

ON LOVE

Burnt fields throughout the West Coast of the United States. 6 million acres charred. Ecosystems, with all of their inhabitants, destroyed. Majestic trees laid waste. Towns burnt to the ground. Precious lives extinguished.

Just when we thought things couldn't get any worse, they did. The plagues besetting us only seem to multiply, rather than diminish.

It certainly feels like we are being tested. And prodded to go deeper and deeper in our explorations of ultimate meaning. Our very lives hang in the balance these days. We must get to the heart of things, to the essence of the Universe, so that we may find understanding and insight there, as a remedy to the crises that are sweeping so many of us away, in so many different ways, right now.

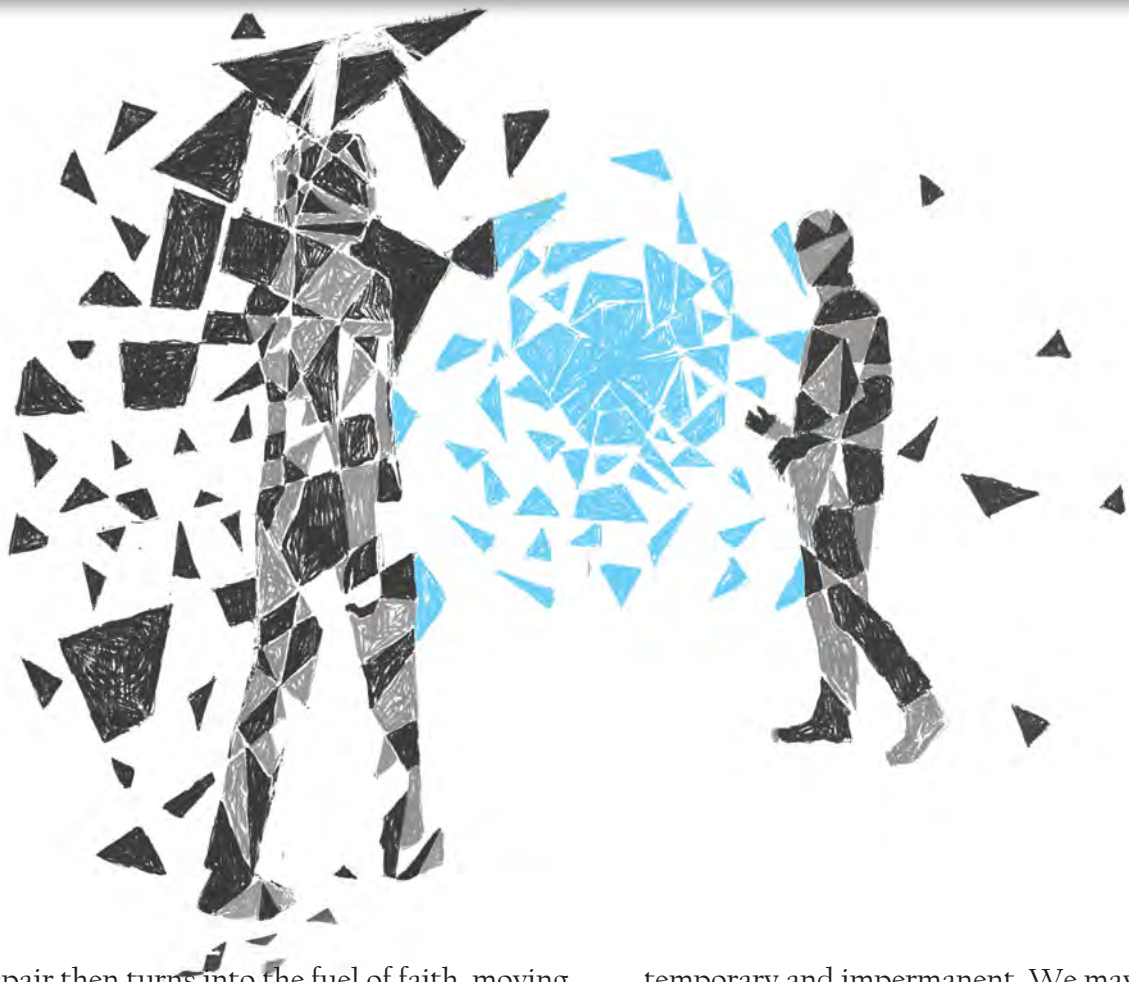
So, we spiritual companions sit with one another, on the barren and carbonized fields of our expectations and dreams, and the life's work of so many, decimated. Trying not to give in to despair and desolation, and waiting for hope to arise again.

