



CUTTING-EDGE QUARTERLY

Summer Quarter, 1999
July, August, September

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... for Practical Spirituality

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Sparks of Interest

By Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks, Spiritual Director
The Soul-Esteem Center

When I was a kid, the word “hunk” might have referred to a big piece of cheese, “buns” were something that came with a hamburger inside, “pot” was something you cooked in, and “hip-hop” was the way Peter Rabbit got around. With every generation, words can take on new and different meanings. One of the biggest challenges in today's world is how to talk about spirituality without

confusing people. We are faced with describing new and current concepts with the same words that define old concepts.

After spending countless hours searching for a word that would best describe what The Soul-Esteem Center represents, I concluded that the most suitable word is “metaphysical.” But like so many words in our vocabulary, the meaning of the word metaphysical has changed over time. It has become a catchall word that can mean anything from “beyond the physical,” to “strange and mysterious.” A basic definition of metaphysics is, “a branch of philosophy concerned with the nature of ultimate reality.” Philosophers throughout history, from Aristotle and Saint Thomas Aquinas, to Immanuel Kant and Ralph Waldo Emerson, have put their own particular bent on the meaning of metaphysics, giving rise to various branches including transcendentalism and existentialism.

To say, “we study and practice metaphysics,” means that we are engaged in a study of the *mystical*, or the nature of our relationship to God and the universe. Today's metaphysician claims a direct relationship with God, and thinks of God as an all-pervasive Presence with a Nature that is unconditional Love, rather than a big man in the sky sitting in judgment. This puts the responsibility for our belief, behavior, and experience of life squarely in our own laps, with the Law of Cause and Effect being our balancing rod. So, until a more specific word or term presents itself, we will go on thinking of The Soul-Esteem Center as teaching a metaphysical spiritual philosophy that contains within it many paths to the realization of God.

...metaphysicians claim a direct relationship with God, and think of God as an all-pervasive Presence whose nature is unconditional Love...

With Love and Blessings of Peace,

Phylis Clay Sparks is an ordained minister, and the Spiritual Director of The Soul-Esteem Center. She is a graduate of Washington University in St. Louis, and the Ernest Holmes College, School of Ministry in Orlando, Florida. She is a professional speaker, teacher, artist, workshop facilitator, spiritual counselor and author.

The Cutting-Edge Quarterly

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We welcome all submissions and ideas. Please submit to Gary Heebner by E-mail: gheebner@juno.com - or fax: (314) 275-7720. We reserve the right to edit material, and will seek approval of edited copy from the author before printing. The deadline for all submissions in the next issue is September 1, 1999.

The Soul-Esteem Center

... for Practical Spirituality

is an independent, nondenominational spiritual community, coming together to explore spiritual truth, to discover and develop spiritual confidence, and to learn the practical application of spiritual principles in everyday life. We have no religious doctrine or creed. We are focused on the oneness of all life, the healing power of Love, and the co-creative relationship between God and the individual.

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12924 Ray Trog Ct.
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NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

Great Things Can Happen

By Gary Heebner

We have just published our second issue of the *Cutting-Edge Quarterly*. We have received many articles and newsworthy contributions from individuals in our spiritual community. This interest and help in making this publication a reality is a blessing.

I would like to thank the many people who have assisted in this publication's creation, its ongoing production, and its continuous improvement. Where two or more individuals come together to honor God, great things can happen.

Dr. Gary Heebner is president and owner of Cell Associates, which provides marketing consulting services to companies serving the scientific industry.

Summer Passage Renewal Retreat for Women

Saturday, July 17

By Rev. Linda Nash

Retreat...to withdraw to a place of refuge. We all need an opportunity to get away from the stresses and challenges of day-to-day schedules in order to "find ourselves" amidst the chaos. You deserve that time. Gift yourself with a day in a relaxed and beautiful environment, to learn, to grow, and to reclaim the authentic power and expression that is you. Our goal is that you will return home renewed with a joyful lightness, and increased self-love and spiritual confidence.

