

Contemplative Lawyering
Spring 2010 Syllabus
Mondays 3:30 pm – 5:20 pm in Zief 3
University of San Francisco School of Law
Professors Judi Cohen, Rhonda Magee and Tim Iglesias

Text: There is no assigned text for the course. All assignments will be provided either on the TWEN website or as handouts.

Course Requirements: The class will be pass/fail. You will be expected to attend all classes (including being on time); to participate in class activities and discussions; to complete all assignments (including assigned reading and turning in journal entries on time); to make a sincere effort to develop a contemplative practice; and to be faithful to class commitments (as defined by the class)

Class Description and Overview: The course is divided into three parts: three classes of introduction, nine classes on particular topics, and two classes for closure. The class will expose you to the contemplative practices of a variety of wisdom traditions (both religious and secular) in order to encourage you to develop your own contemplation practice. This will, in turn, assist you in honing many essential lawyering skills, including reading and analysis; counseling and negotiating; and advocacy, both in and out of the litigation context. These essential skills require the underlying abilities to focus without distraction; respect and empathize with clients and colleagues; listen and explain with open-mindedness and patience; problem-solve creatively; facilitate productive communication among adversaries; deal safely and constructively with conflict; engage in honest and fearless self-awareness; and pursue alignment of the practice of law with our values. Once you have begun to develop your own contemplation practice you will be asked to use that practice, supported by critical reading and class discussions, to develop these underlying abilities. Development of these abilities will in turn support your attainment of essential lawyering skills in a manner conducive to practicing law as thoughtful, grounded, collected, and moral people.

Course Objectives:

- *Knowledge:* You will obtain knowledge of a variety of contemplative practices, develop proficiency in using at least one contemplation practice, and obtain direct experience in the application of the contemplative mind to a life in the law. You will also gain wisdom from your experience, and tools for the application of that wisdom to the practice of law.
- *Skills:*
 - You will develop a capacity to perform a variety of traditional and contemporary contemplative methods and practices
 - You will develop a capacity to apply contemplative practices to traditional lawyering skills and to reflect on these experiments
- *Values:* You will develop a capacity to use contemplative practices to explore, clarify, rediscover/recover and ground yourself in your ethics and values and to honor them in your legal practice

TWEN website: Please register at the class TWEN website using an email address that you check frequently. We plan to use the TWEN website for the following purposes: distribute assignments; offer optional enrichment materials; communicate with you; and enable you to share poems, quotes, music, links or other resources with us and your classmates.

Assignments:

January 11: What is Contemplative Lawyering?

January 18: No class: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

January 25: Exploring Contemplative Practices

February 1: Connecting Contemplative Practices to a Life in the Law

February 8: Communication

February 15: No class: President's Day

Tuesday, February 16: (Administrative Monday): Emotions

February 22: Habits & Patterns

March 1: Balance & Body

March 8: No class: Spring Break

March 15: Power, Conflict & Competition

March 22: Forgiveness

March 29: Discernment

April 5: Love

April 12: Engagement

April 19: Closure Part I

April 26: Closure Part II