The always illusory distinction between our temporal and spiritual selves has been shattered under the brute force of the pressures of our time. And as those pressures increase, our souls struggle mightily to be released from them, springing forward new life from parched cracks.

We are forced to till our soil, like gardeners working the fields of our burnt expectations and traumas, allowing us to compost them, and to use the fertilized ground that results so that our new spirits may emerge, like flowers fighting the elements and thriving despite them.

continued on next page





Our despair then turns into the fuel of faith, moving us forward towards our guiding light, Universal Love.

A Forever Love this, not the transactional or studied kind, but organic and intuitive, omnipotent and serene.

Why else do we persevere but for that promise and invitation to “step outside the circle of time and into the circle of Love,” as Rumi once said?

And what is all of this life on our little planet, less than a micro fraction of a dust particle in an infinitely growing universe, if not all the proof we need of the manifestation of the possibilities of Love?

This does not deny the temporal realities of almost inconceivably evil monstrosities like the Holocaust, or the cruelties of chance and circumstance, like those snatching loved ones away in seemingly random and indiscriminate ways these days.

It's at times like these that we are forced to remember that all of the things of this world, good and bad, are

temporary and impermanent. We may wish it weren't so, but how can we deny it?


There is, however, a Love that is eternal, and never separate from us, before we were, as we are, and as we will be. This Love does not bend or fracture, but pervades and infuses always. When all things fall away, it remains as the one true constant. There is nothing and no one that escapes its reach.

We are here to recall each other to this Universal Love. In fact, we need each other to remember and fulfil it, and to remind ourselves and each other of its power and reach.

May its promise heal all of our wounded hearts.



Rev. Seifu Anil Singh-Molares
Executive Director, SDI



Whatever your
spiritual orientation,

wherever you are
in your journey,

We are with you.

BECOME AN SDI MEMBER

All SDI Members receive discounts on SDI's educational offerings, and gain exclusive access to our various online resources, such as Discussion Forums, Group Spiritual Companionship and our new, beautiful online version of Presence Journal.

Choose the membership that is right for you!



VENUS
(STUDENT)

For those who are
training to become
spiritual companions.



NEPTUNE
(STANDARD)

For all kinds of
spiritual companions
and deep listeners.



JUPITER
(ENHANCED)

For those who are
able to support SDI
at a higher rate.



COSMOS
(PREMIUM)

For our most active
and supportive
companions.

Join us today at sdicompanions.org.

JACOB'S PILLAR

The garden cairn
lost its balance.
It happens. Things topple.
Gravity overcomes friction.
Maybe a slick bit of moss on a rock,
or the exuberant gesture of someone walking by.
It doesn't take much.
One of the falling rocks landed on-end
and stood in the garden
like Jacob's pillar.
Remember Jacob's dream
about angels on a staircase?
Jacob up-ended the rock that had been his pillow,
anointed that rock with oil.
Decades later,
when he and his children were in a mess of trouble,
God said, "Go back there." Go back to the upended.
Dwell in the place that amazed you.
Rest on the pillows of vivid dreams.
Anoint them.

Rita Willett serves as a chaplain in a women's prison. She is a graduate of Earlham School of Religion and Shalem Spiritual Guidance Program. The toppled cairn inspired her while walking in a garden with her spiritual director.