This is not a day of quiet boredom...far from it! This is a program of passage: of learning how to progress from where you are now, to a higher level; of getting "unstuck," and then changing, releasing and creatively moving forward. That requires information, fun and meaningful interactive exercises, plus the freedom to reclaim the joy and laughter of the child within. Time is always set aside for reflection,

Saturday, July 17 - Gift yourself with a day in a relaxed and beautiful environment, to learn, to grow, and to reclaim the authentic power and expression that is you.

quiet prayers, meditations, guided imagery and journaling. These help guide you to insights and answers for breaking through your barriers and becoming more of who you're meant to be.

This is a day of beauty for the soul. The setting is in a lovely rural area which is still close to home. With good food, camaraderie, and caring facilitation, you can let your spirit soar. There are no limits; you are boundless.

Reverend Phylis and I hope you can join us on July 17th for the 1999 Summer Passage Renewal Retreat for Women. For more information call me at (314) 725-9782 or Phylis at (314) 275-7663. We promise you a wonderful experience.

Rev. Linda Nash is a nationally known professional speaker, seminar leader, author and individual coach and facilitator.

BOOK REVIEW

Life & Teaching of the Masters of the Far East

By Baird T. Spalding

Reviewed by Pat Peck

This work (a five volume set, first published between 1924 and 1955) is a fascinating reading adventure. Volumes 1-3 relate the experiences of Baird Spalding and a research party of eleven persons who visited the Far East in 1894. For three and one-half years they entered into the lives of those people they call "Great Masters of the Himalayas." During this time these Masters demonstrated the working of the great Law. Examples of their understanding of the Law included having life spans of hundreds of years without aging, telepathic communication, travel by teleportation, and producing objects out of the air.

Volume 4, first published in 1948, contains lessons by Spalding. Some of the subjects covered include: the White Brotherhood, Basis of Coming Social Reorganization, and the Quantum Theory. Volume 5 begins with a short biographical sketch of Baird Spalding that I highly recommend for the background knowledge of the reader. It also includes lectures that he gave in California during the last two years of his life.

Spalding passed away in 1953, at the age of 95 (there is argument over the exact date). His career was in mining engineering. He was a serious follower of the teachings of Jesus and believed the Christ was in each person, and because of this, each person was potentially a Master.

David Bruton published *Baird T. Spalding as I Knew Him*, in 1954. Bruton, who knew Spalding well over many years, said that Spalding was not "a great man; rather he was fabulous and fantastic and he did fulfill a great destiny ... and he ushered in a New Age of Light." Douglas K. DeVorss, the publisher of these books, says "The basic ideas are in harmony with the ancient wisdom teaching found throughout the classics of metaphysical literature," yet they are very easy reading.

A Sunday Service for the *NOW* Age !

The Gathering

Presented by

The Soul-Esteem Center

For Practical Spirituality

Sundays, 10:00 am

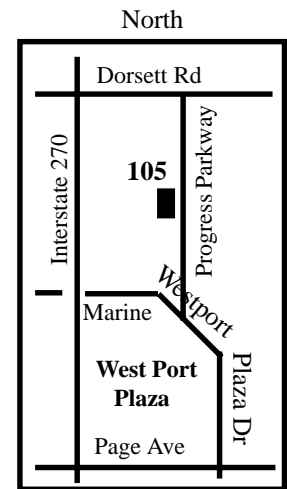
Sunday Services held at

105 Progress Parkway, Maryland Heights, MO

(East of I-270, midway between Westport Plaza Dr. and Dorsett Rd.)

Join us as we come together in reverence to God, in a casual and loving atmosphere. We welcome all people regardless of their gender, race, nationality, or religious background. The service includes a metaphysical message, prayer, guided meditation, music, and background video.

**Children's Circle
10:00 am**



Today, this work is confirmed by all of the Light that is now coming through human consciousness. And, as Bruton says, "Spalding's books confirm an inner conviction each one feels about his ability to attain spiritual understanding." For me, and I hope for you, reading Spalding's work will expand the consciousness, as well as be an enjoyable reading adventure.

Pat Peck has been a student of metaphysics for over 25 years. As a member of the United Church of Religious Science she was a licensed Religious Practitioner for 10 years. Professionally, today she is Coordinator of Social Services for the School District of Jennings and continues the study of metaphysics at the Soul-Esteem Center with Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks.

Heart Esteem

By Nancy Bardenheier

Gentle heart, so true and strong,
Trust in life! Don't relinquish your song!
Waves of tears may splash on your shores,
But a resilient foundation supports your floors.

