



UU Sangha

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An Excerpt From *This Truth Never Fails: A Zen Memoir in Four Seasons*

by David Rynick

Editor's Note: We are pleased to present this excerpt from David Rynick's forthcoming book. You may recall David Dae An Rynick Roshi as one of the teachers at the 2011 UUBF Convocation. He is also one of the guiding teachers of Boundless Way Zen and Abbot of Boundless Way Temple



INTRODUCTION

When I look deeply into the real form of the universe, everything reveals the mysterious truth of the Buddha. This truth never fails: in every moment and every place, things can't help but shine with this light.

—Torei Enji

I could blame my involvement in Zen on my parents.

My dad was a Presbyterian minister who believed we should look for God in the midst of our ordinary lives. My mom, a less overtly "spiritual" person, was endlessly appreciative of the wonders and beauty of the everyday world. So when I encountered Zen Buddhism in my early twenties, the teachings sounded like what I had been hearing all my life: what is

most precious and sacred is right here, all we have to do is turn towards it.

My commitment to the path of Zen is also an expression of a deep yearning for connection that has been with me all my life. This persistent longing—which has so often felt like a problem—has been the compass of my life. When I heard a Zen teacher talk in 1980, he spoke of what I knew in my bones—that though we often experience ourselves as separate and suffering individuals, we are also lovingly held in a vast and luminous web of aliveness.

And I believed him when he said there is a direct path toward waking up to this aliveness.



(Continued on page 3)

Notes from the Editor

Greetings.

Congratulations to John, a member of the Church of the Larger Fellowship and the UUBF. Three of his poems were selected for inclusion in *30 Voices*, a CD which was played continuously during the Liberation Exhibition of Prisoner Art and Poetry. The exhibition was at Maitland Goal, formerly an Australian prison and now a cultural center, and will be on tour in Australia. One of the poems, "Fallen Sparrow", appears in this issue along with his watercolor. The exhibition is sponsored by the Foundation for the Preservation of the Mahayana Tradition; congratulations to them too. Visit www.LiberationPrisonProject.org for more about the project.

John is a prisoner in Oklahoma; you've seen his work here before. We are always pleased to publish articles, poetry, and art by our incarcerated members.

**Gassho,
Robert Ertman,
Editor**



**Form is exactly emptiness,
emptiness is exactly form.**



Turitella sp.

This fossil is an internal mold of a snail shell. It was found along the Potomac River in Charles County, Maryland, and was formed in the Paleocene epoch, about 60 million years ago.

(Collected and photographed by the editor.)

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(Continued from page 1)

The path of Zen is not about leaving the world behind or getting something we don't already have. This path of awakening "simply" requires stopping our incessant busyness and our fervent searching long enough to be able to receive what is already abundantly here. Easier said than done, of course, and so this is where formal meditation practice comes in.

When we sit in Zen meditation, we're not trying to rid ourselves of thoughts nor are we cultivating exalted states of mind. We're practicing the surprisingly difficult work of being who we already are – cultivating a basic friendliness toward ourselves and our experience. Over time, the discipline of meditation can help us grow in our capacity to appreciate the aliveness of each moment, regardless of the content.

But the point of Zen is not about perfecting the art of sitting still. The real-time complexity of our everyday lives is where our most challenging (and rewarding) practice takes place. Zen does not offer a magical escape from the ups and downs of our lives. However, as we learn to meet what is arising with curiosity and compassion, the quality of our ordinary lives is transformed. Even in the midst of the flood of events, emotions, and thoughts, we find something genuinely trustworthy. We stop looking somewhere else and begin to participate more intimately in the truth of this life we already have. Right here, in these exact circumstances.

This collection of short observations and reflections is my "Zen memoir"—a record of my ongoing practice and study of this extraordinary experience we call ordinary life. While written over a period of several years, I have arranged these pieces into the cycle of the seasons of a single year. Each piece stands alone, but is also part of a loose overall narrative that includes leaving a home of eighteen years and creating a Zen temple in a lovely old Victorian mansion where I now live, meditate, and teach with my wife Melissa Myozen Blacker, also a Zen teacher.

