I envision that the Mind & Life Institute can best serve when we endeavor to remove silos — institutional, disciplinary, methodological, and geographic — and close the academic/applied chasm. With a spirit of genuinely coming together and collaboratively digging deeper, I believe that we can better understand the mind and human behavior, and identify meaningful solutions to complex issues that matter in the world.

Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD
President, Mind & Life Institute
Welcome to the 14th annual Mind & Life Summer Research Institute!

You are participating in a signature program of the Mind & Life Institute, bringing together nearly 150 scientists, scholars, contemplatives, students, professionals, teachers and practitioners, all engaged in applied work.

In a rich and intimate retreat-like setting, all of us will dive together into topics related to contemplative sciences, and we will listen to and learn from one another, considering different perspectives, while engaging in contemplative practices each day.

My own introduction to Mind & Life came 10 years ago as a Summer Research Institute participant, so I know firsthand how deeply transformative this experience can be. I am especially excited that this year’s program integrates foundational aspects of my vision for Mind & Life: increased diversity and inclusion, global outreach, ethics, and relevance to contemporary real-world matters.

It’s inspiring to see the tremendous interest and participation from an increasingly diverse cohort of applicants. This year we had a record 352 applicants, representing the most diverse population in the history of the gathering. 40% came from underrepresented groups, and 35% came from 22 different countries outside of the Unites States. Due to generous support from the Hershey Family Foundation, 52 attendees received travel scholarships. Additional funding provided 19 full registration scholarships to outstanding young investigators from international and underrepresented backgrounds. Indeed, we are making great progress in expanding the Mind & Life community and improving racial, ethnic, geographic and institutional diversity.

This year’s theme, “Intersubjectivity and Social Connectivity,” addresses fundamental issues related to ethics and how we relate to ourselves, to others, and to community and strangers. We live in a time of paradox when we are super connected technologically, yet we feel increasingly disconnected and disenchanted. We will explore these topics, including the science of implicit bias and how our social and cultural histories shape individual and collective well-being. We will also discuss new research findings on interconnectivity of mind and health, and empathy and compassion and their cultivation through meditative practices. Woven throughout, we will pause and reflect on our first-person experiences and shine a light on relevant social justice issues.

I am grateful to so many individuals who have made this Mind & Life Summer Research Institute possible: the Program Planning Committee for their tireless efforts creating the excellent program; the outstanding faculty for giving their time and sharing their remarkable work; the Mind & Life staff who have carefully managed all the details with integrity and skill; the Mind & Life board of directors for their enthusiastic support; the Garrison Institute for their warm hospitality; and our dedicated donors whose generosity sustains our work and makes it possible for us to have meaningful impact on many levels.

Kind regards,

Susan Bauer-Wu, PhD
President, Mind & Life Institute
The purpose of the Mind & Life Summer Research Institute is to advance collaborative research among scientists, scholars of the humanities, and contemplative practitioners, based on a process of inquiry and dialogue. With this unique program, we are nurturing a new generation of scientists interested in exploring the influence of contemplative practice on the human mind, behavior, brain function and health, and we are fostering the development of nascent research fields collectively referred to as “contemplative sciences.”

The aims of contemplative sciences are to advance our understanding of the human mind and how training the mind through the use of particular contemplative practices can lead to a reduction in suffering, enhanced health and cognitive/emotional functioning, greater happiness, and increased social justice. Work within contemplative sciences — deriving from Dialogues between the Dalai Lama and distinguished scientists, philosophers and scholars — has integrated the rigorous methodologies of science with the philosophical and experiential insights into mind and mental training that were developed by contemplative traditions.

Within the umbrella of contemplative sciences, there is contemplative neuroscience, contemplative clinical science, contemplative education and contemplative scholarship.

Contemplative neuroscience is a field focused on understanding changes in brain function and structure that are related to contemplative practice, and it is grounded in research on neuroplasticity, which holds that the brain flexibly changes in response to experience and training of various kinds, including contemplative practices. Such methods can be conceptualized as forms of physical and mental training that lead to the development of specific kinds of self-regulatory skills and dispositions including mindfulness, compassion, and the cultivation of altruistic well-being.

Contemplative clinical science is concerned with systematically and rigorously evaluating the physical and mental health effects of interventions derived from the practice of
contemplative techniques. The rate of publication of randomized, controlled clinical trials of contemplative-based interventions has accelerated significantly in the past decade, and has focused on a wide range of physical and mental health conditions.

Contemplative education has emerged from the growing belief that a high-quality education should not only cultivate the intellectual skills of students, but should also nurture the development of positive human traits such as self-awareness, social and emotional intelligence, care and compassion; and it works to find ways of fostering these elements in various school settings.

Contemplative scholarship, although long established within humanities disciplines such as history, philosophy and religious studies, has only more recently begun to interact collaboratively with researchers and practitioners in the contemplative sciences. The early results of these collaborations indicate great promise for our understanding of the importance of culture, historical context and conceptual frameworks in the relationships between contemplative practice, experience, biology, culture and behavior.

**The specific goals of the Summer Research Institute are:**

- **TO CULTIVATE STRATEGIC DIALOGUE** between neuroscientists, clinical scientists, other scientists of mind and behavior, humanities scholars and contemplative scholars/practitioners to develop new research collaborations that explore the mind from an integrative perspective, including first-, second- and third-person approaches, and the effect of contemplative practices on mind, behavior, brain and health.

- **TO CREATE A CONTEXT** for this dialogue that embodies a contemplative orientation via meditation and yoga instruction, daily contemplative practice periods, a full day of silent contemplative retreat and a closing reception.

- **TO FOSTER A NEW** generation of nascent scientists (graduate students and postdocs) and contemplative scholars and practitioners interested in innovation and collaboration in research into contemplative practices.

- **TO CATALYZE THE FIELD** of contemplative sciences, focusing on the study of how contemplative practices engender effects on brain, mind and behavior, and how these effects are conditioned by culture, history and other contextual variables.

- **TO EXAMINE AND TRAIN** in emerging methods and best practices, future opportunities and challenges within the contemplative sciences.
The 2017 Mind & Life Summer Research Institute gives attention to scientific, humanistic and first-person contemplative perspectives on intersubjectivity and social connectivity. Plenary presentations, workshops and small group discussions explore interrelational human dynamics, including how we relate to ourselves and others, and to community and strangers. Faculty from across a multitude of disciplines present research findings on the meditative cultivation of pro-social emotions, intergroup dynamics, social and embodied cognition, cognitive ecology, implicit bias and social justice. We examine how these experiences are embodied in the brain, nervous system and cellular health. By deepening inquiry through this weeklong interdisciplinary exploration, we investigate ways in which social and cultural histories shape the mind-body complex, subjective and collective values, beliefs, and purpose in life. Discussions will highlight scientific research on the interconnectivity of mind and physiological health, as well as environmental and technological influences on interpersonal connections and social cognition. Training workshops engage participants in facilitated trainings on critical issues in transdisciplinary research methods as well as social diversity and inclusion in the contemplative sciences.