Nancy Bardenheier enjoys the expression of Spirit through the vehicles of language and live music. Professionally, she is a corporate travel agent. She is also an enthusiastic participant at The Soul-Esteem Center.

The Spiritual Network

The Spiritual Network

The Artist Within

By Michelle Celeste Ries

Within our bodies is a frequency of pure creation. Within our minds there lives all of what we've experienced and learned. The mind-body connection transforms our abilities and allows our talents to flow freely from our thoughts into form and content. These works are monumental, musical and magical; illuminating with brilliance. Spontaneity sweeps into the soul and envelops all the senses, surrounding our whole being with the Divine Infinite Joy of all that has been and will be.

This feeling is the power to create, which is manifesting at every moment, whether we are awake or asleep.

See, feel, and experience the flow of relaxed attention. Know (beyond thinking and the creative intention to invent) and stage the events as they unfold. These are actions of positive affirmation that lead us to produce master works of artistic expression . . . expressions of being alive and exploring the depth and intensity of our emotions.

What I'm really saying is that everything is art! From cleaning and arranging your house, yard

or garden, to researching, visioning, and communicating through sensory activities. Art is writing letters, drumming, sculpting, and exploring uncharted enchanting pathways. From whispering or smiling on rainy days, to opening up to doing things differently . . . venturing with confidence into having exactly what we've always wanted.

While transcending time and space, listen deeply to your soul inspirations. Create art kinetically and abstractly, and vibrant compositions will come alive, with energy and life. The body, mind, heart, and Spirit connect our physical actions with the Divine inside. These experiences, that are guided, natural awakenings of our being, are recorded and documented through the expressions of art. The magnificent creative source is the artist within, living gracefully, participating in the great cosmic dance of eternal life.

The magnificent creative source is the Artist Within, living gracefully, participating in the great cosmic dance of eternal life.

The Artist Within is alive, in love with life, and free to be!



Michelle Celeste Ries is an active participant in the Soul-Esteem Center. She has a Bachelors degree in Fine Arts from the Kansas City Art Institute, and has completed several cross-country tours of the United States and Europe. Her interests include dance-movement therapy, healing arts, and metaphysics.

Spiritual Investing

By Marilyn Epstein

I would describe myself as a strong "left-brain" thinker, relying on logic and facts. My knowledge of investing was learned through the college of "hard knocks", as were many of my life's lessons. Upon graduation, I began to realize that the Universe seemed to be in support of my actions when they were founded on good intentions.

Throughout my learning process, I repeatedly encounter lessons of increasing difficulty until I finally master the material. Investing has been one of those lessons. I experienced numerous failures and set backs until I finally listened and learned.

In the past, I managed my money with a scarcity mentality. I was sure that there was never enough to "go around." I was also very impatient with my investments and wanted to see quick results. My financial abilities were founded in fear, not in Love, God and the use of Universal truths. By the time I realized that I was operating out of fear, and not love, little of my financial assets remained.

Fortunately, as with all life's lessons, I was given yet another chance. This time, I began to take control in partnership with my Creator. Although I continued to utilize a "left-brain" approach, I was now able to allow my intuitive self to participate. I began to trust myself as a part of my Higher Power and my faith was strengthened. (continued on page 5)

(Spiritual Investing continued)

At first, I tried new methods only because of the many failures I had experienced in the past. I was especially leery of the practice of giving away financial energy with good intention and being told that these energies would be returned to me many times over. Despite this “logical” concern, I began to give away possessions and to make financial contributions with faith and good intention. With this change in my behavior, financial energy began to flow in both directions. In fact, when I took on an abundance mentality, I received so much more than I gave. This abundance now continues in my life.

The logical aspect of investing will probably always be a part of me. I enjoy reading financial journals, columns, and magazines, as well as participating in investment clubs. But my investing is now enhanced by my more recently acquired intuitive or “right-brain” thinking.

The Spiritual Network

As my faith has increased, I have become increasingly successful in releasing the fear and control that financial energy once had over me. Now I am free to have my financial needs met, with ease.

