

# BREATHING

BREATHE-RESPIRA

Breathe—Respira  
NEWSLETTER

Volume 1, Issue 3

## Love and Friendship

By Antonio Ramirez, Ph.D

When thinking about the month of February we know that it is different and special month. As we all know, February is the only month that has 28 days, and in addition, every four years changes to 29. We know these changes but rarely think about them. What we do remember, is that the 14th of this month, we celebrate the day of love and friendship (Valentine's Day).

We know that for many, this day is just another day of marketing, just another date that is use to sell chocolates, flowers, cards, and other gifts. For others, it is only a "corny" day. For many children, it is a special day, where friendship symbols and hearts are given to loved ones and classmates. For couples, it is a

day of flowers, chocolates, and a romantic/intimate dinner. But for many others, the 14th is not a day of joy but a melancholic one, they wish or hoped for that special someone or perhaps is a reminder of the loved one they lost.

I would like to invite you to meditate this 14th, on the value of friendship. "He whom finds a friend, finds a treasure" Scripture says. True friends, as the saying goes, "can be counted with the fingers of one hand." Friends are those that remain with you at all times and in spite of everything. Sometimes many of us discover who is our true friend when we go through a difficult time or a tragedy. When everything is not going well, we can really

appreciate those who love us and accept us as we are. With our faults, weaknesses, and limitations.

On this 14th let us remember the passage where we hear the words of a friend who never fails and is always faithful: **"No longer do I call you servants, but I have called you friends"** says Jesus in the Gospel of St. John. Jesus wants you to remember that He is your friend, through good and bad times. He is even your friend when you SIN! You can always rely on Him. Try it and "you will see that the Lord is good". What you may not know is that Jesus incarnated is present in true friendship. What's more, friendship is a sacrament. A visible sign of God's love.

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## Seeing the Beauty and Goodness in Front of Us

We don't have to go far to find the treasure we are seeking. There is beauty and goodness right where we are. And only when we can see the beauty and goodness that are close by can we recognize beauty and goodness on our travels far and wide.....

Let's try to see the beauty and goodness in front of us before we go elsewhere to look for it.

Henry Nouwen

## MINDFULNESS

By Amira Valle

Mindfulness is the latest buzz. We read and hear in the media about the wonders of the practice of mindfulness, but what is it really about?

Mindfulness is a particular way of bringing our

attention, voluntarily, to the "present moment". It is directing our attention to the experience, just as it unfolds moment by moment, with curiosity, an open mind, non-judgmentally and with

acceptance. This attention can be directed to sensory experiences, thoughts, or emotions.

The origins of the

(cont. Pg 2)

Interested in Talks or Counseling?

(210) 550-1114

[breatheat@gmail.com](mailto:breatheat@gmail.com)

[Arleonphd@gmail.com](mailto:Arleonphd@gmail.com)

<http://www.breathe-respira.com/>

## Love and Friendship (cont)

Jesus is present in your friend. The Holy Spirit is also palpable in friendships. The link that unites two friends *is* the Holy Spirit. That is why, He is the third person of the Trinity. All friendships are a Trinity: He/She, you and your relationship!

Studies of couples who are happy and



remain united show that all loving relationships and marriages must have two central aspects: sexual attraction and friendship. Friendship is a crucial part of sexuality. Sexuality is not limited only to "sexual intercourse" but it is also and more importantly, companionship, conversations, the "connection" with each other.

Therefore let us give thanks to God for any expression of love, whether it is a family member, a romantic partner, or a friend. Let's enumerate them and give thanks to

all of those that have been loyal, let's tell them that we truly appreciate their presence and their friendship. If possible celebrate this 14th with someone, and not only that day, but every day, celebrate true love and true friendship. And while meditating on this topic, it comes to my mind, the lyrics and music of a Latin song called "Amigo" that says:

*"Tu eres mi hermano del alma por siempre mi amigo..."*

*("You are my brother forever my friend...")*

## Mindfulness (cont)

Mindfulness practice are dated back 2500 years ago. It was Jon Kabat-Zinn, Professor of Medicine Emeritus and founding director of the Stress Reduction Clinic and the Center for Mindfulness in Medicine, who applied it for the first time, in a scientific way, 30 years ago. Kabat-Zinn designed the MBSR (Mindfulness Based Stress Reduction) program, which has been applied at hospitals and clinical settings with an outstanding success as a stress reduction method, a wellness tool, and as a treatment for stress related conditions.

