details.

The Store's Registry is unique for its personal and loving attention to you and your guests. No matter if you are in the area or out of town, we are only a phone call away on The Store Hotline. 1-(800)-639-8031



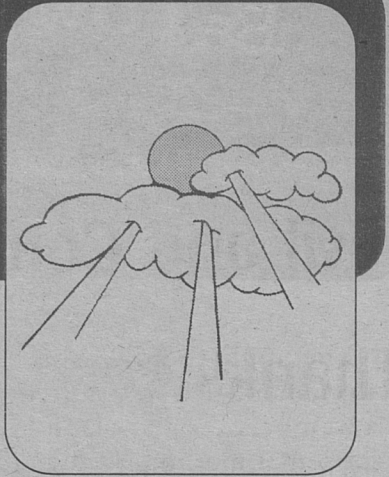
THE STORE

Route 100, Waitsfield, Vermont
(802) 496-4465 FAX (802) 496-7719
Est. 1965
Open 10-6 Daily

Email - info@vermontstore.com
Web Site - www.vermontstore.com

The Spiritual Essence

by The Rev. Jane Dwinell



Tonglen

I have recently finished reading a wonderful book that has been helpful for our dark and confusing times: *The Places That Scare You: A Guide to Fearlessness in Difficult Times* by Pema Chodron. Pema is an American-born Buddhist nun and resident teacher at Gampo Abbey at Cape Breton, Nova Scotia.

I find Buddhist teachings of mindfulness, breath-watching, and release to be helpful when dealing with stress. Although I have never been successful at meditation – I hate sitting still – I still find the act of pausing to be very meaningful and life enriching.

In this book, Pema describes a Buddhist practice called *tonglen*, translated as “exchanging oneself for others.” The essence of this practice is to breathe in the pain of the world – starting with our own, and expanding out to include people we know and love, people we know and hate, and people we don’t know at all. As we breathe in the pain, we sit with it, and feel it, and then breathe out loving-kindness and compassion. While this sounds simple, it is in fact quite hard.

Sitting with our own pain may take a great deal of patience and persistence. Most of us don’t want to go there, and not only do we avoid such practices, we may also numb ourselves with activity or mind-altering substances. How much easier it is to pour a glass of wine than to sit with our pain for thirty minutes or even thirty seconds! Yet how much of the world’s pain have we felt lately? Perhaps too much. I suppose it depends on where you were on September 11th and where you’ve been since then. Were you glued to your TV watching the horrific images over and over? Were you in a foreign country responding to the kindnesses of strangers? Were you just trying to do your job, or watch your kids, or keep the path you’re on? How have the subsequent beginning of war and the continuing anthrax scares affected you?

I know I’ve been on a rollercoaster of emotion with all of this. I’m angry, I’m indignant, I’m scared, I feel compassion, I get lost in feelings that have no names. I find myself waking up at night and wondering what will become of our world.

Such is a time for *tonglen*.

First we sit and be still. Then we open to whatever emotion arises, and stay with it. We breathe in the feelings, the pain, the horror, the anger, and we sit with it. Then, as we breathe out, we breathe out a sense of relief, a giving away of the painful emotion, and an opening to compassion for ourselves. When we’re done with ourselves, we move on to the people we love, breathing in their pain, breathing out love and compassion. Then we move on to people we know and feel neutral about, breathing in their pain, breathing out compassion for them. At the next level, it’s the people we know and hate, breathing in their pain, breathing out compassion.

Then we open it up to the whole planet, people we don’t know and never will, breathing in their pain, breathing out compassion.

We breathe in the pain of the families who lost loved ones on September 11. We breathe in the pain of the rescue and demolition workers still at it.

We breathe in the pain of the military personnel, off to fight a war they may not even understand.

We breathe in the pain of our elected leaders caught in a spiral of hate, destruction, and uncertainty.

We breathe in the pain of the people of Afghanistan, who are at war, again.

We breathe in the pain of the Taliban, who is watching their country be destroyed.

We breathe in the pain of Osama bin Laden and his compatriots, who are wondering if their plan to change the face of our world will be successful.

We breathe in pain, and we breathe out compassion – compassion for all those above-named individuals, and compassion for those who have no names.

Is it really possible to breathe out compassion for the likes of the Taliban and Osama bin Laden? Is that something we should even consider? They are destructive and have wreaked havoc and horror on their world and ours. But holding anger and hatred toward them will not hurt them, but will eat away our hearts and eventually destroy us.

We could also try this practice and name people who have hurt us in other situations – family and friends, legislators and other public officials, religious leaders, media personalities. Being hurt and feeling anger is part of life. We must not ignore it or feed it. It will only grow.

Acknowledging it, holding it, feeling it, and then letting it go with compassion for ourselves and others will go a long way toward healing ourselves, and the world.

May we use this time to decrease hate in our lives, and increase love and compassion in our world.

The Rev. Jane Dwinell serves the First Universalist Parish, a Unitarian Universalist congregation, in Derby Line, VT. She lives with her partner, Sky, and their two children, Dana and Sayer, on the shores of beautiful Lake Memphremagog.

Sarah Harrington, a Realtor dedicated to our community!

- Mountain Pride Media - Board Member '99, '00
- Pride Committee - Silent Auction '98, '99, '00
- Rainbow Business Association - President '98

Call Sarah if you're buying or selling your home.



RE/MAX North Professionals
Each Office is Independently Owned and Operated
553 Roosevelt Highway, Colchester, VT 05446
(802)655-3333 x30