Schedule and Format
The week provides an immersion into theoretical frameworks, networking, hands-on collaborative work and contemplative practice. Participants engage in lectures and discussion that explore the theme as well as periods of guided contemplative practices (both formal sitting practice and movement practices including yoga and t’ai chi). Morning sessions consist of two plenary lectures with brief Q&A. Afternoon sessions include another plenary lecture facilitated small-group breakout sessions, and time for open discussion. At the midway point of the week, we come together for a day of silent meditation. During this silent retreat day, contemplative faculty guide participants through practices that integrate their first-person knowledge with themes being explored, interspersing meditation sessions with free time for personal reflection. This weekly schedule is designed to foster a balance between the intense academic activity and direct engagement with contemplative practice.

Locations
All events are held in the Main Hall, except for the breakout sessions which are held in the side rooms; and the following events which are held in the Lower Auditorium: morning yoga, evening t’ai chi and poster sessions.
Pictured: Mycorrhizae, the symbiotic relationship that forms between fungi and plants.
PROGRAM
SCHEDULE

DAY 1
MONDAY, JUNE 5
2:00 – 6:00 PM Arrival and Registration
6:00 – 7:00 PM Dinner
7:30 – 8:30 PM Opening Session and Orientation
8:30 – 9:00 PM Meditation
10:00 PM – 8:15 AM Silence into breakfast

DAY 2
TUESDAY, JUNE 6
6:00 – 7:00 AM Yoga | CATHERINE SHADDIX
7:15 – 8:00 AM Meditation
8:00 – 9:00 AM Breakfast
9:15 – 9:30 AM Introduction & Announcements
9:30 – 10:20 AM The Enactive Approach to Cognition | EVAN THOMPSON
   This lecture will give an overview of the enactive approach to cognition, according to which
cognition is a mode of embodied action. The implications of the enactive approach for
understanding intersubjectivity, social cognition and contemplative practice will be explored.
10:20 – 10:40 AM Q&A
10:40 – 10:50 AM Break
10:50 – 11:40 AM The Other as Part of the Self: Empathy, Understanding and Support | JIM COAN
   High-quality social relationships help us live longer, happier and healthier lives — facts that
hold true, as far as anyone knows, regardless of geography or culture. Although links between
relationships and health have been observed for decades (if not millennia), the mechanisms
responsible for them remain speculative. In this talk, Jim Coan will first describe his work on one of
these potential mechanisms: social regulation of the brain’s response to perceived threat. Next, he
will offer a perspective — derived initially from social regulation results — that integrates the study
of social relationships with principles of behavioral ecology and cognitive psychology to propose that
the people who make up our social networks can be construed by the brain as bioenergetic resources
available to the self. Because of this, proximity to social resources economizes both current and
predicted cognitive and bodily effort, a process that can diminish subjective stress, improve health
and prolong life.
11:40 – Noon Q&A
12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch
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<tr>
<th>Time</th>
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<tr>
<td>1:00 – 1:30 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<tr>
<td>1:30 – 2:00 PM</td>
<td>Advancing Prosocial Interactions on Facebook Through Interdisciplinary Research</td>
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<td>PETE FLEMING</td>
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<td>Pete Fleming has built a multidisciplinary research team at Facebook, responsible for studying social interactions and developing products to make Facebook a safer and more supportive space for people to connect with others. The team is made up of researchers from a wide range of disciplines, including social psychology, clinical psychology, human-computer interaction, sociology, demography, anthropology and public health. Through collaborating closely with academics and practitioners, they seek to build on existing information and contribute to the advancement of scientific knowledge. Pete has become an expert in team-building and facilitating collaboration between researchers from different disciplines. His presentation will focus on how building a multidisciplinary research team at Facebook has elevated their work on social connectivity including, for example, emotional responses, gratitude, social support and bullying.</td>
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<td>2:00 – 2:55 PM</td>
<td>Interdisciplinary Panel</td>
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<td>Social Networks: Intersubjectivity, Connectivity and Technology</td>
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<td></td>
<td>PETE FLEMING, DAVID SBARRA AND TANIA SINGER</td>
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<td>Moderated by Elissa Epel</td>
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<td>This panel will examine the growing role of social media and handheld technology uses in various relationships, individual and group health, intergroup dynamics, and its effects on prosocial behavior. Panelists will discuss the opportunities, misbeliefs and dangers of increased connectedness through technology, with reflections on current research findings and will raise important questions for future research on technology, extended mind and relationships.</td>
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<td>2:55 – 3:15 PM</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>3:15 – 3:30 PM</td>
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<td>3:30 – 4:30 PM</td>
<td>Plenary Workshop</td>
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<td>What Roles Do Inclusivity and Social Justice Play in Contemplative Science?</td>
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<td>RHONDA MAGEE AND PETER GROSSENBACHER</td>
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<td>In this interactive session, Rhonda Magee and Peter Grossenbacher will guide reflection on the meanings of inclusivity and social justice from a contemplative studies/sciences perspective, and examine some of the theoretical, practical and ethical implications for the field. The session will invite infusion of inclusivity and social justice commitments in the development, design and methodology, interpretation, dissemination and application of results.</td>
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<td>4:30 – 4:45 PM</td>
<td>Q&amp;A</td>
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<td>4:45 – 5:00 PM</td>
<td>Break</td>
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<td>5:00 – 6:00 PM</td>
<td>T’ai chi</td>
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<td>6:00 – 7:00 PM</td>
<td>Dinner</td>
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<td>7:00 – 8:30 PM</td>
<td>Poster Session I</td>
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<td>8:30 – 9:00 PM</td>
<td>Meditation</td>
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<td>10:00 PM – 8:15 AM</td>
<td>Silence into breakfast</td>
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WEDNESDAY, JUNE 7

6:00 – 7:00 AM  Yoga  |  CATHERINE SHADDIX
7:15 – 8:00 AM  Meditation
8:00 – 9:00 AM  Breakfast
9:15 – 9:30 AM  Announcements
In the last decades, plasticity research has suggested that training of mental capacities such as attention, mindfulness and compassion is effective and leads to positive changes in socio-affective and cognitive functions. Tania Singer will show first results of the ReSource Project, a large-scale multi-methodological one-year secular mental training program in which participants were trained in attention-based mindfulness, compassion and perspective taking on self and others. She will especially focus on introducing novel forms of intersubjective mental training performed with another partner aiming at boosting social closeness and interconnectedness. She will then argue for the differential effects of mindfulness-based as compared to socio-affective and socio-cognitive practices on outcomes such as attention, compassion, Theory of Mind, altruism as well as social stress and autonomic body regulation. She will then discuss those findings with regard to their relevance for contemplative neuroscience and society.