My Higher Power communicates with me in many ways: through other people, books, prayer, meditation, and dreams. My job is to remain awake and alert to life. Today I will say a prayer of gratitude for all of my prosperity and all that is good in my life. Today I will listen and pay attention. I find that when I focus on what is good in my life, my prosperity grows and crowds out the deficiencies and lack.

Marilyn Epstein is a nutrition consultant, and is available for private consultations. She is an active participant of The Soul-Esteem Center. You can reach her at (314) 469-4911.

THE WORLD OF INSPIRATIONAL MUSIC

Randall Leonard Performance - Sunday, August 22

By Brad Smith

Randall Leonard will be our featured pianist at *The Gathering* on August 22, and I look forward to accompanying him on saxophone and flute. He will also do a special performance after *The Gathering*, at 11:45 am, performing various selections from his five CD's: *Angels in the Rain*, *Melting Snow/Thirsty Flowers*, *Flutterbys*, *Terra Angelica*, and *Pastorale For The Winged Ones*.

Randall is a composer, concert performance artist, and speaker. For several years he was Guest Musician for *Future Visions*, a series of symposia held in major cities throughout the United States and Canada, featuring such leading motivational speakers as Bernie Siegel, Deepak Chopra, Stuart Wilde, and Gabrielle Roth. Also, he has composed background music for many book-to-tape versions of “best-sellers” by popular authors Louise L. Hayes and Wayne Dyer.

When I first heard Randall Leonard's music, I immediately felt its healing qualities. The energies of safety and nurturing that emanate from his music comforted me so much that I make the experience more personal for myself by regularly playing my flute and saxophone along with his recordings.

On occasion I am honored with the opportunity to play with him live. Also, I have recorded soprano saxophone on his newest CD: *Pastorale For The Winged Ones*. While Randall feels he is not a virtuoso pianist, I feel he is actually a virtuoso at conveying the real emotion of music without hiding behind a flurry of notes. For me this is the real essence of the musical experience that Randall has mastered. I hope you come to experience the magic of music as expressed by Randall Leonard at this upcoming special event.

Brad Smith shares his talents through his music by composing, performing and recording for the Native American flute, saxophone, flute and keyboards. He is the Music Director of The Soul-Esteem Center, and regularly performs at The Gathering. Brad has two recordings available called “New Dance” and “Flute Affirmations”. You can contact Brad by email at ucun@swbell.net.

The Healing Network

The Healing Network

Peace Prayer

By Christine Bryant

I believe that manifesting world peace is part of the “greater works that ye shall do.” We can only manifest world peace if we are willing to accept the Presence of God in everyone and everything. I invite you to join me in this peace prayer, and incorporate it into your daily life.

There *is* the Presence of God in all things.

This Presence is a golden thread of Love woven into the intricate fabric of my life.

I acknowledge this Presence, and I accept this Presence as who I Am.

I allow this Presence of Love to move through me in a powerful way for peace.

Each moment today, I take charge of my thoughts, words and actions.

I think loving thoughts, speak words of kindness, and act with compassion for *all* life.

My action of Love creates peace in my life.

My peace touches everyone as it radiates from me and embraces the world.

I allow nothing to disturb my inner peace.

I know this Truth for everyone in the world.

I see the Presence of God in everyone as a Light growing brighter and brighter.

I see this Light in everyone as harmonious decisions, as kind words,
and as constructive actions for a safe and clean world.

I accept World Peace Now!

Chris Bryant's beautiful spiritual messages are available in a line of handmade greeting cards. If you want to know more, you can call her at (314) 646-1196, or E-mail her at cardsbychris@mindspring.com. Chris is the Secretary of our Board of Directors at the Soul-Esteem Center.

Men's Retreat

Saturday, Sept. 11

10:00 am - 4:00 pm

At Perry Blankenbiller's
27 Auvergne Dr., Lake St. Louis

The Power of Breath Through Rebirthing Overnight Retreat

**Friday, Sept. 27, 5:30 pm
to Saturday, Sept. 18, 5:00 pm**

Facilitated by Susan Brockmeier

At Toddhall Retreat Center, Columbia, Illinois
\$110 includes Friday dinner, Sat. breakfast
and lunch, and overnight accommodations.
Call (314) 275-7663 for more information.

Let your spirit soar with the
original piano music of

Randall Leonard

Guest Speaker and Musician



Sunday, August 22

At *The Gathering*, 10:00 am
at 105 Progress Parkway, Maryland Hts.