In the process of writing, I have been increasingly aware that when we talk or write, we are never wholly reporting on something out-

side ourselves. Each perception and each description is an interpretation, a creation of the moment based on bits of information. In some of these reflections I stick quite closely to what others might be able to verify. In other pieces I have allowed myself to wander far afield – to dream into what I see and hear and feel. This dreaming is one way of presenting what Zen Master Kosho Uchiyama means when he says "Everything you encounter is your life." Each encounter is both meeting the eternal Other—what is always outside and unknown, and is also meeting ourselves in the particular form of the moment.

When I truly hear the hoarse call of the starlings on the birdfeeder, the calling and the hearing become one thing and I find my way into the world where "I" and the starlings are not as separate as it might appear.

At the heart of things, there is a truth that is always revealing itself. Whether we call it the Dharma, or God, or the universe, or aliveness—it is essentially ungraspable. In these writings, I use these names and others as a stand-in for this essence that can never be truly named. But though the true source of our lives is beyond words, we can surely know and come to rely on this mysterious truth.

All of us have had moments, however brief, when we catch a glimpse of the beauty and wonder that surrounds us, that is us. The smell of petunias on a clear June morning, the spontaneous hug of a toddler, the notes of a melody that resonate in our deepest heart, the loving eyes of a friend. In these moments nothing more needs to be said. A smile appears, our eyes brim with tears, we nod in silent recognition.

What we long for is always present, hiding in plain sight. Every situation we encounter contains the truth of our existence. Utterly reliable and always ungraspable, we are never separate from this mysterious aliveness.

My hope is that these reflections will remind you of what you already know and awaken your heart more deeply to the luminous possibility inherent in each moment of every life.

Book Review

Zen Master David Rynick's *This Truth Never Fails: A Zen Memoir in Four Seasons.*

By Rev. Dr. Judith E. Wright

David Dae An Rynick Roshi has written a beautiful book, *This Truth Never Fails*, published by Wisdom House, in 2012. The book is delightful to read, as well as insightful in relating the personal events of David's daily life as a Zen teacher, life coach, husband, and friend to the Zen path. As a Zen practitioner, David is a Zen teacher authorized in two lineages, a Korean Linji lineage and a Japanese Soto one. He is a founding teacher of The Boundless Way Zen, and is the Abbot of the Temple in Worcester, Massachusetts, where he lives with his wife, Melissa Myozen Blacker Roshi who is also a Zen teacher.

In addition, David is a Unitarian Universalist, and past President of the Unitarian Universalist Church of Worcester, Massachusetts. David and Rev. James Ishmael Ford, UU minister in Providence, Rhode Island, and also a founding member of Boundless Way Zen, were our two main teachers for our last UUBF Convocation, held in the spring of 2011. Fortunately for me, I got to know David a little through this experience, as well as visiting him at his Zen Temple in Worcester.

This Truth Never Fails is a Memoir written over the course of a year. It is divided into four sections, based on the four seasons. In the short introduction, David tells us of his connection with Buddhism at an early age in his twenties. He discovered that *what is most precious and most sacred is right here, all we have to do is turn towards it.* (p. 1) As a young man, David longed for connection, and discovered through Buddhism a way of being *lovingly held in a vast and luminous web of aliveness.* (p. 2) This book is a collection of David's stories about being fully alive within such a luminous web of existence.

This collection of stories was written over a period of a few years, but organized for this

book into the cycle of the seasons within one year. Aware of the role of perception and interpretation in what he has written, David quotes Zen Master Kosho Uchiyama: *Everything you encounter is your life.* (p. 4) Thus, these wonderful vignettes from David's life are the intersection of David's internal world with what is happening outside of himself.