10:20 – 10:40 AM  Q&A
10:40 – 10:50 AM  Break
10:50 – 11:40 AM Interdependency: the Buddha’s Central Insight  |  WILLIAM WALDRON
This presentation will outline the Buddha’s basic approach to understanding our cognitive processes, focusing on dependent arising or radical interdependency. William Waldron will discuss the factors involved in the dependent arising of cognitive awareness and the co-arising of our “world” as first articulated in the early teachings. He will then present how these basic analyses were elaborated in Indian Abhidharma and Yogacara traditions. The Yogacaras argued that many of these cognitive processes occurred nonconsciously and were deeply influenced by language and concepts, which are imminently social phenomena. These deeply inform the nonconscious, collective construction of our common “world.” The constructive processes that bring about this “world” are, however, deeply hidden, leading us to falsely imagine it is an accurate view of reality. We can, though, “wake up” from our collective slumber through proper analysis and insight, a process articulated in the Yogacara concept of the Three Natures.

11:40 – Noon  Q&A
12:00 – 1:00 PM  Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 PM  Break
1:30 – 3:15 PM  **Training Workshop: Engaging Transdisciplinary Research**  
(SEE FRIDAY 1:30 PM FOR INFORMATION ABOUT PART II)  
This hands-on workshop is designed to train participants in general principles and best practices of collaborative transdisciplinary research in the contemplative sciences. Participants engage in exercises that raise critical questions and probe the importance of collaborative research processes that involve first, second and third-person perspectives. Particular attention is given to principles of transdisciplinary work, such as (a) including multiple disciplines and areas of expertise, (b) identifying shared research interests and questions across disciplinary perspectives, (c) relinquishing certainty about possible outcomes, (d) fostering circumstances for the emergence of new knowledge, and (e) recognizing what is not known and holding the question. The workshop will discuss methodological considerations, interpersonal and organizational opportunities, and common challenges encountered. Participants are guided through small group exercises, which continue outside the workshop, and conclude with reflections and feedback from workshop leaders during the second day.

**Part I – Transdisciplinary Research**  
LED BY EVAN THOMPSON AND LIS NIELSEN  
Moderated by Elizaveta Solomonova and Michael Lifshitz  
The first of two training workshops will explore the best practices and general principles of collaborative, transdisciplinary research. Participants will hear from current researchers in the contemplative sciences, who will discuss methodological considerations and interpersonal and organizational opportunities and challenges commonly encountered. Participants will be guided through small group exercises, which will continue outside of the workshop and conclude during the second transdisciplinary training on Friday.

3:15 – 3:30 PM  **Break**  
3:30 – 4:45 PM  **Breakout Sessions**  
5:00 – 6:00 PM  **T’ai chi**  |  PETER WAYNE  
6:00 – 7:00 PM  **Dinner**  
7:00 – 7:20 PM  **Mind & Life Grant Funding**  |  WENDY HASENKAMP  
7:20 – 8:30 PM  **Presentations from Varela Grantees**  
8:30 – 9:00 PM  **Meditation**  
10:00 PM – 8:15 AM  **Silence into breakfast**
THURSDAY, JUNE 8
SILENT RETREAT DAY

CONTEMPLATIVE FACULTY: THUPTEN RINPOCHE AND JESSICA MOREY

Silence will be observed from 10:00 PM on Wednesday until 8:15 AM on Friday.

This full-day, mini-retreat includes guided meditations for those new to meditation practice as well as for more seasoned practitioners, and includes periods of sitting and walking meditation. The silent day will provide an opportunity to practice “phenomenology on the cushion” and to observe and learn from our own first-person experience.

6:00 – 7:00 AM  Yoga  |  CATHERINE SHADDIX
7:15 – 8:00 AM  Meditation
8:00 – 9:00 AM  Breakfast
9:30 AM – Noon  Contemplative Practices
12:00 – 1:00 PM Lunch (Silent)
1:00 – 1:30 PM  Break
1:30 – 4:45 PM  Contemplative Practices
5:00 – 6:00 PM  T’ai chi  |  PETER WAYNE
6:00 – 7:00 PM  Dinner (Silent)
7:00 – 7:30 PM  Break
7:30 PM – 9:00 PM Contemplative Practices
9:00 PM – 8:15 AM Silence into breakfast
FRIDAY, JUNE 9

6:00 – 7:00 AM  Yoga | CATHERINE SHADDIX

7:15 – 8:00 AM  Meditation

8:00 – 9:00 AM  Breakfast

9:15 – 9:30 AM  Announcements

9:30 – 10:20 AM  STEMing the Tide: How Female Experts and Peers Foster Social Connections and Serve as "Social Vaccines" to Protect Young Women’s Self-Concept in STEM | NILANJANA DASGUPTA

Individuals’ choice to pursue one academic or professional path over another may feel like a free choice but it is often constrained by subtle cues in achievement environments that signal who naturally belong there and who don’t. What factors release these constraints and enhance individuals’ real freedom to pursue academic and professional paths despite stereotypes to the contrary? Nilanjana Dasgupta will present a decade-long program of research addressing this question in the context of young women’s confidence, persistence, and career aspirations in science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) in the face of subtle and sometimes not-so-subtle stereotypes casting doubt on their ability. Dasgupta’s research identifies people and environments that enhance social connections and function as “social vaccines” to protect women’s confidence and success in STEM despite negative stereotypes. Using these data, she will propose remedies that promise to enhance the recruitment and retention of diverse groups in STEM majors and professions.

10:20 – 10:40 AM  Q&A

10:40 – 10:50 AM  Break

10:50 – 11:40 AM  Love and Enaction: Towards an Engaged Epistemology | HANNE DE JAEGHER

How do we understand life and mind? For Kym Maclaren, understanding something means “letting it be.” We understand something only to the extent that we do not fully determine it. Understanding something wrongly can do an injustice to it. Imagine a horse trainer only interested in the money-making his animal can do; it will collapse before he knows it. Maclaren (2002) argues that we learn “letting be” through and with others. Also, in this understanding relationship, we, the knower, are the “let-be-er.” We participate in particular ways in the act of understanding. Not only the conatus (Spinoza) of the thing under scrutiny is at play, but also our own conatus. De Jaegher will present some of her investigations into how the enactive theory of intersubjectivity (De Jaegher & Di Paolo, 2007) can contribute to understanding the relationship between knower and known, by delving into some of the inherent tensions in love relationships.