Enjoy a Bonus Performance, 11:45 am

Brad Smith will join Randall on saxophone and flute.

Fall Class - Level I

The Principles of Metaphysical Spirituality

with Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks

5 Tuesdays,

Starting Sept. 14, 1999

7:00 - 9:30 pm, at 12924 Ray Trog Ct.

A Level I Certificate Class - \$75

(Required for Level II Classes)

Study metaphysical philosophy, terms, principles, prayer techniques, and practical application. A must for anyone who is serious about developing spiritual confidence.

Call (314) 275-7663 to register.

The Doctor Within Us – Innate Intelligence

By Dr. Jeffrey Hoese

Albert Schweitzer, M.D. once said, “Each patient carries his own doctor inside him. They come to us not knowing that truth. We are at our best when we give the doctor who resides within each patient a chance to work.”

Each living thing has a 100% perfect intelligence in it that guides its life. It is revealed when a plant turns its leaves toward the light, when a bird sits on its eggs until they hatch, and when a human body knows what is needed to heal itself. This intelligence makes a baby’s heart beat, digests its food, and uses its white blood cells to fight disease. No one has to teach the infant to do these things.

When this innate intelligence is allowed to flow in perfect order, we are in perfect health. The messages from this intelligence flow through a complex system of nerves to every cell in our body. Many different things can interfere with these impulses, so we must do what we can to keep the channels open. This is the objective of the chiropractic physician, who seeks to remove the cause of the problem, instead of merely relieving the symptoms. When we have a headache, most of us reach for a bottle of aspirin. But is our body running low on aspirin? A headache is like a warning light on the dashboard of our car. A headache tells the doctor within us that something is wrong. We must then find the cause, not merely silence the symptoms. Listening to the doctor within helps us stay in balance and be healthy.

Take a few minutes today and give thanks that you do not have to tell your white blood cells to fight off a virus that has invaded your body. Give thanks that you do not have to tell your lungs to inhale and exhale every five seconds. Give thanks for this wonderful innate intelligence - this doctor inside you.

Dr. Jeffrey Hoese is the owner of Stanford Chiropractic Center, PC. His office provides chiropractic care, massage therapy, and nutritional supplements. For more information you can call (314) 423-2211.

The Healing Network

Resist Not Your Feelings

By Cecelia BonJour

We often judge our life experiences through our feelings. Many of us have learned to divide feelings into categories. Generally, negative feelings (like sadness, fear, and anger) are labeled as bad, while positive feelings (like happiness, contentment, and bliss) are considered good.

However, *all* feelings have validity and purpose in our life. For example, the feeling of anger is neither negative nor positive. Rather it is the behavior we choose to express that anger which gives meaning and judgment to the experience. The same is true for all other emotions. When we resist allowing our true feelings to arise to the sunlight, we limit our full human potential and restrict our true nature as emotional persons.

Deepak Chopra states in his book, *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*, “Nature’s intelligence functions with effortless ease. This is the Law of Least Effort or the principle of no resistance. When we learn this lesson from nature, we easily fulfill our desires.” This is true for our emotional lives as well. When we do not resist feeling the emotions we consider negative, and choose behaviors which bring us back into harmony with nature, our lives become more fulfilling, and loving relationships are attracted to us.

When we keep our emotions “bottled up,” we cannot bloom into the light beings we were meant to be. Feel all your feelings to their depths, modulate your behavior and learn constructive ways to release all that you do not wish in your life. As you continue to practice this principle you will be able to manifest your desires effortlessly. It is God’s gift to you.

Cecelia BonJour, MSW, LCSW, is a licensed psychotherapist and health educator at Vitality Unlimited. She is available for individual session and classes. Additionally, she co-facilitates the Reiki Share bi-monthly evenings for the Soul Esteem Center.