As Unitarian Universalists, we have six sources of our faith. One of them, *the direct experience of that transcending mystery and wonder, affirmed in all cultures, which moves us to a renewal of the spirit and an openness to the forces that create and uphold life* is quite similar to David's statement (p. 4) that

at the heart of things, there is a truth that is always revealing itself. Whether we call it the Dharma or God or the universe or aliveness, it is essentially ungraspable.

This is the Truth that never fails. David's stories remind me of the famous Indian fable of *The Blind Men and the Elephant*. As each blind man touches a different part of the elephant, he declares that he has, indeed, discovered what an elephant is. "An elephant is a rope," declares one man, who is holding onto the elephant's tail. No, no, says another. "An elephant is a tall wall." as he touches the side of the elephant. Of course, none of the blind men ever really grasps what a true elephant is like. Similarly, when we attempt to say what is God, or what is Truth or what is Dharma, we have, as humans, only part of the answer. David's stories gives the reader a glimpse into the mystery of what is – of the beauty, wonder, awe as well as the griefs and sorrows of life, available if we would but look and see and hear and touch and smell what is really around us.

The book begins with the summer season. Let me just give you a small taste of this book by lifting up some parts of this section, Summer. Common themes arise in David's writing that abound in life. For example, in this section he write about learning to trust the deeper flow of "what is" and letting go of fear or about deep, wrenching sadness & grief over letting go of a long held pastime and noting the impermanence

of life's constant, onward flow. He tells in another story of a time of halting and stopping when too much is happening at once, and learning to rest in the unknown for a while. It is during the summer season that David and his wife Melissa purchase the Zen Temple in Worcester, and he writes lovingly about his relationship with her, as she suggests to him that car noises that irritate him could be perceived as lovely "waves."

In a precious story, *Fear and Faith*, a story most of us will identify with, David writes of packing up his earthly belonging, and deciding what to take with him and what to let go of. He discerns that the real issue is one of fear vs. faith: what really sustains him are not the material things he enjoys, but *some aliveness and generosity that has no fixed form*. (p. 24) He acknowledges that he moves between awareness of such faith, and feelings of fear and tightness, and accepts that this, most likely will be the case for the rest of his life. And he will continue to strive towards what is *most true, most alive* in his life. It is such clear honesty and personal sharings that make this book such a treasure.

David has a humorous streak in his writing that comes well to light in his story "The Invisible Dog."

Envious of those who have dogs, and go outside regularly for walks, David invents an "invisible dog" that he takes with him on his walks outside. He walks slowly with his canine friend, who needs to stop and smell along the way. It is enough to be outside, with the sun on his back, enjoying the late summertime. And he knows that he and his invisible friend belong on those familiar roads, enjoying the sights and the sounds.

I highly recommend that you read this book. Savor its pages. Read it slowly. It will lift up your spirits, as well as provide you with teachings found in every day existence that will help you remember to tap into what is most important in life – a truth that is not graspable totally, but glimpsed through such wise, luminous stories such as those that David has written in this book.



Judith Wright is the President of the UUBF.

Non Harming and Addiction

By Julie Roehm

In his book *Stride Toward Freedom*, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. outlined six principles of nonviolence. Included among the six are the ideas that: nonviolence or non harming is a way of life for courageous people, violence of the spirit is to be avoided as well as external violence, and that the joining together of the courageous ones, the "Beloved Community", is the framework of the future. Creating the Beloved Community is a worthy goal and one that can be arrived at with diligence in working with those principles.

To begin to connect as a community, it is necessary to be aware of and involved in healing our addictions. On March 30, at UUCA, Dr. Therissa Libby gave a presentation on addiction and non harming, sponsored by the Mindfulness Practice Group. Part of the evening also included a period of guided meditation with the use of "gathas", or guiding phrases focused on the awareness of the grasping, addictive habit patterns and the choice that can be made to react in a non harming way with awareness and healing. After meditation, Dr. Libby spoke on the principals of non harming and self forgiveness, offering examples from daily life and personal anecdotes.

