



Bread of Life

Cultivating attitudes, skills and practices that transform lives, organizations, and communities.

The Centre for
Contemplative
Dialogue 

Active Engagement Practicum

A learning community committed to contemplative dialogical practice in all life arenas.

Beginning July, 2012

A 2 year praxis communal learning experience

Praxis – n. practice, as distinguished from theory; application or use, as of knowledge or skills.

- ◆ Preparing and developing the skills, awareness and knowledge needed to personally integrate and effectively practice Mindful Leadership through Active Engagement/Contemplative Dialogue in your organizational and personal settings. Those who choose to do so will be supported in learning to facilitate and/or train others in the practice of Active Engagement/Contemplative Dialogue
- ◆ Participants will work and practice in their local professional, community and relational settings
- ◆ Participants will receive a course of development through a rich blend of practical and theoretical work, one-on-one mentoring and peer group learning with multiple opportunities for learning, reflection and engagement.
- ◆ Those choosing to pursue competency standards will be certified to offer Path of Contemplative Dialogue training sessions with the support and contractual licensing of The Centre. They will also be identified and publicly recognized as certified trainers and/or facilitators in this practice.

VISION

The Centre for Contemplative Dialogue in partnership with the Bread of Life Center seeks to create a community of practitioners and partners to deepen and expand this transformative work. Our vision is to create a community of practitioners who in time will deepen and tend the growth and practice of Contemplative Dialogue. With mutual support and encouragement they will carry the practice outward, translating it and making it available in increasingly diverse communities, organizations and walks of life.

Bread of Life and the Centre will support this community with ongoing mentoring, continual development of resources and ongoing learning opportunities which help sustain the standards and deep integrity of the practice.

We invite you to become a part of this adventure, which some current participants have described as 'life-altering' and helping them to 'live with deeper integrity.'

STRUCTURE OF THE PRACTICUM

This two year practicum will involve participants in active practice, skill development, and reflective learning in community. To date participants have been from Canada, Jamaica and the United States. Distance participants in Australia are working in the developmental phases of the practicum.

Gathering the Group

- ◆ Three previous practicum groups have been formed. The first completed its formal two year training in January of 2008. The third ended in March of 2011.
- ◆ The Government of Alberta Canada has begun 2 practicum groups for government employees (one in December 2011 the other February 2012). Government decision makers who participated in previous practicums found the work to be so valuable they assumed positive systemic change would happen as larger numbers of government employees engaged and integrated the practices and skills.
- ◆ Our intent is to gather 6-10 individuals at least half of whom are interested in becoming trainers and facilitators in Active Engagement/Contemplative Dialogue as we see increasing demand for well trained and experienced facilitators. Bread of Life and the Centre are deeply committed to offering these skills and practices to any individual or group interested; this requires more facilitators.

Practicum Sessions

- ◆ Opening Gathering. This 4 day gathering will actively engage the group in the practicum work and begin to create the learning community.
- ◆ Residential Integration Session, a 4 day gathering at the end of year one at a site convenient to participants.
- ◆ Closing Integration Session, at the close of the second year (dates to be determined with the group's input) will be the final 4 day session.
- ◆ Monthly group meeting – This 90 minute gathering (available by teleconference as necessary) will take place one evening each month at 5pm PST. It will blend input with reflection and conversation in both large and small group formats.

Practicum Elements

- ◆ Mentoring – Each participant will be engaged in monthly mentoring, a one hour telephone or face-to-face session that focuses on the individual's practice. Mentoring will support participants in reflectively planning, engaging and learning from their work.
- ◆ Online learning journal – Participants and facilitation team members contribute to a group online learning journal. This practice encourages shared learning and reflection, and group accountability for the discipline of the work.
- ◆ Learning Partner Contacts – Participants will work with other participants in learning partnerships by supporting and maintaining monthly phone calls or face to face meetings. In practice, these became active peer support relationships.
- ◆ Learning materials – Various books and articles will be used to support and encourage learning depth. Exercises designed to facilitate practical application of the skills and theories offered will be assigned and group interactions will often center on learning from these practices.
- ◆ Required practice – Participants will have monthly practice assignments designed to build foundational skills. At times participants will create presentations of the components of Active Engagement/Contemplative Dialogue. This supports participants in developing their language, stories, and comfort in introducing and explaining the practice in diverse relational settings and audiences.
- ◆ Training opportunities – Interested participants will be actively supported in developing and participating in training events as facilitators. Readiness for, and availability of events will be individually coordinated over the course of the two years and beyond.
- ◆ Time requirements – We anticipate an average time commitment of 3 hours per week to do the necessary group work, reflection, practice, and reading. We assume that participants will draw on any variety of current and everyday involvements as rich opportunities for real life practice and development. This real time use of the skills and awarenesses is not included in the time estimate.

COST

Annual tuition for the practicum is \$4,500 US. Tuition covers all teaching components and coordination services for 4-day intensive sessions, monthly group work and mentoring sessions, distributed materials, etc. Participants are responsible for their own transportation, lodging arrangements and meals at residential sessions.

An initial payment of \$750 is required upon acceptance. The balance may be paid at the initial residential gathering. Flexible payment arrangements (monthly or quarterly installments) may be arranged. Some scholarship assistance is available please call or email Jean Holsten for more information ((916) 648-1803 ext. 11, jean@breadoflife.org)

TEAM

The practicum will be team led by two experienced Contemplative Dialogue trainers. Both team members helped develop the curriculum and process for the practicum and were on the original practicum team of facilitators. Interested participants are invited to speak with past team members. The team is:

Jean Holsten is a licensed attorney who discovered a preference for and a power in dialogue over debate. She has extensive experience as a trainer, consultant and facilitator. She currently is co- executive director of the Bread of Life Center, a non-profit dedicated to educational and charitable work in Sacramento, California. Her own experience of nonviolence has been enriched by her practice in various communal and organizational settings across the United States and Canada.

Sandra Lommasson is an internationally known spiritual director, retreat leader and teacher and educator of teachers/facilitators. She has been practicing and training spiritual directors since the 1990's and leading groups for more than 30 years in a variety of settings. She was a facilitator for the International Merton Retreat in 2008 bringing together faith leaders from a variety of traditions to dialogue at a deeper level than most had experienced in a diverse group.

APPLICATION

For further info or to explore participating, please call Jean Holsten (916) 648-1803. Email contact is jean@breadoflife.org

After an initial phone conversation, we will arrange an interview with the full team to explore your involvement in this rich learning endeavor. We seek participants who bring a desire to live this practice with integrity, are willing to take risks in the service of their learning, and who will offer the fruits of their learning to others.

Attending a 4 day Mindful Leadership: The Path of Contemplative Dialogue session is a pre-requisite for participation. We'd like you to be exposed more deeply to what you're committing to. We will assist you in meeting this requirement if you have not done so.

We are open to participants with diverse backgrounds and personal styles (so please don't *assume* you won't fit). Current and past participants have come from a wide range of professional and personal backgrounds. Our desire is for participants who have a genuine desire to deepen the practice in their own life circumstances.

Conversation with current and past practicum participants is welcome. We'll provide you with their names and contact information. You'll find them rich resources who welcome conversation with you.