



AWAKENINGS

Consciously Linking Humanity Through Presence, Dialogue & Collaboration

Service: Movement in the Making

Bill Bolling, Executive Director of the Atlanta Community Food Bank

As I write this article I have just returned from Washington, D.C., where we celebrated National Hunger Awareness Day with the first-ever interfaith service at the National Cathedral. It was an exceptional gathering of national and local hunger leaders along with 37 heads of faith from every major tradition. Over 1,500 people filled the Cathedral. We came together from all over the country to celebrate our common work and challenge the status quo that allows hunger to exist at unacceptable levels across the country and the world.

During the service, children brought different types of bread to the altar, symbolically representing all the hungry people of the world. With dancers, drummers, singers, music, prayers and words of inspiration, it was an evening that for the first time represented a unified voice against hunger. Speaker after speaker urged us to create a hunger movement that demands an answer to an issue that can and must be solved in our lifetime.

As hundreds of hunger fighters remained in Washington to lobby on Capitol Hill on the morning of June 7th, I returned to Atlanta to participate in our own interfaith service. We, along with members of Faith Alliance of Metro Atlanta and local leaders of every faith, convened at Atlanta's historic Ebenezer Baptist Church to hear Archbishop Wilton D. Gregory deliver the keynote address.

Later in the day we continued to raise awareness before 25,000 fans at Turner Field with Atlanta Braves Pitcher John Smoltz, Publix Super Markets Vice President Bob Moore, USDA Deputy Undersecretary Kate Coler and Governor Sonny Perdue, who proclaimed National Hunger Awareness Day in Georgia. Similar activities were taking place in hundreds of cities across the nation. The issues of hunger and poverty were being held up for all to see.

During the Food Bank's recent capital campaign we

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About Bill Bolling

Bill Bolling is the founder of the Atlanta Community Food Bank and has served as its Executive Director since 1979. In this capacity he oversees the distribution of over 15 million pounds of good but unmarketable food each year through nearly 800 local and regional nonprofit organizations that feed the hungry. He is a frequent speaker on topics related to hunger, poverty, regionalism and public policy reform. His skills in bridging various public sectors have made him a leader in strengthening the community to serve those most in need.

To read more about Bill Bolling, visit http://www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=bio&display=16&category=01--Board_of_Directors

Bill can be contacted at: bbolling@afcb.org

promised our supporters we would distribute more food, be more effective in our work and more responsive to those we serve. At the end of any capital campaign there comes that moment of truth when it's time to put our promises to work. In the seven months since we moved into the new facility, we are amazed by how well our new home is working to help us deliver those promises. We continue to receive strong affirmations from the community, and we have the tools we need to move forward. At this time, we are beginning our next five-year strategic planning process.

But new facilities, new technology, new systems, even new strategies – however well intentioned – will not, on their own, end hunger. It will take courage, hard work and – not patience, but impatience. We will have to create a discomfort with a status quo in which one in five of our children lives in poverty. We need more people feeling compassion for the pain of a hungry child or the anguish of a parent who can't provide.

All faith traditions call us to feed the hungry, to take care of the health and welfare of our children. All faiths call us to personal responsibility for our thoughts and actions. As Jim Wallis from the Sojourners Community so clearly points out in his new book, *God's Politics*, there are more calls in scripture to feed the hungry and take care of the poor than any other requirement of faith. I believe this is a personal responsibility that must be carried out by each of us in our own way.

Even as we celebrate National Hunger Awareness Day we face the possibility of major cuts in the Food Stamp program and health care for our children. We have to ask ... if the economy is doing as well as our political leaders tell us, why would we be cutting feeding and health care programs for our children? Why would we be cutting veteran's programs in the middle of a war? Why would we be cutting affordable housing programs when the need is growing?

As we continue to debate about whose responsibility it is, hungry families and children wonder where their next meal will come from. The pain and suffering of the hungry cannot be the legacy our generation leaves behind. We are a greater people than that. We have the resources – we know too much and have come too far to declare that the job is too difficult to complete.