From the perspective of a person acquainted with the recovery process and the courage needed to face addiction in a non violent way, the evening was refreshing and healing. It seemed, in fact, to be a microcosm of the concepts of the "Beloved Community": courage in facing the potential violence of the spirit caused by addiction and the development of non harming on a personal level. Perhaps this is another way to "carry the message to the still suffering..." (AA Big Book).

Both Julie Roehm and Therissa Libby sit with the Mindfulness Practice Group of Annapolis. Therissa is a neurobiologist and owner of the T.A. Libby Group, providing training in addiction science for health care providers. She is an addiction science author and educator, a student of mindfulness and Buddhism, a person in long-term addiction recovery, a member of the UU Addictions Ministry Team, and a UUCA Lay Minister.

Book Review

Booked!: A Review Essay of “High Concept” Portraits of Us, Hooks in Our Mouths

By Phyllis Culham

Anneli Rufus. *Stuck: Why We Can't (or Won't) Move On*. New York: Penguin, 2008. 328 Pp. \$23.95 Hb.; Winifred Gallagher. *Rapt: Attention and the Focused Life*. New York: Penguin, 2009. 224 Pp. \$24.95; Joe Palca & Flora Lichtman. *Annoying: The Science of What Bugs Us*. Hoboken: John Wiley & Sons, 2011. 262+x Pp. \$29.95 Hb..

Dawn Steel, the first female head of a major film studio, Columbia Pictures, notoriously pioneered the “high concept” film: that which could be pitched in a single sentence. Among the bookish this has been further refined: that which can be pitched in a single word in bright typography on the dust jacket. These books are presumably featured on NPR and in Salon because these words describe the human condition. They identify things which blind us to the Third Noble Truth so we can't see that there is a way out of suffering. These three volumes share a number of common features: they explicitly engage with mindfulness by examining the consequences of our attempting to navigate a rapidly changing world on autopilot; they confront the consequences of our handing over more and more of our attention to e-gadgetry; and they echo the first Noble Truth in contrasting our lives of unprecedented affluence and comfort with increasing expression of dissatisfaction and depression. They also demonstrate a trend of both more respectful attention to Buddhist or Buddhist-derived solutions for suffering simultaneously with increasing reliance on science on the chosen issues.

Anneli Rufus has been the reviewer's heroine since her publication of *Party of One: The Loners' Manifesto* in 2003. Rufus suggests that people may become stuck in a past, which feels

safe if only because it seems understandable, or in what some readers of this publication may call habit energy, or in dependence on [attachment to] something or someone, or in the present, this last in a section of the book disappointing in its very partial understanding of Thich Nhat Hanh. As Rufus says, “In all of history, no population anywhere has ever been so free as we. And yet—somehow we all feel stuck....A lucky few are fully alive in the present, respecting the lessons of the past, yes, but forever facing forward. The rest of us envy their realism.” Rufus unwittingly recommends practice with the Five Remembrances in describing how “...the past becomes more magnetic...” as we become more ill and experience losses. (Pp. 2,9) One can sympathize with Rufus' suggestion that “religion's liturgy and lore” are double edged in that they provide authenticity and a sense of continuous support from charismatic teachers from the past, but they were culturally crystallized “long ago and far away” and may contribute to a longing for an imagined past (not necessarily a benign failing in current politics.) Rufus evokes the “Dharma bums” of the Beat Generation who depicted Zen as “exoticism” and “name-dropping” to claim lineage or at least authenticity, while falsely claiming it as a license for sex and drugs in the guise of self-discovery. Rufus herself claims that it is possible to “be stuck in the present” by falling from being into wanting felt as needing, into consumerist gratification.

