

Turn Signals and Enlightenment

God wants me to know that we are all one. I believe that we are, but lately I've been experiencing it first hand. Recently I was driving south on Middle Street getting ready to make a right turn onto Middle Road at the Texaco station, and I forgot to activate my turn signal. There was another car waiting to turn onto Middle Street that could have turned earlier had I put my signal on to notify them of my intentions. I remembered the many times I'd been in that driver's place and silently cursed the oncoming car for not signaling their turn. I saw myself cursing myself – weird.

And just last week I was driving south on Central Avenue in Dover gazing out my car window at the lovely sky as traffic crept along. I suddenly became aware of someone wanting to pull in front of me from the left turn lane. The driver did not want to turn left and, realizing his error,

quickly tried to get in front of me and continue straight through the light ahead. He was upset because I didn't see him right away, and his look, well, it could kill. I got upset, too, at first. After all, I just didn't see him! Jeez! Then I remembered what I do for a living, took a deep breath, centered, smiled, and let him in. Maybe he saw my smile, I don't know, but he seemed to calm down. And then I realized – Wait a minute! That could have been me in that car. In a very real sense it was me. I've been there, had that man's feelings – wrong lane, oops!, gotta get over but she won't brake for me, what a creep! I recognized myself again.

I've had many mini-awakenings like this lately. It's great. I just keep seeing myself in other people – other angry people, frustrated people, silly, judgmental, frightened, and – yes – happy people. No sooner do I start to criticize my neighbor for some act of stupidity than I

remember – "I've done that!" I see myself reflected in them. I appreciate the feelings the other person is experiencing as I remember my own. I am that person in a very real way. Watching people ahead of me in a long line at the checkout counter, I see impatience, frustration, boredom, and calm as I look from face to face. But instead of looking from the outside in judgement, I'm looking from the inside with understanding and appreciation of their condition – the human condition. The result is that I'm becoming less critical of others and of myself. This new awareness grows and intensifies like a reinforcing

loop. The less I am critical of others the less I critique myself, and the less I critique myself the less I am critical of others, and on and on.

But there's more. As I identify with their actions, I also identify with

their attitude toward me. In this reflexive view of relationship, what I say or do to another I am doing to myself. I notice the angry thought toward the driver who forgets to signal her turn, and it's like I'm sending it to myself. Do I want to do that? The reality of the mantra that "we are all one" comes home in a significant way.

In The *Magic of Conflict* workshop we do a Tai Chi movement called Embrace Tiger, Return to Mountain. It's a lovely slow dance-like movement that suggests we embrace all of life as a gift. One gesture represents the reality that at every moment our actions and thoughts create our world and that what we offer out to the Universe will indeed come back to us. We choose and we give – our energy, our being – with every breath. And as I have discovered in the conflict laboratory of my car, it's important to choose wisely.

Increasingly you realize there is nothing separating us. You are a bunch of exploding atoms and so am I. What separates us is everything in us that wants to separate from each other. Once you let go of wanting to separate, you can begin to see that we are all one.

— Terry Dobson
(*It's A Lot Like Dancing: An Aikido Journey*)

poem

The Sunrise Ruby

In the early morning hour,
just before dawn, lover and beloved wake
and take a drink of water.

She ask, "Do you love me or yourself more?
Really, tell the absolute truth."

He says, "There's nothing left of me.
I'm like a ruby held up to the sunrise.

Is it still a stone, or a world
made of redness? It has no resistance
to sunlight."

This is how Hallaj said, I am God,
and told the truth!

The ruby and the sunrise are one.
Be courageous and discipline yourself.

Completely become hearing and ear,
and wear this sun-ruby as an earring.

Work. Keep digging your well.
Don't think about getting off from work.
Water is there somewhere.

Submit to a daily practice.
Your loyalty to that
is a ring on the door.

Keep knocking, and the joy inside
will eventually open a window
and look out to see who's there.

— From *The Essential Rumi*,
Coleman Barks

Conflict Management
Communication Skills
Training & Facilitation



Judy Ringer



real life

Journey to Center in October

If you'd like to learn more about *The Magic of Conflict* and give yourself a



real gift of peace, reflection and learning, consider attending Tom Crum's *Journey To Center* week in the Rocky Mountains this fall. Each October I return to Peaceful Valley, Colorado to attend and assist with Tom Crum's *Journey to Center* program and to reenergize, review and relearn skills in optimal relationships and successful conflict management. At dawn we breathe and meditate, and during the day Tom teaches awareness, focus and peak performance through aikido movement, problem solving strategies and vision building. This year the program runs from Sept. 30 to October 4. For more information, email judyringer@rcn.com or visit www.AikiWorks.com. Join me and the rest of the staff at Tom Crum's *Journey to Center* program in October. It's a wonderful way to learn, play, and spend a week.