If we are to create a movement to end hunger, we will have to believe that it is actually possible. It will have to come from the grassroots community, where all movements begin. And it will have to stand on the

From the Editors . . .

In this, our second issue of *Awakenings*, we highlight the subject of Awakened Service. **Jurate Calise**, in her article on *Bearing Witness as Personal Service*, reminds us of our many daily opportunities for serving others by sharing awakened presence. **Bill Bolling**, Director of the Atlanta Community Food Bank, draws attention to the enormous worldwide need to feed the hungry. **Noor Johnson** describes two service organizations with which she has had direct experience, and explores ways that Universal Awakening may assist members by supporting their service in such groups. Local UA Chapter facilitator **Diane Weiner** reports on the two groups in Corpus Christi, TX and gives examples of their work with service. Finally, in the second installment of our series on UA Board members, we introduce **Reb Zalman Schachter-Shalomi** and review highlights of his lifelong devotion to service.

It is hoped that this issue will inspire and encourage all of us to explore opportunities for service which await us in our own communities, and to support others in their efforts through Universal Awakening. We would love to hear of your own experiences in this regard, so keep in touch!

shoulders of society as a whole. People from all walks of life must discover the courage and find the resources to sustain the work against the cynics and hard of heart.

It will have to begin, continue and end with us.



Editor's Notes: This article can also be found on the Universal Awakening web site at:

<http://www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=articles&category=03--Service>

Listen to an interview with Bill Bolling on the UA podcasts at: http://www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=articles&display=102&from=0&category=01--Audio_Podcasts

*A growing archive of interesting and informative articles can be found at **The Meeting Place** on the UA web site. Included are writings by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, Shams Kairys, Pir Zia Inayat Khan, David Spangler, Alex Grey, Himayat Inayati, Donald Weiner, and Aostre Johnson.*

Bearing Witness

As Personal Service

By Jurate Calise

Within the everyday moments of our lives, there are countless opportunities to serve our fellow beings. A phone call responded to with timely courtesy, helpful availability when a favor is requested, extra attention to details at work, volunteer activity within the community – all these are forms of service. But what distinguishes such ordinary service from “awakened” service? One might consider any of these activities as having the potential to be awakened service.

It is the *intention* that is essential to inspiring the wakeful aspects of service. Awakened service can be something as simple as bearing witness, which means being fully present when someone needs to be seen or heard or touched with compassion. By striving continually to make “conscious attention” a part of all interactions, one becomes increasingly aware of and sensitive to the more subtle needs of another, whether that person is a friend, a family member, or someone who briefly enters one’s field of concern. Through this willing orientation to sincere presence, a wonderful habit of “personal service” can emerge.

Of course, such awakened personal service does require a level of natural sincerity which prompts a genuine desire to be present to the other and to be of service in whatever capacity is reasonably possible. Without sincerity, or the engagement of the heart, service can simply be the fulfillment of a sense of

service can simply be the fulfillment of a sense of duty ... just another job or responsibility.

Personal service also brings the sense of willingness into the equation. If service is a required or forced action, due to whatever obligation, then the element of free will is minimized, shifting the focus away from inspired presence and into the arena of others’ expectations.

Perhaps this is no small practice for us to sustain – constantly renewing the sincere and willing act of bearing witness as personal service. But the feelings of kindness, peace and good will that may be engendered, and the resulting feelings of connectedness and of caring, are all gifts both given and received within the heart as we share our awakened presence with another.

In its purest form, bearing witness can be a silent expression of universal love, given and received.



“Let the beauty you love be what you do. There are hundreds of ways to kneel and kiss the ground.” These words by Rumi provide inspiration for Jurate Calise. As a lover of fine textiles and hand-crafted artistry, she works as a purveyor of beauty, serving the extended community by importing wearable art. Her frequent travels offer many opportunities to bear witness through “conscious attention” and to share in spontaneous sacred dialogue. Jurate and her husband live in Rhode Island, and she serves on the board of directors for Universal Awakening. She can be reached at JurateC@cox.net.