This present also offers the dangers of consumer electronics. Rufus notes, “If the most prestigious marvel is the fastest marvel, speed will matter most. ...Patience atrophies and becomes obsolete.” (67) This reviewer certainly loses touch with the third paramita, kshanti, patience, most when she expects instant rewards and perfect performance from the next pad, the 7.0 upgrade, the chip. Rufus excuses her, “American culture itself, its values and commodities and methodologies seems calculated to induce those symptoms...” (68) Unfortunately, the chapter goes awry when Rufus, never sympathetic to that which she considers newagey, misunderstands Charlotte Joko

Beck's "There is no past, there is no future, there is nothing but this," and refers to "the mainstreaming of mindfulness brokers" including Thich Nhat Hanh, whom she also misunderstands. (72, no citation to Beck) Rufus claims that only monks, babies, and criminals can actually live completely in the present moment, because they force the rest of us to plan and provide for them. She actually seems to believe that it would be news to Thich Nhat Hanh, survivor of the Vietnam War, that "Danger is always lurking." (73) The reader can agree that we have contracted out our perceiving to cameras and community to e-vites and still wish that such an astute author had read Thich Nhat Hanh thoroughly before writing about the Present Moment.

On the third theme, satisfaction decreasing in proportion to increasing consumption and affluence, Rufus asks (while actually using the term "habit energy!") "Is it any wonder that we act like a nation of addicts?" She claims that we MUST have habits as well-worn grooves in the brain—how long would it take us to tie our Nikes while following a diagram? Rufus offers an often astute critique of the simple "disease" model of addiction, while insisting that it can only exist in the presence of a failure of character; she believes the disease model is frequently an excuse not to act to preserve the self and others. This is written in apparent ignorance of identifiable brain vulnerabilities to addiction on which we have ever more information,¹ just as we now have more information on genetic differences in vulnerability to trauma-induced stress, which Rufus also associates with weakness of character or will, although she has looked at some studies of trauma and the brain and does not deny the existence of PTSD.² Nonetheless, Rufus unwittingly echoes Thich Nhat Hanh in a secular conclusion that therapies which encourage rumination on the past are not nearly as successful as inculcating confidence in personal capacity not only to change but to help others. The final words in this often anti-Buddhist book go to Rufus' friend, Leigh, identified as a judge in Alabama, "We get stuck

in intolerable situations often precisely because we resist them."

Gallagher's Rapt does indeed advance us more than the one year reflected in the copyright dates, yet it opens with a tiny but rich quotation from William James, "My experience is what I agree to attend to." [no p., no citation to James] Gallagher practices what she speaks of, claiming that she began to study attention in childhood when she noticed its effects on behavior. This book resulted from "the biopsy from hell" showing that she had "a particularly nasty, fairly advanced" cancer. Leaving that medical appointment, she "had an intuition of a highly-unusual blue-white clarity. This disease wanted to monopolize my life..." She vowed resistance. (3) In short, Gallagher is a mindful writer on behavioral science and a practitioner of work with attention.

Gallagher makes it clear that we'd better join her, at least in that second pursuit, or we'll run into trouble in all three of the issues in this review essay: being hijacked by our autopilot, the false promise of e-gadgetry, and the rising tide of depression in the midst of affluence: "As the expression paying attention suggests, when you focus, you're spending limited cognitive currency that should be wisely invested, because the stakes are high. ... Your attentional system selects a certain chunk of what's there, which gets valuable cerebral real estate and, therefore, the chance to affect your behavior. Moreover, this thin slice of life becomes part of your reality, and the rest is consigned to the shadows or to oblivion." (9)

She respects Buddhist and other remedies much more than does Rufus, noting "...most new strategies have a 'back to the future' quality derived from their origin in meditation, secularized and made amenable to scientific study. These cognitive regimens can strengthen attention and improve well-being and are both free and safe." (11) She is aware of the temptations of e-gadgetry but believes that tradition can triumph over new challenges, "It's the fashion to blame the Internet and computers, cell phones and cable TV for this diffused, fragmented state of mind, but our seductive

machines are not at fault. The real problem is that we don't appreciate our own ability to select and create truly satisfying experience. "