Music In Market Square

Music is a great resource for inner and outer harmony. This summer North Church in downtown Portsmouth is again offering its free concert series – "Music in Market Square" – on Fridays from Noon to 1 p.m.

I'm personally excited to be part of this year's program. On August 16, I'll be performing Bach duets for solo soprano and violin with my violinist sister, Deborah Rodin, who is traveling from far away Indianapolis for the occasion. I hope you'll come and listen!

CONCERT SCHEDULE:

August 9

Yagottawanna (women's a capella group)

August 16

Mostly Baroque:

Bach arias for soprano and violin

August 23

Air Force Brass Quintet

Why is centering so powerful?

Because we can do it anywhere, at any time, and it changes the quality of our lives in an instant.

From Helen Berube, Kinesiotherapy of New England

Practice, practice, so many opportunities to practice. I actually had fun with the Visa lady who would/could not talk to me about my aunt's account! It played out in a manner amazingly similar to your bank experience in the last newsletter. The only thing I 'did' was to carefully avoid becoming adversarial or irritated. Or maybe, I stayed centered? Do you think these things imprint??

From Michelle Bolen, Psychotherapist

I thought of you a few months ago. I guess you could say that I had the "presentation of my life." My father died in April and we flew back to Kansas for the funeral. My brother and I spoke at the funeral. I was so glad to have taken your workshop because I believe it really helped me say what I wanted in a present and integrated way. Thanks.

From Ruta Jordans, Educator, Trainer

Yesterday as I was drying my hands in a fast food restroom (being, of course, in a hurry), I discovered that the time while the blower is drying my hands is an excellent time to center, rather than be impatient with the time it takes to dry! Those moments are everywhere!

From Bill Pelletier, Analyst, Fortune 500 Insurance Co.

The mere act of closing your eyes, letting your shoulders drop and taking a deep breath is an absolutely amazingly simple task that works wonders.



All of us will be pulled off center. we will be shaped by both disaster and delight. So we need to learn the art of returning home. returning to center...

– Philip Simmons (*Learning to Fall*)

resources

www.JudyRinger.com

If you enjoy surfing the web, you can now receive *Power & Presence* – and a lot more tips and information – at www.JudyRinger.com. Our new site offers support on conflict skills and communication training, conflict facilitation, private coaching and aikido. You'll also find in-service workshops and upcoming events. Please stop by!

www.PortsmouthAikido.com

Portsmouth Aikido is an ongoing martial arts school located at the Seacoast Family Y in Portsmouth. Many of the principles that are reflected in our workshops and in *Power & Presence* come from Aikido, the Japanese martial art devoted to turning resistance into energy. Regular mixed level classes are held on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 7:45 to 9:00 p.m. and on Sundays from 2:15 to 3:30 p.m. Monthly dues are \$40.00 per person and there are discounts for family memberships. Beginners (aged 12 and up) through advanced are welcome. You may stop by anytime and watch a class, or jump in and practice once at no charge. Visit our new web site for more information.

Beginner's Class – Oct. 20 – Nov. 24

A beginner's course in Aikido will start at the Seacoast Family Y in Portsmouth on Oct. 20. The six-week course will run through November 24, from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. each Sunday. The cost is \$50.00 per person for the course, and anyone aged 12 and up is welcome to attend. For information or to register, please call Judy at 431-8560. There will be a **live aikido demonstration** and initial "try-it-out" class offered through Kittery Adult Education at Traip Academy on October 16 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m. The cost for this class only is \$10.00 and registration is through Kittery Adult Education, 207-439-5896.

Book Club at Exeter Health Resources

After a recent retreat and workshop, the **Quality Systems Division at Exeter Health Resources** decided to form a monthly Book Club to discuss *The Magic of Conflict*. Karen Bell Doucet at EHR says they are studying one chapter at each team meeting, and that participants are eager to "explore the book" as a group.



We don't see things as they are, we see them as we are. Anaïs Nin

The words *Power and Presence* are used in numerous and sometimes contradictory ways. In *The Magic of Conflict* and *The Powerful Voice* workshops, power is defined as the life force that connects, engages and flows internally and from one person to another. Presence refers to a quality of being in the world and in the moment, a unity of mind, body and spirit that fosters connection with ourselves and our deepest values, a place of awareness and stillness that promotes appropriate action.

Power and Presence is published three times per year to provide ideas, information, and inspiration on conflict, change, connection and power, and ways to make conscious choices about them.

workshops

(See calendar to the right for dates and times.)

Conflict in the Workplace

This interactive workshop provides perspective, tools, and training in self-management and conflict resolution in the workplace. You will learn to change the dynamics of your workplace relationships with non-verbal skills like centering and empathy, then use these skills to stay in control of yourself and engage others in problem-solving strategies. You'll also:

- Define and understand conflict and your typical reactions to it.
- Appreciate the value of listening.
- Acknowledge your emotional energy and direct it in positive ways.
- Utilize conflict resolution strategies to communicate more effectively at work, in meetings and difficult conversations.