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or the engagement
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Awakening Through Service

By Noor Johnson

If the fundamental idea behind Universal Awakening is that everyone can awaken to a deeper level of connectedness in life and a deeper intimacy with the sacred, then perhaps the most powerful vehicle for awakening is service. There are many service oriented organizations around the world that use service as a vehicle to bring people together and break down barriers, expanding the horizon of participants' consciousness to include a sense of fellowship and belonging with people different from themselves.

Two examples that I can speak to from my own experience are the Sarvodaya Shramadana movement in Sri Lanka, and City Year, a nonprofit I work with that is headquartered in Boston, with 16 locations across the U.S. and a branch in South Africa.

Sarvodaya is Sri Lanka's largest NGO, with local membership societies in villages across the country. Their work is diverse, ranging from basic development projects such as construction of schools, village health centers, etc., to youth service groups and peace building efforts aimed at bringing an end to Sri Lanka's 20(plus)-year civil conflict. Since the founding of the organization in the 1950s, one of their signature programs has been what they call *shramadana*, meaning "to give labor". In a *shramadana*, members of a community come together to conduct a project that will benefit the community – building a road, digging a well, or building houses for poor community members. In villages that are multiethnic or multi religious, *shramadana* is a way to join hands and hearts for the collective good. Some *shramadana* are explicitly organized to bring together people from different ethnic groups – a group from a Tamil village in the North may be brought to do a *shramadana* with Sinhalese villagers in the South, for example. Through Sarvodaya's pioneering service model, *shramadana* – originally a Gandhian term – has become a household word in Sri Lanka.

City Year is one of the largest youth service organizations in the United States and is part of AmeriCorps, the domestic Peace Corps program initiated by President Clinton. Every year, more than 1,200 young people in cities across the country choose to do a "City Year". Selection criteria emphasize the importance of diversity – every City Year "corps" (each location has its own "corps" of varying sizes, ranging from 25-200) has to meet diversity requirements. Corps members are then assigned to teams of 10-12, and each team is assigned a school in which to serve, mentoring and tutoring children.

diversity requirements. Corps members are then assigned to teams of 10-12, and each team is assigned a school in which to serve, mentoring and tutoring children. Teams are assembled based on diversity. One of the overarching goals of City Year is that young people learn to work together and to overcome the barriers of race and class that are so difficult to transcend in everyday situations.

Service, then, can be transformative. Human society teaches us that we belong to certain identity groups – I am American, not South African. I am white, not black. I am middle-class, not poor, not rich. Alan Khazei and Michael Brown, the cofounders of City Year, like to say that service is the only vehicle besides the military that brings people together across all social boundaries by asking them to work for a cause larger than themselves. In the process, our sense of belonging to one group or another loosens and our identity widens. We see our interconnectedness.

So – if service is a vehicle for awakening, then how do we begin? In my own life, what I struggle with the most is not *that* I should serve, but rather *how* I should serve.

St. Francis of Assisi's famous prayer begins, "Lord, make me an instrument of thy peace." And the Sufi teacher, Hazrat Inayat Khan, taught his followers to pray, "Use me for the purpose that thy wisdom chooseth." More and more it seems that we are turning and reorienting towards these prayers. The good news for those of us who live in Europe and the United States is that there is now a great deal of social support for service. The nonprofit sector is the fastest growing sector in the United States. Entire organizations are dedicated to matching the skills and interests of would-be volunteers with the specific needs of community organizations. Some forward-thinking companies like Timberland are creating programs for their employees that allow them to take paid time off in order to volunteer. So – there are many opportunities to serve. And, as we all know just from reading the newspaper or watching the news or even walking out the front door of our houses, there is a great need for service.