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Questions & Answers

By Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks

One of the most popular activities at The Soul-Esteem Center is our Q & A sessions on selected Sunday mornings after The Gathering. We always have a great turnout, thought-provoking questions, and lively discussion. Here are a few of the questions that I'm asked on a regular basis:

Question: *What makes The Soul-Esteem Center different from any other religious "movement" which thinks that their approach to God is better than the others?*

Answer: Although we could be thought of as part of a metaphysical "movement," we are uniquely different from traditional religious groups. First of all, as metaphysicians, we leave the specifics up to the individual. No one will tell a person how to approach their realization of God. All paths are honored and respected, and no one is "wrong" for what they choose to believe. This means that we are not evangelists, and even though we might enjoy sharing about our beliefs, we are not focused upon converting anyone. We accept everyone as part of the unified collective consciousness, part of the Great I Am, and see every system of belief as an important part of the way in which the Universe is serving the needs of humankind.

Question: *Does God punish us?*

Answer: We start with the premise that God is Love, and that the nature of God is to give. Punishment does not come from a judgmental God, but from a spiritual law. This law could be called the Law of Cause and Effect, which means that for every action there is a reaction. Some call this law *karma*. In other words, it is that which a person has thought, felt and believed, being returned to him or her. Sin is actually an old archery term meaning "missing the mark," or a mistake, and the response is not punishment, just natural consequences. We do indeed *reap what we sow*.

Question: *You have said that we create our own experience. I can't believe that I created the accident I had last week when I broke my arm and totalled my car. Do you think I caused that?*

Answer: No, but you did cause your state of consciousness which could have kept you from "listen-

ing" to the inner guidance that may have guided you out of harm's way. Most accidents happen as a result of going unconscious, and just driving our car, or going through the motions of whatever we're doing like a robot. Sometimes we are distracted by worry, anxiety, anger, the meeting we just left, or the meeting we're anticipating. These are all forms of being asleep in the present moment, which makes us subject to the Law of Averages in the present moment. In other words, when we go to sleep, spiritually speaking, we open ourselves to whatever comes down the pike. This is why it often looks as though something outside of us is cause to our experience. But it still boils down to *where we focus our attention*, and what we hold in consciousness as *intention*. Stephen Covey said it best: "All things are created twice.

There's a mental or first creation, and a physical or second creation to all things. If we do not develop our own self-awareness and become responsible for first creations, we empower other people and circumstances outside our Circle of Influence to shape much of our lives by default."

What Is Channeling?

By Jackie Mellis

For many of us in our "left-brain" culture, the idea of channeling may at first seem rather strange. Actually, channeling is the very natural process of allowing yourself to receive sensory impressions or information from Spirit or spiritual guides.

The entity Kryon is channeled by Lee Carroll, a businessman, who was initially very hesitant about this calling. In *Kryon's Book VI, Partnering with God* (and on the Kryon web site) "he" details the telltale signs of pure channeled information: high guidance never speaks as the "only" source, always honors free will, and encourages you to seek your own truth. Channeled information is new information that is love-filled, inspiring and useful to everyone (not just a chosen few).

The highest channeled information will resonate with your deeper being in such a way that you will have an inward experience of knowing, deeper than that of our usual linear thinking. Also,

(Continued on page 9)

(What is Channeling continued)

one can know how pure the information is by the indicators of unconditional love, inspiration, non-judgment, joy, love, embracing of *all* experience and the absence of fear. Entities that express unconditional love don't tell us what we "should" do. They also don't make linear time predictions.

I've been channeling a deeply loving being for over two years now. I learned how to channel from Sanaya Roman's books, including *Opening to Channel*. My journey with Wanda, my guide, has been one of self-discovery and gradual acceptance of a greater self-identity and unconditional self-love, an awesome gift! Many times I have felt unworthy of her guidance.

Yet she has been incredibly consistent, persistent and loving. She has slowly led me to a deeper level of truth about myself and now I believe it!

Spiritual guidance is available to us in many forms. It comes from our Higher Self, our intuition, and our angels and guides. There is more guidance available than we can even imagine. As we develop the heartfelt discernment of our highest truth, we discover that it doesn't matter where it comes from. The key becomes discerning your own highest truth, and this key is found in your heart.

Jackie Mellis, LCSW, provides individual and group sessions on opening to spiritual guidance and channeling. Her number is (314) 291-7574.

The Soul-Esteem Center hosts

Kryon

Sunday, August 1

At 105 Progress Parkway, Maryland Hts., MO

Meet Lee Carroll at *The Gathering* at 10:00 am

Book Signing at 11:30 am

Lee Carroll presents Lecture and Live Channeling, 2:00 pm - 6:00 pm

Ticket Price \$85. Register early - seating is reserved and limited!