Aikido and Conflict: Getting on the Mat

This is a program for kinesthetic learners who like to immerse themselves in the educational experience. We will turn the Kittery Recreation Center into an aikido "dojo" and practice aikido — on the mat and off. You'll learn how to blend with physical and verbal attacks and to use the energy so that no one is harmed and all parties are supported. You'll also practice applying aikido principles in communication to everyday conflicts in your life. Class is limited to 12 participants.

Vocal Power & Presence

Would you like to feel more confident about your voice and speak with power and presence? Whether you are giving a presentation, holding a meeting, or speaking one-on-one, your voice says a lot about you. With proper breathing, projection, and relaxation, you can have a stronger, clearer and more effortless voice and feel better about yourself. Enrollment limited to ten participants. Activities include:

- Voice and breathing exercises
- Speaking from center
- Projection/confidence enhancement
- Group discussion

To injure
an opponent is to
injure yourself. To
control aggression
without inflicting
injury is the
Art of Peace.

—Morihei Ueshiba, Founder of Aikido

registration

Please reserve space for me in your upcoming workshop:

Title of Workshop: _____

Total Cost: _____ Deposit enclosed: _____ (minimum \$50)*

Name: _____ Occupation: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone (day): _____ (night): _____

E-mail: _____ Fax: _____

Please add me/my colleague to your mailing list:

Please call to discuss creating a program for my organization:

Please tell me!

If you prefer to receive *Power & Presence* electronically, let me know:

- By phone 603-431-8560, • By email judyringer@rcn.com, or
- Online at JudyRinger.com on the Contact page.

MAIL TO: Judy Ringer • 76 Park Street • Portsmouth, NH • 03801-5031

workshop calendar

October 15 • 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

CONFLICT IN THE WORKPLACE

Tuition: \$135.00 per person

(Lunch and *Magic of Conflict* text included)

Sheraton Harborside Hotel, Portsmouth
Call, email, or return Registration Form

November 23 • 10 a.m. - 3 p.m.

VOCAL POWER AND PRESENCE

Tuition: \$45.00 per person

(bring bag lunch)

Sponsored by Kittery Recreation Dept.
Register with Kittery Rec. Dept., 207-439-3800

December 7 • 9 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

AIKIDO AND CONFLICT: GETTING ON THE MAT

Tuition: \$45.00 per person

(bring bag lunch)

Sponsored by Kittery Recreation Dept.
Register with Kittery Rec. Dept., 207-439-3800

Please register early.

All workshops have minimum and maximum
participant requirements.

CUSTOMIZED PROGRAMS

The following are examples of programs
designed for organizations. All trainings are
tailored to meet specific goals and objectives.
Please call for additional information.

CORPORATE/BUSINESS SEMINARS

- Conflict in the Workplace
- Creating a Positive Work Environment
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively
 - Assertive Communication
 - Powerful Presentations
- Difficult People: Tormentors or Teachers
 - Principled Negotiation
- Aikido and Conflict: Getting on the Mat

PROGRAMS FOR EDUCATORS

- The Magic of Conflict
- Violence: Dealing with Anger (for students)
 - Helping Students Deal with Anger and Conflict (for teachers)
- Team Building: Working Together Effectively





Judy Ringer

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inside

- Turn Signals and Enlightenment*
- The Power of Center*
- Beginning Aikido*
- Conflict in the Workplace*
- Aikido and Conflict: Getting on the Mat*
- Vocal Power & Presence*


 By Chivalries as tiny, A Blossom, or a Book, The seeds of smiles are planted - Which blossom in the dark. - Emily Dickinson
 

quotables

- *I think my 'stress level' has gone down and my ability to find 'delight' in more situations seems to have increased. Great stuff, great teacher! Thanks.*
- *Judy gave a wonderful presentation. I enjoy hands-on types of workshops and have used the centering technique to help me in times of stress.*
- *Thank you for facilitating such a wonderful day of renewal and inspiration!*
- *Excellent content and wonderful, helpful techniques for managing myself as a teacher when conflict arises in my personal and professional life. I'm using it already with children and plan to incorporate it in a future lesson.*

solutions

question

How do you practice centering?

answer

Centering can be practiced anytime, anywhere. On my morning walk today I practiced walking from center. It changed my posture, my stride, and my attitude about myself. Sitting at my desk I center and notice it's time for a break. Before picking up the telephone handset I take a breath and center, and I feel better about the way I connect with the person at the other end of the line. Before I write and send that e-mail – center. Before an interview or presentation, as I enter the room I think: "Center." Any exercise or sporting activity is a great way to practice centering. And breathing is one of the best gauges of center. Begin to notice your breath and when you're holding it. I carry a little card in my wallet that stares at me every time I open it, and it says: "Keep Breathing." Try it.



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 Communication Skills
 Training & Facilitation**

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