But one challenge that many of us encounter is the question of how to be fulfilled through the service that we do. Marshall Rosenberg, the founder of Non-violent Communication, has said that the greatest

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Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi

Doctor of Hebrew Letters



Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, better known as “Reb Zalman”, is the father of the Jewish Renewal and Spiritual Eldering movements and a foremost authority on Hasidism and Jewish Mysticism. In keeping with his conviction that every spiritual tradition is “a vital organ of the planet, supporting the health of the others”, Reb Zalman has engaged in ecumenical dialogues with other spiritual leaders throughout the world, including the widely influential dialogue with the Dalai Lama, documented in the book, *The Jew in the Lotus*. The many books he has written include *Wrapped In a Holy Flame: Teachings and Tales of the Hasidic Masters*; *Jewish with Feeling*, written with Joel Segel; and *From Age-ing to Sage-ing: A Profound New vision of Growing Older*, written with Ronald Metler.

Reb Zalman was raised primarily in Vienna and fled the Nazi oppression in 1938. A traditional hasid of the Lubavitcher Hasidim, he was ordained a rabbi in 1947, received his Master of Arts degree in the Psychology of Religion in 1956 from Boston University, and a Doctor of Hebrew Letters degree from Hebrew Union College in 1968. He taught at the University of Manitoba, Canada, from 1956 to 1975 and was Professor of Jewish Mysticism and Psychology of Religion at Temple University until 1987. In 1995, he accepted the World Wisdom Chair at Naropa University in Boulder, Colorado, officially retiring from that post in 2004.

From the early 1960s, Reb Zalman addressed himself to the masses of disaffected Jews who found their own religious tradition bereft of spiritual depth in the wake of the Holocaust. Today, Jews the world over wear the “rainbow tallit” (prayer shawl) he designed. His latest area of exploration has given rise to his most recent book, *From Age-ing to Sage-ing* (see above), in which he writes of elderhood not as a time of slow decline, but as “a time of unparalleled inner growth having evolutionary significance.” He describes spiritual elders as “seers who feed wisdom back into society.” Reb Zalman is such a seer and sage, and we are grateful to have his participation as an Advisor to Universal Awakening. You can read his article on the UA web site at <http://www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=articles&display=6&from=0> and learn more about his work and the work he inspires at <http://www.yesodfoundation.org/rebzalman.html>.

Noor Johnson, continued from page 4

human need – even higher than the need for food, shelter, etc. – is the need to feel that we are of service to others in some way. If this is true, then it becomes of vital importance to be able to understand the impact that our service has on the whole; to connect our service to a larger vision. Many of us serve others in large and small ways on a daily basis, but unless and until we make a connection between the service we do and a vision of something greater and better, then our need to feel that we are of service may not be met. To put it another way, we may not awaken as deeply to our own potential to make an impact on others, on the world, through physical, emotional, and spiritual connection.

Perhaps this is where Universal Awakening comes in. I believe that there is a need to evolve community in support of the many ways – large and small – that we

serve and that we desire to serve. This community may develop specific practices to help each of us to see and understand the ways that we already serve, and to assess where our talents, gifts and greatest potential to serve may lie. Another aspect of UA may be to help us make connections between our own actions and the larger vision of peace and justice that we hold, rooted in the belief that life is an expression of the sacred.

I look forward to working with those who may have a similar vision to begin to develop this community in Universal Awakening.

Noor Johnson is a graduate student in anthropology at American University, where she is investigating pluralism, violence, and the role of culture in peace building and development. She is a member of the Universal Awakening Board of Directors. Her expanded bio can be found at the UA web site.

Understanding Payment Options

Technology, the current frontier at UA, is proving to be somewhat challenging for many people who interface with Universal Awakening. The web site offers the option of making payments through PayPal, which is a very secure way of making payments.

A second option is available for those who prefer not to use PayPal for making donations or payments for workshops and classes. If you enroll online using our shopping cart, your registration information is handled in a secure manner and comes directly to the UA office, **not to PayPal**. We will process all credit cards through our store, "Light of the Mountains Bookstore" rather than through PayPal. Automatic monthly payments can also be handled in that manner.