Consequently, Gallagher presents evidence that "mindfulness meditation" can change the brain itself, because, as Richard Davidson, neuroscientist, says, "Anything that changes behavior changes the brain." (69) Subsequent pages present impressive evidence that focus on the breath in meditation alters the effects of, within genetic and other parameters, basic temperament and deep cultural conditioning. Shifting attention from the self to what the reviewer would call mindful listening demonstrably reduces "unhappiness" amidst the material environment, if only, at the simplest level, by interfering with "self-referential rumination" and getting us off our own "story." (84) Gallagher also notes that practitioners can usefully take awareness off the breath into open awareness meditation with excellent results. (160) Gallagher does concede the complexity and difficulty of transition from the "evaluative, remembering self" to an experiencing (being) self. (122) She is also concerned about surveys of how much time young brains are engaged with multiple media, viewing multitasking as the danger presented by the "alluring machines," She worries that multitasking "encourages" "shallow focus," in which processing "information is superficial at best," leaving the young unprepared to experience a complex world. (154-5)

Readers of the *UU Sangha* will be especially interested in Gallagher's conclusion resting on both Transcendentalism and Buddhism. She quotes Emerson and Thoreau, and then says:

More than a thousand years before Americans started...scanning the meditative brain, Buddhism had turned attention into an art and a science. Indeed, like William James, Buddha was a profound psychologist and philosopher whose insights grew out of a dark personal epiphany: no matter who you are, you and everyone you love must endure pain, sickness, aging and death. (205)

She concludes, "The world's most beautiful garden might as well be an asphalt parking lot if you pound through it while barking into your cell phone." (216)

Most recently, Palca and Lichtman come at cell phones from the opposite point of view: aversion rather than attachment. They say, "Everyone is annoyed by something. Many of us are annoyed by lots of things. ... At the top of the list is that most convenient of modern conveniences, the cell phone..." (3) How does such dissatisfaction in the face of convenience and affluence arise? Answers include habit energy (not their term) in that humans are hard-wired to predict the speech of others, and cell phones annoy us with their attention-hooking partial data; and they are a trial to patience, and impatience seems intrinsic to the experience of being annoyed. (In case the reader is wondering if annoyance is simply a feature of the Poison of anger, its scale seems to be unrelated to that of anger. Disgust seems most closely related. (42))

The duo of annoyance experts note that, "Some of us are better than others at paying attention only to the things we want to pay attention to." (23) Although the authors don't mean to justify mindfulness practice, readers may be interested to note their discussion of "hedonic reversal" in which immersion in an experience causes it to be experienced as a pleasure rather than a pain (this from studies of why we love chili peppers, which activate pain sensors.) The brain may even start producing opioid painkillers in response to literally painful or emotional experiences, as a benefit of staying with that experience. (29-38) Some things, however, only become annoying with "cognitive overlays," meaning that we add to our experience by interpretation of the event as rude or ill-intended, another factor on which mindfulness might work. For instance, people experience very different degrees of aversion depending on how smells are labeled, e.g., whether they are told that a smell comes from an aged parmesan or vomit. (70-1) The authors further note that we experience distraction from our intended focus as annoying, (81) making

the rise of annoyance a sort of bell of mindfulness, in the reviewer's terms. The authors' recommendation is "cognitive restructuring" in which the sufferer is urged to engage in greater awareness of the total situation rather than his own aversion and to see how the annoyance may be useful, e.g., insects swarm the diamond during a professional baseball game. The pitcher, instead of calling repeatedly for inadequate bug spray, could have focused on how the batter with bugs in his eyes could not possibly have hit any pitch thrown at the height of the problem. (88-8) The authors invoke one of the reviewer's very favorite movies, *What About Bob?*, a wonderful catalog of annoyance, to point out that annoyance always reveals more about the annoyed than about the experience. In the end the psychiatrist proves less resilient than the seemingly hapless Bob. Suffering seemingly disproportionate to the occasion may arise in those diagnosed with depression who often interpret beyond their actual experience in the bleakest way.