SDI EDUCATION



THE PLACE WHERE NEUROSCIENCE, MINDFULNESS, AND SPIRITUALITY MEET

This practical new resource on mindfulness and spirituality is **25% off** for *Listen* readers!

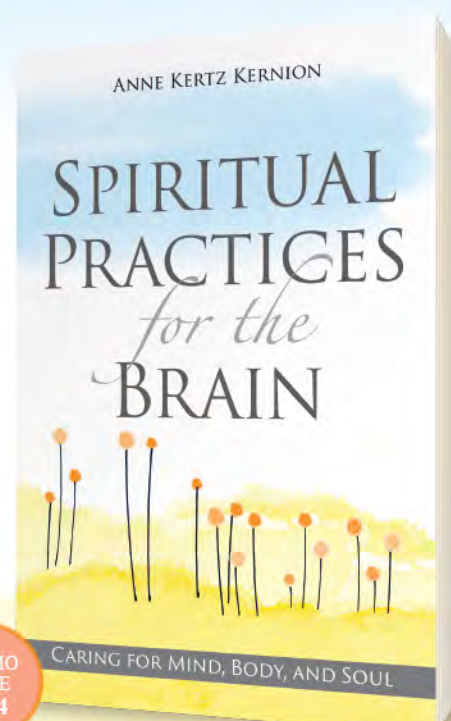


Anne Kertz Kernion, founder of Cards by Anne, is an artist and yoga teacher who holds an MA from Duquesne University and speaks internationally on the intersection of neuroscience and spiritual practice.

For centuries, spiritual and meditative practices have helped people become more calm, focused, and happy. Now we know how and why such habits benefit the whole person.

In *Spiritual Practices for the Brain*, Anne Kertz Kernion features current research to link spiritual practices to improved mental and physical health. Relying on her education and experience in brain development, positive psychology, theology, and yoga, Kernion is able to relate seemingly simple practices—such as focused breathing, gardening, practicing kindness, or going for a walk—with powerful results for your mind, body, and soul.

To purchase your own copy of *Spiritual Practices for the Brain* at 25% off, visit us online or contact customer service. Don't forget to use promo code 5294!



PROMO
CODE
5294

The always illusory distinction between our temporal and spiritual selves has been shattered under the brute force of the pressures of our time.

And as those pressures increase, our souls struggle mightily to be released from them, springing forward new life from parched cracks.

SD Ongoing Formation at The CSD

Zoom – Exploring Boundaries of SD

Sat., Oct. 17th 9a-12:30p PST

Zoom – Spirituality of Visio Divina

Sat., Nov. 21st 9a-12:30p PST

TheCSD.org • 714-744-3172



WILD AWAKENING
SPIRITUAL FORMATION IN THE NEW PENTECOST
LEVEL ONE - 2021

Prayer Workshop: The Art of Being
January 24, Sunday

Module 1
Awareness, Spiritual Formation, and
Spiritual Direction
February 7, Sunday

Module 2
Genealogy: Who Am I?
March 6-7, Saturday-Sunday

Module 3
True Self and False Self
April 10, Saturday

Module 4
Discovering the Inner Child Retreat
May 29-30, Saturday-Sunday

Module 5
Images of God
June 27, Sunday

Module 6
Spirituality and Reality
July 25, Sunday

Module 7
Transformation and Conversion
August 29, Sunday

Module 8
3-Day Ignatian Silent Retreat
September 18-20, Saturday-Monday

All modules from Prayer Workshop to Module 7
will be held online via Zoom. The 3-day Ignatian
Silent Retreat may be held onsite at Cherimoya
Eco-Spirituality and Retreat Center
in Calamba, Laguna.