11:40 – Noon  Q&A

12:00 – 1:00 PM  Lunch

1:00 – 1:30 PM  Break
FRIDAY, JUNE 9

1:30 – 3:15 PM  **Training Workshop: Engaging Transdisciplinary Research**  
(SEE WEDNESDAY 1:30 PM FOR PART I)  
**Part II – Transdisciplinary Research**  
LED BY CLIFF SARON AND WENDY WEBER  
Moderated by Elizaveta Solomonova and Michael Lifshitz  
Transdisciplinary training will continue the small group exercises from Part I on Wednesday. Participants will have the opportunity to discuss what emerged during the group activities — including successes and challenges — and receive feedback from workshop leaders.

3:15 – 3:30 PM  **Break**

3:30 – 4:45 PM  **Breakout Sessions**

5:00 – 6:00 PM  **T’ai chi | PETER WAYNE**

6:00 – 7:00 PM  **Dinner**

7:00 – 8:30 PM  **Poster Session II**

8:30 – 9:00 PM  **Meditation**

10:00 PM – 8:15 AM  **Silence into breakfast**
DAY 6
SATURDAY, JUNE 10

6:00 – 7:00 AM  Yoga | CATHERINE SHADDIX
7:15 – 8:00 AM  Meditation
8:00 – 9:00 AM  Breakfast
9:15 – 9:30 AM  Announcements
9:30 – 10:20 AM Social Connectivity, Mind States, and Biological Aging | ELISSA EPEL
   This lecture will review salient examples of social connectivity — in mood, mind states, and physiology. We will explore how different states or tendencies — biases toward threat appraisals, mind wandering, and engagement in the present, are related to social, psychological, and biological well being. Elissa Epel will focus more deeply on social influences on the biology of aging (telomere / telomerase maintenance system and inflammation) and discuss what we have learned so far from meditation interventions that examine impact on markers of biological aging.
10:20 – 10:40 AM  Q&A
10:40 – 10:50 AM  Break
   Close relationships provide a critical context for health. In this Plenary Session, David Sbarra will discuss the evolutionary basis of the relationship-health association, and in particular the central role of perceived partner responsiveness (PPR) as a key interpersonal behavior that maintains high-quality relationships. After reviewing research in this area, he will discuss a growing literature demonstrating myriad ways in which rapid advances in technology are (and have the potential to) disrupt the basic cognition and emotion processing capacities that are required for PPR and for healthy relationships in general. Throughout, he invokes the idea of a possible looming “evolutionary mismatch” between the modern technological context of relationships — in which attention is often fragmented and shallow — and the ancestral context for and from which many relationship behaviors evolved. How would we know if this mismatch is upon us? What are the potential consequences of this mismatch? Can technology itself prevent the mismatch? Sbarra will tackle some of the questions and suggest that psychological science has much to offer how we monitor humanity’s progress in this important area.
11:40 – Noon  Q&A
12:00 – 1:00 PM  Lunch
1:00 – 1:30 PM  Break
1:30 – 2:20 PM Intersubjectivity and Social Connectivity: Deepening the Work of Putting Contemplative Studies and Science In Context | RHONDA MAGEE
   In this Plenary Presentation, Rhonda Magee will explore means of furthering and deepening contemplative studies and science with awareness of particularity of contexts. She will offer thought and practice experiments grounded in reflections on intersections of Black Feminism and Contemplative Practice with the Phenomenology of the Racialized/Gendered Body as site(s) for disrupting patterns of reification, inequity and injustice.
SATURDAY, JUNE 10

2:20 – 2:40 PM    Q&A
2:40 – 3:00 PM    Break
3:00 – 3:55 PM    Interdisciplinary Panel
                  Human Relations: From Implicit Biases to Compassion for Strangers
                  JIM COAN, NILANJANA DASGUPTA AND HANNE DE JAEGHER
                  Moderator: Rhonda Magee
                  This panel will discuss and explore cross-cutting perspectives about interpersonal relationships and the interdependent forces that bind humans. The conversation will consider the range of human relations from implicit biases that inhibit inter-personal communication to spontaneous intimate relations with strangers. Panelists will discuss from both empirical and theoretical perspectives how human relations impact people at different levels, from their individual health and behavior to group dynamics to levels of systemic relations.

3:55 – 4:15 PM    Q&A
4:15 – 5:00 PM    Break
5:00 – 6:00 PM    T’ai chi | PETER WAYNE
6:00 – 7:00 PM    Dinner
7:00 – 8:30 PM    Dessert Reception and Social
8:30 – 9:00 PM    Meditation
10:00 PM – 8:15 AM    Silence into breakfast
DAY 7

SUNDAY, JUNE 11

6:00 – 7:00 AM  Yoga | CATHERINE SHADDIX
7:15 – 8:00 AM  Meditation
8:00 – 9:00 AM  Breakfast
9:15 – 9:45 AM  Closing Remarks
9:45 AM – Noon  Departure

"The Varela Award has given me the opportunity to finally begin to incorporate mindfulness practices into my research on early child brain and behavioral development. This is something I have been wanting to do for the last 10 years, but there was not a clear and viable option until now. I am very grateful to finally unite my research career with my genuine interest in mindfulness practices."

—Sarah Short
2013 Varela Awardee
The Mind & Life Varela Grants were established in 2004 as a companion program to the Summer Research Institute and have been a critical element in the growth of contemplative sciences. The Varela Grants support new research proposals, many developed through collaboration at the Summer Research Institute, which often do not qualify for traditional streams of funding. Funded projects emphasize empirical examinations of contemplative techniques with the ultimate goal that findings will provide greater insight into the mechanisms of contemplative practice and its application for reducing human suffering.

Since 2004, Mind & Life has distributed more than $2 million in funding to support junior scientists in these emerging fields. As a result of the Varela Grants, a significant increase in cognitive, behavioral, neurobiological and clinical findings are being published in top-tier, peer-reviewed scientific journals. To date, more than 195 scholarly articles have been published resulting from Varela Grant projects, and hundreds of scientific presentations have been given at conferences and special lectures. Further, these relatively small grants have been leveraged into more than $62 million in follow-on funding for grantees.

To be eligible for a Varela Grant, researchers must be graduate students, postdocs or junior faculty up to their third year of appointment, who have attended the Summer Research Institute within five years of their application. Grants are awarded through a competitive process with preference given to rigorous, interdisciplinary proposals that incorporate first-person contemplative methods into traditional cognitive, behavioral, physiological, clinical or socio-cultural research.

To find out more about the Varela Grants and previous grant recipients, please visit www.mindandlife.org/varela-grants/.