Not surprisingly, by 2011 the part of the brain which unleashes annoyance had been identified: the dorsal anterior cingulate cortex, part of the limbic system in the forebrain. It "switches you from autopilot mode into active attention mode," so you go into a "heightened state of alertness" and "can't tune them [annoyances] out." This alert response to certain stimuli is strengthened by repeated exposure. Stress too heightens the propensity to be annoyed. Oxytocin reduces stress and increases empathy, and there are significant genetic differences in oxytocin receptors, yet studies of stress, empathy, annoyance and oxytocin have barely begun. What the authors conclude is that "you become annoyed in your mind." The conclusion offers some Buddhist perspectives yet only as channeled by William James. He does not precisely reflect the Abhidharma, but there is room to hope that after James' first and second steps, 1. We perceive something and 2. Our bodies react, that practice with attention may enable us to use mindfulness at step 3: Our minds become aware of the experience of emotion.

All these volumes address common UU interests in engaging ways, encourage healthy personal growth, and can be used to build dialogues among readers of the *UU Sangha* and other UUs.

Notes

¹E.g., such recent references as Thomas J. H. Chen, "Neurogenetics and Clinical Evidence for the Putative Activation of the Brain Reward Circuitry by a Neuroadaptagen: Proposing an Addiction Candidate Gene Panel Map," *Journal of Psychoactive Drugs*; Apr-June, 2011, Vol. 43 Issue 2, p108-127; Karen D. Ersche, "Abnormal Brain Structure Implicated in Stimulant Drug Addiction," *Science*; Feb., 2012, Vol. 335 Issue 6068, p601-604; Nora D. Volkow, "Addiction Circuitry in the Human Brain," *Annual Review of Pharmacology & Toxicology*; 2012, Vol. 52 Issue 1, p321-336.

² 2008 as Rufus' book appeared new work on PTSD and the brain accumulated too. The next year saw Michael S. Jaffee, & Kimberly S. Meyer, "A Brief Overview of Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) and Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) Within the Department of Defense," *Neuropsychologist* Nov. 2009, Vol. 23 Issue 8, p1291-1298. Most recently: interspecies studies of the mammalian brain and traumatic stress, with, yes, rats: Robert Adamec, Mate Toth, Jozsef Halasz, Jacqueline Blundell, "Activation patterns of cells in selected brain stem nuclei of more and less stress responsive rats in two animal models of PTSD – Predator exposure and submersion stress," *Neuropharmacology* Feb. 2012, Vol. 62 Issue 2, p725-736.



Phyllis Culham is one of the facilitators of the Mindfulness Practice Group of Annapolis, along with her husband, the Editor.

A Fallen Sparrow

by John Sanger



I walked alone, along the road.
My path, it shined; it almost glowed.
But lying there upon the ground,
A fallen sparrow I had found.
Its feathered form no longer gay,
Why was he chosen to die this day?

I stood there in the noonday sun,
My feet reached out as if to run.
But still they stood, locked to the ground,
My hair turned gray, my back bowed down.
My eyes grew dim; I strained to see:
That fallen sparrow – it was me.

I realized just then and there,
I am no place, yet everywhere.
I am the sun and a grain of sand,
I am the touch of a loving hand.
With loving-kindness for our part,
We all connected heart-to-heart.

SAVE THE DATE!

**The UUBF
Biennial Convocation
will be April 5–7, 2013,
Near Baltimore
at the Pearlstone
Retreat Center,
Reisterstown, Maryland.**

**Watch for registration
information on the
UUBF home page.**

www.uubf.org



**Our guest teacher
will be Tara Brach!**



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Return Service Requested

UU Sangha Spring 2012

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**Don't forget the UUBF Convocation, April 5-7, 2013,
near Baltimore at the Pearlstone Retreat Center,
Reisterstown, Maryland.**

Our guest teacher will be Tara Brach!