The results of this practice were so remarkable that scientific research was immediately done in order to evaluate the effects of Mindfulness in the organism. As a result, it has been found that this practice benefits at

three different levels: neurologic, physiologic and social.

Some of the benefits of Mindfulness are:

- Better focus and concentration
- Increased sense of calm
- Decreased stress and anxiety
- Enhanced health
- Improved impulse control
- Increased self awareness
- Skilful responses to difficult emotions
- Increased empathy and understanding of others
- Development of natural conflict resolution skills


Because of all of these benefits, Mindfulness is being applied not only in hospitals and health centers, but also at many schools and work places.

In the next numbers, we'll be talking more in depth about it...

**"As a result, it has been found that this practice benefits at three different levels: neurologic, physiologic and social."**

A photograph of a mossy rock in a pond. The rock is covered in green moss and is partially submerged in the water. The water is calm, and the rock's reflection is clearly visible in the water. The background shows some green foliage and a blue sky.

# February 2014

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<b>1</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> 	<b>15</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	

## Mark your Calendars

- 2/20 10 am—12 noon  
Teologia & Espiritualidad
- 2/20 7pm  
Theology & Spirituality
- 2/27 10 am—12 noon  
Teologia & Espiritualidad

Check our website for new upcoming events

<http://www.breathe-respira.com/>

Theology & Spirituality  
Faith Formation Building at  
Holy Trinity Catholic Church  
San Antonio Texas

### APOSTOLIC EXHORTATION *EVANGELII GAUDIUM* OF THE HOLY FATHER FRANCIS

(extract)

2. The great danger in today's world, pervaded as it is by consumerism, is the desolation and anguish born of a complacent yet covetous heart, the feverish pursuit of frivolous pleasures, and a blunted conscience. Whenever our interior life becomes caught up in its own interests and concerns, there is no longer room for others, no place for the poor.

God's voice is no longer heard, the quiet joy of his love is no longer felt, and the desire to do good fades. This is a very real danger for believers too. Many fall prey to it, and end up resentful, angry and listless. That is no way to live a dignified and fulfilled life; it is not God's will for us, nor is it the life in the Spirit which has its source in the heart of the risen Christ.

[http://www.vatican.va/holy\\_father/francesco/apost\\_exhortation/documents/papa-francesco\\_esortazione-ap\\_20131124\\_evangelii-gaudium\\_en.html](http://www.vatican.va/holy_father/francesco/apost_exhortation/documents/papa-francesco_esortazione-ap_20131124_evangelii-gaudium_en.html)



# BREATHE—RESPIRA

## Amira Valle's Bio

Graduated with honors obtaining a B.S. in Chemistry at the UNAM (National University in México), followed by a number of postgraduate studies and diplomas. As a scientist, she worked as a researcher for the National University, working at the Psychobiology and Human Communication Lab, on the effects of meditation in the brain.

10 years ago, she moved to Miami, where she got certified as a Montessori Educator (MTTI, Miami). She has specialized in Mindfulness in Education. Her Mindfulness certifications include:

### Mindfulness in Education

Mindful Education Institute

### Inner Kids: Mindfulness for Schools and Clinical Settings

Barry University

### Educating World Citizens for the 21st Century MIND AND LIFE INSTITUTE

Penn State University

### Early Childhood Credential

American Montessori Society

### The Montessori Early Childhood Directress Credential

MTTI (Montessori Teacher Training Institute)

### Mindful Schools K-12

Mindful Schools

### The Mindfulness based Stress Reduction for Teens Program

Stress Teens Training Institute

### Mindfulness Curriculum ".b" (dot be)

The Mindfulness in Schools Project (UK)

### The Foundations of Mindfulness and Social-Emotional Learning

Mindfulness Without Borders

### Mindfulness Ambassador

Mindfulness Without Borders

### Atencion Plena: Teoria y Aplicaciones

Facultad de Psicologia (UNAM)

### Atencion Plena y Conciencia Corporal

Facultad de Psicologia (UNAM)

Amira is the founder and Program Director of "Elephant Wise, LLC, A Journey to a Mindful Life", based in Miami FL, where she teaches Mindfulness and Stress Control Methods to stay in the moment and experience calmness to Adults, Children, Teens, Teachers and Executives. She is now opening her operations in Mexico City.

Amira is a mother of two and has been a meditation practitioner for over 20 years.

Thank you Amira

for your Collaboration!!

Visit and Like her page on Facebook

*Elephant-Wise-LLC-A-Journey-to-a-Mindful Life*