### 2016 Varela Grant Recipients

**Katherine Lenger**  
University of Tennessee, Knoxville  
*Is mindfulness only for the fortunate? The development and dissemination of a brief home-based mindfulness intervention to low-income couples.*

**Sara Lewis**  
Wellesley College  
*Navigating the end of life among Tibetans in exile: A transnational ethnographic study.*

**Jacqueline Lutz**  
Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School, Dept. of Psychiatry  

**Lauren Ministero**  
The University at Buffalo  
*An action phase model of compassion: Predictors and effects of helping goal commitment.*

**Sarah Priddy**  
University of Utah  
*The impact of a mindfulness-based intervention on opioid misuse during pregnancy: A mixed methods pilot RCT.*

**Joseph Therriault**  
McGill University  
*Investigating the impact of yoga on brain aging: A randomized controlled trial.*

**Noga Zerubavel**  
Duke University  
*Staying present: Developing an empirically guided mindfulness-based intervention for transdiagnostic dissociation.*
SUMMER RESEARCH INSTITUTE
FACULTY

**Jim Coan**  
*University of Virginia*  
James Coan, PhD (Co-Investigator) is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Virginia. His work seeks to uncover the neural mechanisms of emotion and social behavior, with an emphasis on neural systems mediating known links between social relationships and improved health. Dr. Coan’s work has been featured in Science, Nature, the New York Times, Time Magazine, NPR, the Today Show and other major media outlets. Dr. Coan received the inaugural Janet Taylor Spence Award for Transformative Early Career Contributions from the Association for Psychological Science, and the Award for Distinguished Early Career Contributions from the Society for Psychophysiological Research.

**Nilanjana (Buju) Dasgupta**  
*University of Massachusetts–Amherst*  
Nilanjana (Buju) Dasgupta is Professor of Psychology and the Director of Faculty Equity and Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts–Amherst. Her research is on implicit bias. Whereas past work had assumed that implicit bias is learned early in life and difficult to change, her research shows that such bias can be changed given the right social context. Recently, her work focuses on how implicit gender bias about science and engineering shakes the confidence of women and students of color in STEM. She identifies learning environments that foster social connection, inoculates students against negative stereotypes, and promotes their confidence, persistence and success in STEM. This work has been supported by grants from the NSF and NIH. She spends a good bit of time disseminating this research to broad audiences including K-12 teachers and administrators, university faculty and campus leaders, tech entrepreneurs, federal and state policy-makers, lawyers, judges and legal scholars.

**Elissa Epel**  
*University of California–San Francisco*  
Elissa Epel, PhD, is a Professor in the Department of Psychiatry, at University of California–San Francisco. She is the Director of the Aging, Metabolism, and Emotions Lab, and the Center for Obesity Assessment, Study, & Treatment, (COAST), Associate Director of the Center for Health and Community, and Associate Director of the NIH-funded UCSF Nutrition and Obesity Research Center (NORC). She studies psychological, social, and behavioral processes related to chronic psychological stress that accelerate biological aging, with a focus on the telomere/telomerase maintenance system. She also studies the interconnections between emotional processes, eating, and metabolism. With her collaborators, she is conducting clinical trials to examine the effect of self regulation and mindfulness training programs on cellular aging, weight (including during pregnancy), and parenting stress for parents of children with developmental disorders. She leads or co-leads studies funded by NIA and NHLBI, including a Stress Measurement Network, and a multi-campus center on obesity funded by UC Office of the President. She is involved in National Institute of Aging initiatives on role of ‘stress’ in aging, and on reversibility of early life adversity. She is a fellow of the Association of Psychological Science and Mind and Life. She is one the Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research Board, and the European Society of Preventive Medicine Board. Epel studied psychology and psychobiology at Stanford University (BA, 1990), and clinical and health psychology at Yale University (PhD, 1998). She completed a clinical internship at the Palo Alto Veterans Healthcare System and an NIMH postdoctoral fellowship at UCSF. Epel has received several awards including the APA Early Career Award and Academy of Behavioral Medicine Research Neal Miller Young Investigator Award.
**Peter Grossenbacher**  
**Naropa University**

After graduating from the University of California–Berkeley in mathematics and cognitive science, Peter Grossenbacher’s doctorate at the University of Oregon in experimental psychology focused on human electrophysiology and attention. His book, “Finding Consciousness in the Brain: A Neurocognitive Approach,” offers insights into the brain’s involvement in conscious experience. After researching multisensory attention and synesthesia at the University of Cambridge and the National Institute of Mental Health, he joined the Naropa faculty in 2000. A meditator since 1980, his research focuses on information processing during meditation, meditative development, and contemplative teaching. He trains scientists and educational professionals across a variety of settings in mindfulness-based pedagogies that support awareness, facilitate inclusion, and foster community.

**Hanne De Jaegher**  
**University of the Basque Country**

Hanne De Jaegher is a philosopher of mind and cognitive science. She is fascinated by how we think, work, and play — basically: live and love — together. For studying our rich social lives, she is developing the enactive theory of intersubjectivity, called participatory sense-making. Its concepts and empirical methods find application in, for instance, autism research and practice, psycho- and physio-therapy, education research, ethics, psychology, psychiatry, neuroscience, sociology, design, and the arts, and she works together with researchers in several of these fields. She received her D.Phil. from the University of Sussex, UK (2007). Currently, she holds a Ramon y Cajal Research Fellowship at the IAS-Research Centre for Life, Mind, and Society, Department of Logic and Philosophy of Science, University of the Basque Country.

**Rhonda Magee**  
**University of San Francisco**

Rhonda Magee is a graduate of the University of Virginia School of Law (JD) and Graduate School of Arts and Sciences (MA, Sociology). She is a full Professor of Law at the University of San Francisco, a teacher of Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction-based Interventions, and a student of Buddhism and other contemplative modalities, with a long-standing daily mindfulness and gratitude practice. She is a facilitator of mindful and compassionate communication. A Fellow of the Mind and Life Institute, she works with faculty in law and other disciplines who seek to develop contemplative pedagogy in support of effective learning, with a particular emphasis on teaching and learning for social justice. Her teaching and writing are inspired by commitments to compassionate problem-solving and presence-based leadership in a diverse world, and to humanizing education. She sees mindfulness and compassion practices as keys to personal, interpersonal, and collective transformation.