 **On the Third Day**
Renewal and Formation Center

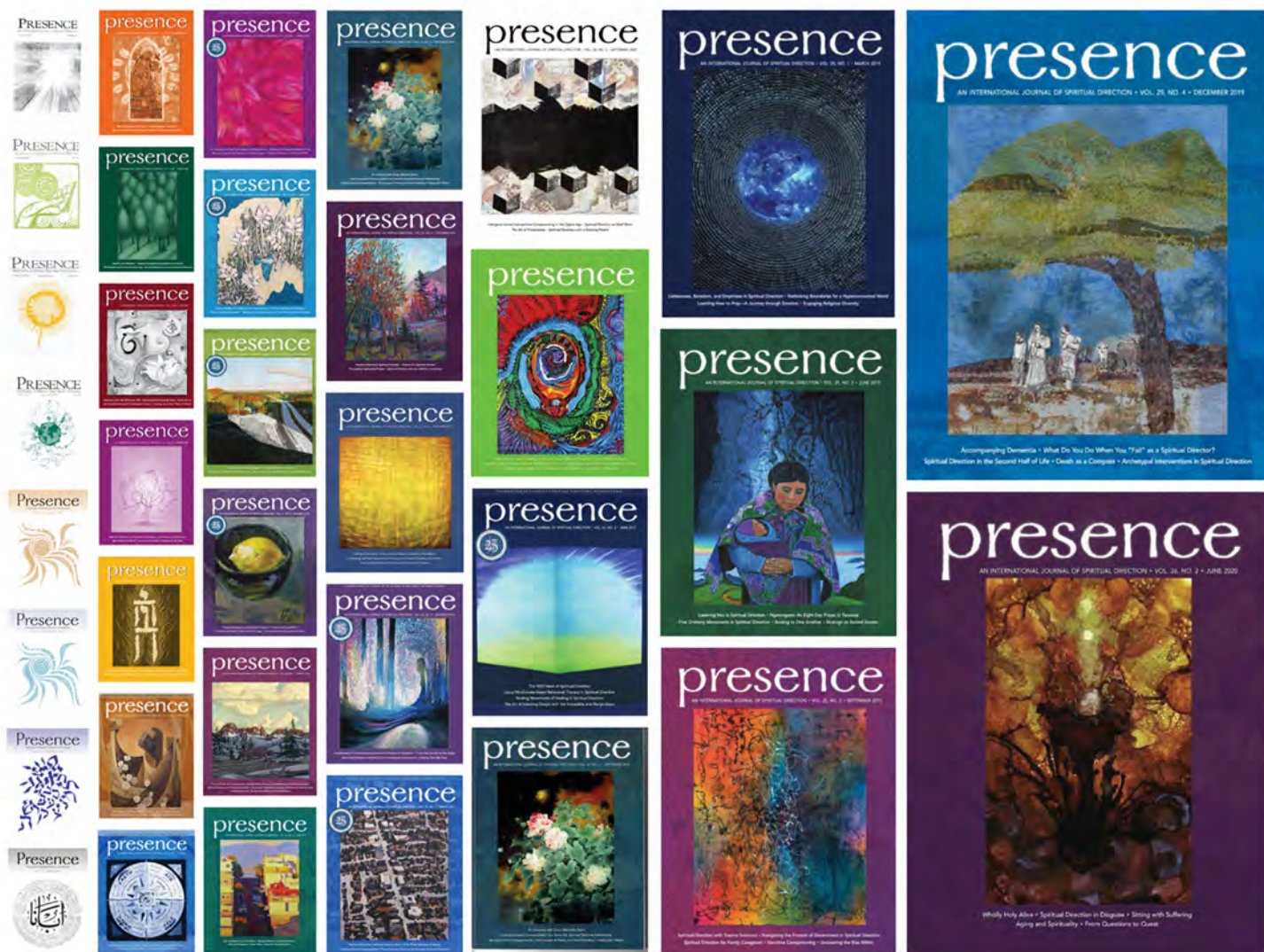
www.spiritualformation.center www.fb.com/ottdbethlehem
programs@spiritualformation.center [+63 917 188 6883](tel:+639171886883)



EVERY ISSUE. EVERY ARTICLE. EVERY WORD.

presence

The Digital Archive



A quarter century of the best thinking about spiritual direction and companionship, on demand and fully searchable. Available now!

sdicompanions.org 

SUN STRIKING ROCK

This tree in the woods
That cloud-hanging sky

That darkening moon
This eye through the night

The blind of this fog
The silence in snow

That deer in the road
The voice of that crow

The cry of that child

The man with the cup

The face of the stranger,
The end of a friendship,

The white on this line
The stone on this grave

The failure of words
My knees on the ground

...is my prayer

Marcia Klepper-Smith is an ordained UCC minister, has served as a Pastoral Counselor and a Hospital Chaplain, and now devotes much of her “free” time in creative endeavors.