Please Use Registration Form Below

Join Lee Carroll for an intense four-hour personal lecture and live channeling. Author of eight books, Lee Carroll answers questions and presents the loving information of Kryon. Having presented three times at the United Nations in New York, and in many countries worldwide, Lee brings good news and hope as the new millennium approaches. Lee describes his relationship with Kryon as a "partnership," and you're sure to enjoy the sincerity, candor, humor and important information offered by this dynamic duo!

For more information

Phone: (314) 275-7663 E-Mail: soulesteem@aol.com Website: www.Soul-Esteem.com

Please make your check payable to Lee Carroll.

Send it along with this form to: Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks, 12924 Ray Trog Ct., St. Louis, MO 63146.

Your tickets will be waiting for you at the door on the day of the event.

Name _____ Date _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

Day Phone _____ Evening Phone _____ E-Mail _____

Number of tickets _____ at \$85 per ticket. Check Number _____ Amount _____

A Near-Death Experience

By Joseph F. Lahue

One evening in April of 1973, I was in one of the deepest states of depression I had ever experienced. I had been reviewing the events of my life and deeply regretted many of the decisions I had made. I felt that I was stuck in an endless situation. I was lying awake in bed in the military barracks. Just as I began praying to God for my own death, the entire room went black and I lost my eyesight. I began to suffocate and felt a great weight upon my chest. Suddenly I realized that the weight was not human but of another dimension.

I was wide-awake, fully conscious of what I was feeling, hearing and sensing, but with no eyesight. My breathing was very rapid, to the point of hyperventilation. I was suddenly struggling to save my very life; the physical life I had wished would be taken from me just moments ago. The split second I gave up my will, my soul and spirit left my physical body. Suddenly my eyesight returned and I looked around the room. The lights in the room were off, but I could see clearly. I could see my body sprawled out upon the bed.

I was extremely buoyant, lighter than a feather, and appeared to be pure energy. In fact I realized that I was indeed nothing more than a ball of bright white light. This was no dream and I was no longer alive. As I floated, I noticed that I could now see clearly without the use of eyeglasses. I could see every detail of my surroundings although the room was dark. I no longer had a sense of smell, taste or touch, but could hear clearly as well as see.

Several balls of light-energy appeared to come through the ceiling and walls toward me. I realized the entities that had come to me were waiting for me to get comfortable with being without a body again. They were very patient and very loving. I sensed that one of these spirits was my spiritual teacher, who had been guiding me through the past years; I felt very comfortable with him and I trusted him. Years later I would learn that I named him Simon, and that he had in fact been with me, guiding me since my first near-death experience, which occurred when I was 14 years old.

As Simon came closer towards me, his thoughts seemed more intense. I focused more and more of my attention upon his presence and began to ignore the other entities. Simon said, "We have come to escort you to the other side." Suddenly a part of the ceiling became a large circle of white light-energy. I now realized that it was an entrance to a tunnel which went upward. I floated closer and closer toward the entrance to the tunnel, wondering why I would ever want to be away from the source of all light-energy.

Like a movie, every thought, act, and motion I had created during my life was flashing before my very eyes, but it was more than watching a movie. I began to feel the pain I had inflicted upon other people. But I also felt the positive effects of my actions upon other people as well. I was reliving every event, every emotion, and every action of my life, like a recorded tape, which was rewinding. Then they showed me every event, every emotion, every action of many other lives I had lived before. It was at this moment that I realized reincarnation was a reality. By looking at all the events of my most current past life as well as others, I realized I was not a failure, that my life had not been a waste, and that I had free will to be, or not to be, whatever I desired.

Simon then directed my attention to my left, and suddenly the wall became the scene from a mountaintop. From the mountaintop I saw 1,000 rivers. And as I looked closer, I realized that each of these rivers were future possibilities for my life as Joseph Lahue. Each river possessed a life force which was my own, but no single river contained exactly the same actions or events which I could participate in. There appeared to be no right or wrong path to travel in my future, only many different ways to travel this single path I was on. As with my past, I saw each and every possible event, every possible emotion, every possible action I could choose to engage in. I realized that only I determined my destiny. I saw many opportunities for me to grow spiritually. However, I knew that there were many challenges up ahead as well.