**David Sbarra**  
**University of Arizona**

David Sbarra, PhD, is a Professor of Psychology at the University of Arizona where he directs the Laboratory for Social Connectedness and Health. His research focuses on understanding why close relationships are so important for health as well as the psychological and biological consequences of ending relationships. He is the author of over 70 scientific research papers on these topics and has received grants from the National Institutes of Health and the National Science Foundation. In 2014, David received the prestigious Herbert Weiner Early Career Award from the American Psychosomatic Society in recognition of his contributions to the study of close relationships and health. David earned his Ph.D. from the University of Virginia and completed his clinical residency at the University of Oregon.
Wisconsin-Madison. He earned his undergraduate degree from Cornell University. He is a member and Fellow of the Association for Psychological Science (APS), and a member of the International Association of Relationship Research (IARR), the American Psychosomatic Society (APS), and the Society for Psychophysiological Research (SPR). In addition, he currently serves as President of the Academy of Psychological Clinical Science (APCS). David is a clinical psychologist by training, maintains a private psychotherapy practice in Tucson, and currently serves as Director of Clinical Training at the University of Arizona, where he teaches a graduate course in advanced cognitive behavioral therapy. Dr. Sbarra’s new e-book is “Love, Loss, and the Space Between: The Relationship Expert Essays.”

Tania Singer
Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences

Tania Singer is the Director at the Max Planck Institute for Human Cognitive and Brain Sciences in Leipzig since 2010. After receiving her PhD in Psychology at the Max Planck Institute for Human Development in Berlin, she became a Postdoctoral Fellow at the same institution, at the Wellcome Department of Imaging Neuroscience, and at the Institute of Cognitive Neuroscience in London. In 2006, she went to the University of Zurich as Assistant Professor and became Inaugural Chair of Social Neuroscience and Neuroeconomics and Co-Director of the Laboratory for Social and Neural Systems Research. Her research focus is on the foundations of human social behavior and the neuronal, developmental, and hormonal mechanisms underlying social cognition and emotions. She investigates the psychological and neuroscientific effects of mental training on brain, health, and behavior. Prof. Singer is the Principal Investigator of the ReSource Project, a large-scale longitudinal mental training study.

Evan Thompson
University of British Columbia

Evan Thompson is Professor of Philosophy at the University of British Columbia. He works in cognitive science, the philosophy of mind, phenomenology, and cross-cultural philosophy. His books include “Waking, Dreaming, Being: Self and Consciousness in Neuroscience, Meditation, and Philosophy” (2015) and “Mind in Life: Biology, Phenomenology, and the Sciences of Mind” (2007).

William Waldron
Middlebury College

William Waldron teaches courses on the South Asian religious traditions of Hinduism and Buddhism, Tibetan religion and history, comparative psychologies and philosophies of mind, and theory and method in the study of religion. His publications focus on the Yogacara school of Indian Buddhism and its dialogue with modern thought. Professor Waldron has been at Middlebury College since 1996. His monograph, The Buddhist Unconscious: The Alaya-vijñana in the Context of Indian Buddhist Thought, was published by RoutledgeCurzon in 2003. He is currently working on an introduction to Yogacara cognitive theory in relation to cognitive science.
CONTEMPLATIVE FACULTY

Jessica Morey
Inward Bound Mindfulness Education
Jessica Morey is the executive director, lead teacher and cofounder of Inward Bound Mindfulness Education (iBme), a nonprofit organization that offers mindfulness meditation retreats for teens, young adults and parents and professionals who work with teens. She has been leading retreats for ten years through iBme and with Against the Stream and Insight communities for the past five years. She began practicing meditation over two decades ago on teen retreats offered by the Insight Meditation Society (IMS) and then participated in the IMS young adult mentoring group for ten years. She is currently part of the IMS teacher training. She and the work of iBme were recently featured on the December 2016 cover of "Mindful Magazine" and she was interviewed on Dan Harris’ podcast "10% Happier" about her lifelong meditation practice and work with youth. Before joining iBme, she worked in clean energy and climate policy and finance. She holds a BA in Environmental Engineering from Dartmouth College and a master’s degrees in Sustainable Development and International Affairs. Her published works range from the chapter "Ordinary Awakening" in “Blue Jean Buddha” to "Conflict Resolution of the Boruca Hydro-Energy Project: Renewable Energy Production in Costa Rica." She wrote about the relationship between her climate policy work and Buddhism in “Bodhi Trees,” a review in "Shambhala Sun."

Thupten Rinpoche
Urgyen Samten Ling Gonpa
Lama Thupten Dorje Gyaltse Rinpoche (Jerry Gardner) has studied the Buddhist Dharma for over 45 years with an emphasis in the Long-ch’en Nying Thig tradition of the Nyingma sect and the Chokling tradition. In 1970 he began his formal training with Geshe Wangyal in New Jersey and with Lama Sonam T. Kazi in New York City. In 1988 Lama Thupten Rinpoche traveled to Nepal and became a disciple of the late Venerable Tulkus Urgyen Rinpoche. Over the past 27 years Lama Thupten Rinpoche has traveled annually to Nepal and India to study and do retreats with Chatral Rinpoche, Chokyi Nyima Rinpoche, Konchok Monlam Rinpoche, Tsoknyi Rinpoche, Dzogchen Khenpo Choga Rinpoche, Dupsing Rinpoche and Lama Dawa Rinpoche. Lama Thupten Rinpoche was ordained as lama in 1997 by the late Khenpo Thupten Oser Rinpoche of Ngayur Samten Chokhorling Institute in India and was recognized as Rinpoche in 2013 by Konchok Monlam Rinpoche and Dupsing Rinpoche. In 1993, under the guidance of Tulkus Urgyen Rinpoche, Lama Thupten Rinpoche established Urgyen Samten Ling Gonpa in Salt Lake City and is presently the resident teacher there. He is also a theatre professor at the University of Utah where he teaches dance, movement and theatre; and is master instructor of Wing Chun Kung-Fu, T’ai Chi Chu’an, and Qi Gong at his Red Lotus School of Movement in Salt Lake City.

Catherine Shaddix
Baywell Psychiatry Group
Catherine Shaddix began her training in Buddhist meditation and hatha yoga in 1991. She has studied with Tsoknyi Rinpoche for the past 14 years, and has received teachings from His Holiness the Dalai Lama, the Venerable Trulshik Rinpoche, and Nyoshul Khen Rinpoche. She has also trained in the Rinzai Zen tradition under Sasaki Roshi. Her primary yoga teachers are Richard Freeman and Mary Taylor, with whom she has studied the Ashtanga Vinyasa system since 1998. Catherine has conducted research at the UCSF Osher Center for Integrative Medicine, examining the long-term impact of the Mindfulness-based Childbirth and Parenting (MBCP) program. In 2013 Catherine was invited to design and is currently co-facilitating a mindfulness meditation and Ashtanga yoga program for the Baywell Psychiatry Group in San Francisco, CA. She is also completing her postdoctoral internship for
Peter Wayne
Harvard Medical School

Peter Wayne is Associate Professor of Medicine at Harvard Medical School (HMS) and Director of Research for the Osher Center for Integrative Medicine jointly based HMS and Brigham and Women’s Hospital. The primary focus of his research is evaluating how mind-body and related complementary and integrative medicine practices clinically impact chronic health conditions, and understanding the physiological and psychological mechanisms underlying observed therapeutic effects. He has served as a principal or co-investigator on more than 25 NIH-funded studies. He is also a committed practitioner and teacher of Tai Chi and Qigong, and author of the Harvard Medical School Guide to Tai Chi, which received an Award of Excellence in Medical Communication by the American Medical Writers Association.