WEEP, SING, RAGE, BREATHE.

Practical Spiritual Tools for the End of 2020

NOV 18 | DEC 2 | DEC 9 | DEC 16

After months of stress and anxiety, gift yourself spiritual tools to re-ground, sustain, heal, and transform.



Sarah Cledwyn
BioSpiritual energy
healer, guerilla
spiritual director



Rev. Sekou
musician, activist, theo-
logian, author, docu-
mentary filmmaker, and
public intellectual

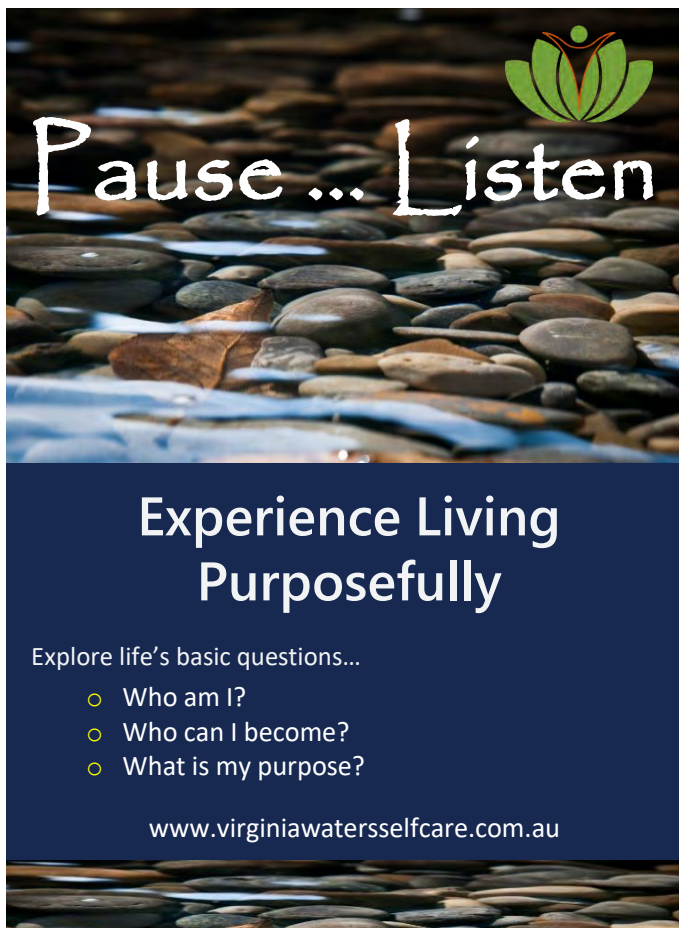


Teresa Mateus
co-Director Mystic Soul
Project & Trauma Re-
sponse and Crisis Care
for Movements



Alan Haras
co-founder Ignatian
Yoga, psychosynthesis
coach

SDI WEBINARS



Pause... Listen

Experience Living Purposefully

Explore life's basic questions...

- Who am I?
- Who can I become?
- What is my purpose?

www.virginiawatersselfcare.com.au

Listen

PUBLISHER: Spiritual Directors International

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR AND EDITOR:

Rev. Seifu Anil Singh-Molares, MTS

PRODUCTION SUPERVISOR: Matt Whitney

SUBMISSIONS: listen@sdiworld.org

ADVERTISING: ads@sdiworld.org

Listen is published four times a year. The names **Spiritual Directors International™**, **SDIWorld™**, and **SDI™** and its logo are trademarks of Spiritual Directors International, Inc., all rights reserved. Opinions and programs represented in this publication are of the authors and advertisers and may not represent the opinions of Spiritual Directors International, the Coordinating Council, or the editors.