If you do prefer not to use the computer at all for making payments, you can fax your information to the UA office at **828.683.1219**. The best time to fax is prior to 10:00 am or after 2:00 pm (EST). Just dial up on your fax and hit "Send".

UA Wake-up Calls

AWAKENINGS will be published every two months, and we're including these reminders for your consideration between issues. This will help us to limit the number of e-mail notices we send each month.



- Make your **monthly pledge** to UA: www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=shop
- Consider taking a **personal retreat** at Light of the Mountains. For more information, contact Nur Fryar: **828.683.1219**; office@universal-awakening.org
- Do you have family or friends who would **enjoy receiving AWAKENINGS**? Send their email address (with their permission, of course) to us at: office@universal-awakening.org

Love cannot remain by itself - it has no meaning. Love has to be put into action, and that action is service.

~ Mother Teresa

Upcoming Podcasts

The next podcast will be a conversation with **Roger Nelson, from the Global Consciousness Project (GCP) at Princeton University**. Building on years of laboratory experiments, Roger began using random event generator (REG) technology in the field to study effects of special states of group consciousness. This led naturally to the GCP, which is designed to register indications of a coalescing global consciousness responding to major world events such as 9/11, the beginnings of war, or New Year's Eve.

Join us at **The Meeting Place** on the UA site (see link below) to learn more about this fascinating project in awakening and consciousness:

<http://www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=articles>

Online Classes

The Universal Awakening **Online Classes** provide opportunities to experience another mode of spiritual learning and direction – a way of the future. These classes offer an exciting forum for interacting with other students from around the world, and also include personal time with the teacher via phone.

Current classes began June 1st. You will have another opportunity to register for an online class in the Fall.

Support Someone Special

Support Someone Special is the opportunity to make a \$5 donation each month or one time donation of \$60 to Universal Awakening in honor of someone special in your life. This person will receive a card from you each month for one year, prepared and mailed from the UA office, with a meditation for the month. It is a good way to acknowledge a special occasion, such as a birthday or Father's Day, or to offer support to someone who is having a challenging time in life.

To participate in the **Support Someone Special** program, please follow the link here and fax or mail the form to the Universal Awakening office. Donations to **Support Someone Special** will be processed by the Universal Awakening office directly via Light of the Mountains Bookstore and not through PayPal.

www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=shop&display=Outreach

Updates from Local Chapters

Editors' Note: As local UA chapters form and organize themselves, reports on their activities will be included in this column. For information about how to create a UA chapter in your area, contact: office@universal-awakening.org

Corpus Christi, Texas

Diane Weiner

“What did you think of the answer Himayat gave to your question last weekend?” I asked one member during a recent meeting of our local Tools for Awakening chapter. “Actually,” the member responded, “I can’t remember what he said.”

Recalling the content of Himayat’s question led into a discussion of how important it is to involve our sense of the sacred in our healing – that merely facing our problems is not enough. We practiced breathing into our hearts as a way of accessing the sacred, and from that point of view we reviewed any problems in our lives, which now seemed different from that new perspective.

This story illustrates one of the purposes of a local chapter, namely that of reviewing and practicing techniques taught to us by Himayat or other teachers in UA. We find that as we address our personal concerns in a group, many members can share and learn together.

Our two local groups in Corpus Christi were formed primarily from participants in recent Raphaelite Work or Universal Awakening workshops here. Others were members of our church or Sufi group and friends referred by any of the above. One group meets during the day at our home and another one meets in the evening at our church.

At the most recent meeting of the second group, one woman spoke of the pain she feels as she deals with the poor health of her parents. When friends have tried to help by offering unsolicited advice (which felt, to her, like more pain), she has found it helpful to reply simply, “I just need you to hold me in my pain.” We discussed how heavy the load of all that pain on top of the original pain can be, and contrasted it with this woman’s feeling of lightness as she shared her experience with the Tools for Awakening group. This discussion provided a concrete example of how we can extend sacred space to others.