Rick Hecht
Osher Center for Integrative Medicine

Rick Hecht is Research Director of the Osher Center, and Professor of Medicine at UCSF. He received his MD from SUNY Health Science Center at Brooklyn, and completed Internal Medicine residency at Montefiore Medical Center/Albert Einstein College of Medicine Residency Program in Social Medicine. He received training in clinical research methods during a fellowship in Clinical Epidemiology at UCSF. Following fellowship, Dr. Hecht developed a multidisciplinary research program investigating early (primary) HIV infection. He has served as co-director of the UCSF Center for AIDS Research Behavioral and Epidemiology core, a board member of the HIV Medicine Association, and an Associate Editor of “AIDS Clinical Care.” At the UCSF Osher Center, Dr. Hecht has built a research program that focuses on mind-body interventions, particularly meditation and yoga, using a psychoneuroimmunology approach to studying the effects of these practices on the endocrine, metabolic and immune systems. He is the author of over 200 peer-reviewed articles, and has been the principal investigator of eight grants from the National Center for Complementary and Integrative Health (NCCIH, formerly NCCAM) of the National Institutes of Health (NIH), including two Center for Excellence in Research on Complementary and Alternative Medicine grants. He directs the UCSF Training in Research in Integrative Medicine fellowship program, funded by NCCIH.

Pete Fleming
Facebook

Pete Fleming leads the Protect and Care Research team at Facebook. His team is responsible for studying social interactions and developing products to make Facebook a safer and more supportive place for people to connect with others. He oversees Facebook research projects that focus on social connectivity including, for example, emotional responses, gratitude, social support and bullying. Prior to joining Facebook, Pete was a Research Director at the University of Pennsylvania and co-founder of Invest in Knowledge, a nonprofit working in Sub-Saharan Africa to provide research services while building local research capacity. At the University of Pennsylvania he directed NIH grants studying social networks and health in Sub-Saharan Africa that were led by investigators from a sociology, psychology, demography, anthropology, medicine and public health. He has become an expert in team-building and facilitating collaboration between researchers from different disciplines, in academia and in industry, and how to conduct better science through collaboration.
**Louis Komjathy**  
*University of San Diego*  
Louis Komjathy is Associate Professor of Chinese Religions and Comparative Religious Studies at the University of San Diego. As a leading teacher-scholar of Daoism (Taoism), he has particular interests in contemplative practice, embodiment and mystical experience. He is also founding Co-chair (2010-2016) of the Contemplative Studies Group of the American Academy of Religion. He has published widely on contemplative practice and contemplative experience, both in Daoist contexts and from a comparative perspective. He is the editor of “Contemplative Literature” and the author of seven other books, including the forthcoming “Introducing Contemplative Studies.” Beyond his academic work, he has over twenty years of experience with holistic and integrated Daoist practice, including meditation. He is an ordained Daoist priest and the founding Co-director and senior teacher of the Daoist Foundation.

**Lis Nielsen**  
*National Institute on Aging*  
Lis Nielsen leads the National Institute on Aging’s Individual Behavioral Processes Branch, which supports behavioral, psychological and integrative biobehavioral research on the mechanistic pathways linking social and behavioral factors to health in mid-life and older age. She examines aging processes across the full life course, including early life influences on later life outcomes, as well as research on behavioral and social processes in midlife that play a causal role in shaping trajectories of aging. Her own portfolio supports transdisciplinary research in affective science, health psychology, and life-span developmental psychology. She coordinates NIA research initiatives on midlife reversibility of risk associated with early life adversity, conscientiousness and healthy aging, socioemotional influences on decision-making, and stress measurement. She serves on the Implementation Team for the trans-NIH Science of Behavior Change (SOBC) Common Fund Program, which promotes a mechanisms-focused experimental medicine approach to behavior change intervention design.

**Hal Roth**  
*Brown University*  
Hal Roth is Professor of Religious Studies and the founding director of the contemplative studies initiative at Brown University. Most of his published research is in Chinese philosophy and textual analysis; his particular interests have been in the classical Daoist traditions of meditation and cosmology. He has also led efforts to develop the academic field of contemplative studies and was instrumental in creating the first undergraduate concentration program at a major research university in North America. He has published six books and more than 50 scholarly articles in these areas including *Original Tao* (Columbia, 1999), a translation and analysis of the oldest text on breath meditation in China, and “Against Cognitive Imperialism” (Religion East and West, 2008), a critique of Eurocentric conceptual biases in Cognitive Sciences and Religious Studies. He led a team of four scholars who translated the 139 BCE Daoist compendium, the Huainanzi (Columbia, 2010).
Cliff Saron
University of California–Davis

Cliff Saron is a Research Scientist at the Center for Mind and Brain and MIND Institute at the University of California–Davis. He received his PhD in neuroscience from the Albert Einstein College of Medicine in 1999. His lines of research investigate sensory processing and multisensory integration in autism spectrum disorders and the effects of intensive meditation practices. In the early 1990s he was centrally involved in field research in India that investigated Tibetan Buddhist mind training. Since 2006, he has been Principal Investigator of the Shamatha Project and related efforts that are multidisciplinary longitudinal investigations of the effects of long-term intensive meditation training on physiological and psychological processes central to attention, emotion, health and well-being. The most comprehensive study of its kind, it was conceived with and taught by Alan Wallace, with the talents of a large consortium of researchers at the University of California–Davis and elsewhere.

Wendy Weber
National Institutes of Health

Wendy J. Weber, ND, PhD, MPH, joined NCCIH as a program director in 2009. She oversees NCCIH’s portfolio of health services research, studies of complementary medicine to promote of healthy behavior, and complex complementary/integrative medicine intervention research to include traditional Chinese medicine, naturopathy, integrative medicine and Ayurveda. Dr. Weber’s interests include the use of complementary medicine interventions for common pediatric conditions, mental health conditions, promoting healthy behaviors, and health services research. Dr. Weber is the coordinator for NCCIH’s Preliminary Clinical Studies in Preparation for Large Interventional Trials of Complementary and Alternative Medicine Therapies (R34) program. She is also the NCCIH representative to the NIH Common Fund Science of Behavior Change program and the NIH Prevention Research Coordinating Committee. Dr. Weber earned a Doctorate of Philosophy in epidemiology and a Master of Public Health from the University of Washington. She earned a Doctorate of Naturopathic Medicine (N.D.) from Bastyr University. Prior to joining NCCIH, she was a research associate professor at Bastyr University, where her research included the study of herbal treatments for pediatric conditions.