(Continued on page 11)

(A Near-Death Experience continued)

It was at that moment that I gave up my will and agreed to remain in my body and continue to play the role of Joseph F. Lahue. In that split second, my soul and spirit were suddenly thrust back into my physical body. I opened my eyes and realized I was back in my body, but could not move. It took several hours to regain my ability to use this physical form again. However, I now had a new lifetime to think about, and to live it from a totally new perspective, with many exciting possibilities. I now knew that I and I alone would choose.

Joseph F. Lahue is a spiritual channeler, student, teacher, writer, and photojournalist who began his metaphysical journey as a child. During his teens, he had three near death experiences. He is a second-degree Reiki Master, and a life member of the Association for Research and Enlightenment.

Fall Class
**The Many Mansions
of Meditation**
with Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks
5 Weeks,
Starting Sept. 14, 1999
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At 12924 Ray Trog Ct.

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Ends Saturday, Aug. 21 at 6:00 pm
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*\$95 per person includes dinner Friday,
breakfast and lunch on Saturday,
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Join Linda Nash and Phylis Clay Sparks as they facilitate a day of renewal, learning, loving and reclaiming your power! \$150 (\$135 if paid by July 10)
Call 275-7663 for details.

The Soul-Esteem Center
Sunday Tape Subscription Program

Please send copies of the Sunday morning audio tapes from *The Gathering*, by Rev. Phylis Clay Sparks, to:

Name: _____ Today's Date _____

Address _____ City, State, Zip _____

_____ Week Program, From: _____ to _____ (\$5 per tape, plus \$1.25 per tape postage) Total: \$ _____

Paid \$ _____ Check No. _____ by _____ Phone _____

Mail check and Enrollment Form to: Christine Bryant, 3222 Watson, St. Louis, MO 63139

Journey To Sedona, Arizona

Oct. 17 - 23, 1999

By Linda Kluge

More than fifty interested people attended the Sedona trip planning and informational meeting held

Make your airline and room reservations now! Join us for a terrific, uplifting time in Sedona!

on April 18. Together we formed a vision of our journey that includes the following suggestions:

- Nature Walks and Outdoor Drumming
- Guided Meditations and Reiki Circles
- Group Discussions and Channeling
- Visiting Power Vortexes
- Excursion to the Grand Canyon
- Hot Air Balloon and Pink Jeep Rides
- Picnics, Gatherings, Shopping
- Celebration Banquet
- Photo Memory Share Party

Many of us have made our airline reservations, and we are beginning to plan the week's agenda. **Join us for a Sedona Potluck Dinner and Planning Party on Friday, July 23, 7:00 pm at the Sparks', 12924 Ray Trog Ct.** We encourage you to take your next action step to make this vision a reality in your life. For additional information, please call (314) 275-7663 or visit the information table at *The Gather-*

ing
Linda Kluge is an experienced employment counselor, and spiritual practitioner. She will be organizing the Soul-Esteem Center trip to Sedona in October. Linda can be reached at kluge@primary.net.

Joint Summer Picnic

Sunday, July 11

By Linda Kluge

On July 11, **The Soul-Esteem Center** family and friends will join with members of **The Spiritual Enrichment Center** for a summer picnic at **Babler Memorial State Park in Wildwood**. We will have private use of the Walnut Grove Pavilion, which is

Join us for a picnic at Babler State Park, Sunday, July 11

located between the riding stables and the swimming pool. The site provides dozens of picnic tables, a large barbecue pit, bathrooms, shelter and a softball diamond. **Mitzie MacDonald, Brad Smith, Ernie Hayes and others**, will provide fantastic music.

The picnic will begin **immediately after our Sunday services**. Please bring food and drink to share, games to play, chairs, etc.

Directions: Take highway 40 west to the Chesterfield Airport Exit. The exit crosses the highway, becoming Long Road. Take Long Road and turn right on Wild Horse Creek Road. Turn left on Highway 109, and right on Highway BA. This will take you to the entrance to the park. Maps will be available at *The Gathering*.

All are welcome!



The Cutting-Edge Quarterly

12924 Ray Trog Ct.
St. Louis, MO 63146