A third meaningful learning experience came from a meeting of the Friday group in January at which I had

set the focus for us to discuss how we can take what we have learned in UA to other groups we attend. A woman illustrated how she had brought a sense of expectation and belongingness to the Alcoholics Anonymous meeting she attended. She said that everyone there felt that the group somehow created a sacred space in which people could see things differently.

In summary, the goal of our groups is to provide a place and time for members to share experiences of how we use tools for awakening in our lives. For the future, I plan to suggest opportunities for members of our groups to interface with more diverse groups and to share those experiences with each other as we feel called to do. Don and I attended a workshop at the local Hindu temple and will bring this experience to our groups soon. I will report more stories in future issues.

Diane Weiner is a member of the Universal Awakening Board of Directors. She can be reached at RavaniRah@aol.com

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WELCOME
TO

THE UA CAFÉ

Introducing – *drum roll!* – a new feature of *Awakenings*: **The UA Café**. Imagine a warm and cozy meeting place where friends enjoy stimulating conversation while sipping good, hot coffee (or tea, if you must). As we return time and again to enjoy our favorite brew, the café and its staff become familiar, even as the patrons and the information they bring are constantly changing.

Our hostess, **Cathy Oberg**, who lives in Seattle (home of great coffees and teas), will “serve up” a menu of specials in each issue. In her words, they will be “books, web sites, events, radio stations, and more – all relating to awakening”. We hope that as you enjoy what Cathy has to offer, it will inspire you to offer some suggestions of your own. Then the UA Café will become a most interesting place to share awakened conversation about what we’ve all been reading, viewing, etc. Enjoy!

- ◇ **Entangled Minds**, a groundbreaking new book from Noetic scientist Dean Radin. Has the potential to create a major paradigm shift in science, as it demonstrates that not only are psychic effects real, but they can be accounted for with a theory of bio-entanglement – a parallel to quantum entanglement.
- ◇ **God Without Religion: Questioning Centuries of Accepted Truths**, a new book by Sankara Saranam, examines the past effects of organized religion and offers more direct avenues to knowledge of God for the present and future. More info at www.godwithoutreligion.com

- ◇ **Check out DailyOM**, the daily source for nurturing your mind, body & spirit. Every weekday, DailyOM will turn you on to ways to make your life happier, less stressful, more fulfilling, and will provide you with tools to stay centered in our hectic world. You can sign up for your free daily email at <http://www.dailyom.com>

Thanks for visiting! Send your UA Cafe contributions to:
cathyoberg@earthlink.net

Universal Awakening Events

All events are facilitated by Himayat Inayati unless otherwise noted.

Check the UA web site for calendar updates at www.universal-awakening.org/index.php?page=calendar

Contact the UA office for more information on events or to schedule an event in your area.

Phone: 828.683.1219 □ **Email: office@universal-awakening.org**

June 6 - 11, 2006

Ghost Ranch Retreat Center
Abiquiu, New Mexico

**Awakening in the Desert: A Five-Day
Retreat Led by Himayat Inayati**

July 3 - 8, 2006

La Salindre, Southern France

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship

For more information, contact Munira Johne:

Sabine.Johne@nwn.de

September 15 - 17, 2006

Bothell Washington

The Raphaelite Work:

A Course In Spiritual Healing

Registration: office@universal-awakening.org

Information: www.raphaelitework.org

September 30 - October 1, 2006

Rhode Island

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship

October 14 - 15, 2006

Gainesville, Florida

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship

October 28 - 29, 2006

Asheville, North Carolina

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship

November 10 - 15, 2006

Essen, Germany

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship

For more information, contact info@institut-ibis.de

December 1 - 3, 2006

Corpus Christi, Texas

Sacred Dialogue – Sacred Relationship