WORKSHOP MODERATORS

Michael Lifshitz
McGill University

Michael Lifshitz is a doctoral student studying cognitive plasticity in the neuroscience department at McGill University in Montreal. His research investigates practices that aim to transform subjective experience, from meditation and hypnosis to placebos and psychedelics. He works from an interdisciplinary perspective, combining cognitive, biological and cultural approaches to shed light on consciousness and self-regulation. In this spirit, he recently co-edited an academic book together with his PhD supervisor, Amir Raz, called “Hypnosis and Meditation: Towards an Integrative Science of Conscious Planes.” Michael’s work is supported through a Vanier Graduate Scholarship from the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council of Canada (NSERC), funding from the Bial Foundation, and a Francisco J. Varela Research Grant from the Mind & Life Institute. Before his doctorate, he completed a master’s degree in neuroscience and an undergraduate degree with honors in psychology and minors in philosophy and world religions at McGill University.
Elizaveta Solomonova
McGill University
Elizaveta Solomonova is an interdisciplinary scientist of the mind, working at the intersection of cognitive neuroscience, philosophy and the arts. Her main research interest is the neurophenomenology of conscious experiences across sleep, wake and contemplative states. She is currently finishing an interdisciplinary PhD at the University of Montreal, and starting a postdoctoral fellowship at McGill University’s Neurophilosophy Lab. She has been working at the Center for Advanced Research in Sleep Medicine and at the Topological Media Lab at Concordia University. She previously worked on a variety of projects in neuroscience of sleep and in media arts, including meditation, sense of presence, sleep paralysis, sensory incorporation in sleep, memory consolidation, nightmares, emotion regulation, collective experiences, and experimental philosophy. In addition, she is a research scientist at the YHouse, a New York-based nascent interdisciplinary institute, dedicated to the study of awareness from biological, phenomenological and contemplative perspectives.

SPECIAL GUEST:

James Austin
University of Colorado Medical School (emeritus)
James Austin is a neurologist and author of the book “Zen and the Brain” which establishes links between the neurophysiology of the human brain and the practice of meditation. He began his career at the University of Oregon Medical School, then became chairman of neurology at the University of Colorado School of Medicine. He is currently Emeritus professor of neurology at the University of Colorado Medical School–Denver and visiting professor of neurology at the University of Florida School of Medicine.
Mind & Life Dialogue at the Sera Monastery in Bylakuppe, India.

David Langner
Program Manager
David has a master’s degree in Buddhist Studies, a bachelor’s degree in neuroscience, and yoga teaching credentials. He also brings years of experience supporting science research through logistics and project management positions.

Michael Sheehy
Director of Programs
Michael has a PhD in Tibetan and Buddhist studies. He extended his training with a three-year immersion in a remote monastery in far eastern Tibet. For eight years, Michael directed research at the Tibetan Buddhist Resource Center, a digital library of Tibetan literature, where he developed interdisciplinary programs and administered initiatives in Tibet. Before joining Mind & Life, he was a Visiting Scholar at Harvard Divinity School. He concurrently holds a faculty appointment in Religious Studies at the University of Virginia.

Wendy Hasenkamp
Science Director
Wendy is the senior scientific officer at Mind & Life, overseeing and administering the grant programs. She is a neuroscientist and contemplative practitioner whose research examines the neural correlates of meditation, with a focus on the shifts between mind wandering and attention. She has contributed to neuroscience curriculum development, teaching and textbook creation for the Emory-Tibet Science Initiative. She is author of the forthcoming book, “The Monastery in the Microscope” which documents the 2015

Rob Dunnenberger
Programs Associate
Rob graduated from James Madison University with a degree in Music Industry with an emphasis in Percussion Performance. Rob has worked as a music educator, performer, and stage manager for various events in the Central Virginia area.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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These contributions were made to the Mind & Life Catherine Kerr Award for Courageous Science, in memory of the late Cathy Kerr and her remarkable contributions to the field of contemplative sciences. These donations fund an academic award and lecture in her honor, to be given during the Mind & Life Institute’s biennial International Symposium for Contemplative Studies (ISCS). Recipients of the award will exemplify the qualities and character that Cathy brought to her work, including bold innovation, imagination, courage, authenticity and heartfulness. 100% of these donations will go directly to the Catherine Kerr Award for Courageous and Compassionate Science. For more information on ways to support this memorial fund, please contact the Mind & Life office of philanthropy at 434-339-0281.
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George Wang, MD, PhD, is adjunct assistant professor of medicine at Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine. He is a geriatrician and researcher examining the beneficial effects of mind-body interventions for cancer patients, and a Mind & Life donor since 2015.

Why I support Mind & Life

“As a physician-scientist, I’m fascinated by the power of the mind, and how it plays a role in health and healing. As a physician, I see on a regular basis how a whole-person approach to health care is really powerful, and particularly needed in a time when we’re starting to recognize the inadequacies of the current medical paradigm. For me, it’s very satisfying to scientifically study and understand these holistic healing approaches, including mindfulness and meditation, so we can actually see how they influence our health at various levels — the anatomic, cellular and molecular levels. I hope to see mindfulness practices broadened into virtuous actions that benefit society on a large scale.

“Ever since my first encounter with Mind & Life, I was fascinated by their merging of the contemplative traditions and science into the same space, and immediately loved the interdisciplinary approach — from neuroscience to health care and the humanities — all in one place. Personally, I think when such a range of scholars come together with a shared interest, amazing things can happen. Mind & Life’s mission, that notion of bringing together science and contemplative traditions to alleviate suffering and promote flourishing, aligns very well with my own values, and that is why I strongly support what they do.”
### 2017 Summer Research Institute: Intersubjectivity and Social Connectivity

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<td><strong>MEDITATION</strong></td>
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<td>3:30–4:45</td>
<td>Pete Fleming</td>
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<td>Transdisciplinary Training Workshop with Evan Thompson and Lis Nelsen</td>
<td>Contemplative Practice</td>
<td>3:30–4:45</td>
<td>Peter Grossenbacher + Rhonda Magee Plenary Workshop</td>
<td>Breakouts</td>
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<td>5:00–6:00</td>
<td><strong>TAI CHI</strong></td>
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<td><strong>MEDITATION</strong></td>
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<td>Grants &amp; Varela Presentations</td>
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