We WELCOME your feedback on any aspect of this issue of LISTEN, or on SDI as a whole. Please send your comments to
LISTEN@SDIWORLD.ORG

PRESENCE GOES DIGITAL

You asked for it.... Here it is ... The four most recent issues of our International Journal of Spiritual Direction, *Presence*, offered online.

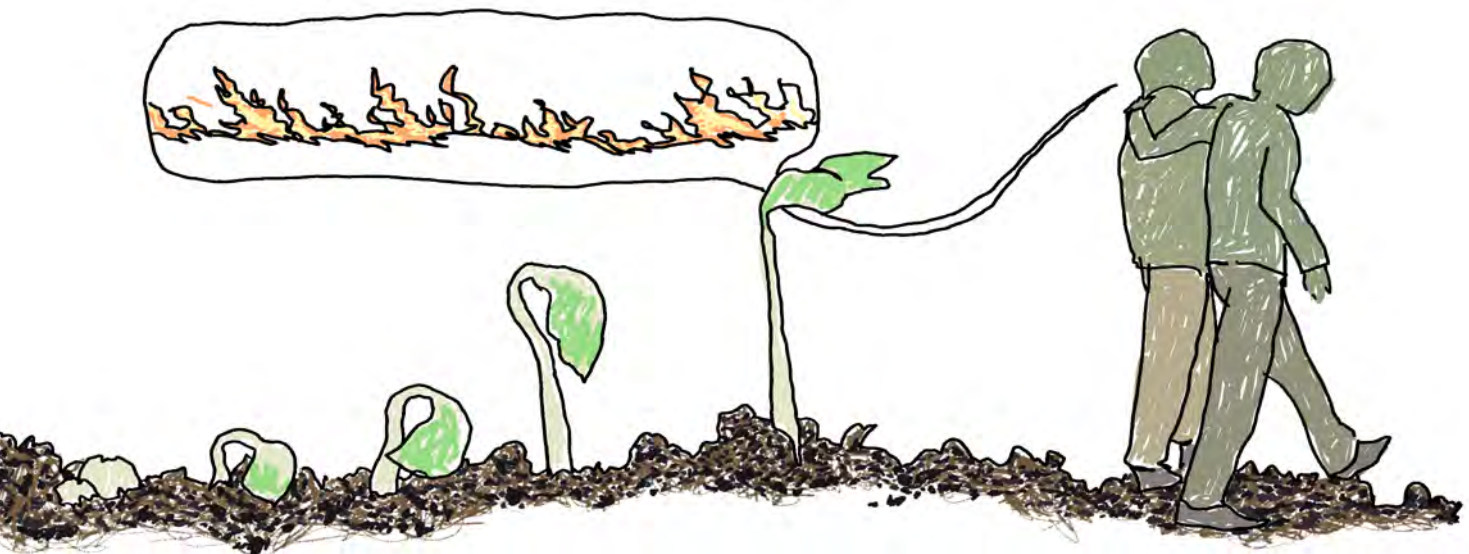
Access is for members, but non-members can have a look at one issue for free. Read now.



Listen is an outreach publication of SDI - The Home of Spiritual Companionship. When you visit the SDI website at www.sdicompanions.org, you can learn about retreats, programs, conferences, and other educational events related to spiritual companionship. You can read descriptions of the spiritual direction relationship from a variety of spiritual traditions, and discover excellent questions to ask yourself and any potential spiritual directors you choose to interview. To locate a spiritual director or guide, go online to *Find a Spiritual Companion Guide*. More than 6,000 spiritual directors are listed at www.sdicompanions.org.

“What is to give light must endure burning.”

Viktor Frankl, *Man's Search for Meaning*





The Home of Spiritual Companionship
PO Box 3584 | Bellevue, WA 98009