

[Generative Contemplation Symposium: The Art and Science of Effortless and Self-Emergence Contemplative Practices in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism](#)

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Type:

Symposium

Date:

April 20, 2023 to April 21, 2023

Location:

Virginia, United States

Subject Fields:

Philosophy, Psychology, Humanities, Religious Studies and Theology

On Thursday April 20th and Friday April 21st, 2023, the Contemplative Sciences Center at the University of Virginia is hosting the Generative Contemplation Symposium, an interdisciplinary dialogue on the art and science of effortless and self-emergence contemplative practices in Indian and Tibetan Buddhism.

Registration is now open for the two-day symposium, including a private screening of the documentary film, *Tukdam: Between Worlds*. See the registration page:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/generative-contemplation-symposium-tickets-...>

Across the multi-millennial discourse on contemplative practices within Indian and Tibetan Buddhism, there is a pervasive tension that persists between practices that apply effort and those that are effortless. Recently this has emerged as an important framework for interdisciplinary engagement about enhanced cognitive performance. While presented as a binary in classical accounts—as if effort is a fixed and static quantity that is present or absent—it is better understood as a descriptive framework for a spectrum of contemplative dynamics that unfold during meditative experiences, and which can be intentionally enacted, or fostered, by different contemplative techniques. These practices are performed in ongoing and dynamic shifts across a spectrum of intensities of effort.

The symposium promises to catalyze transdisciplinary research collaborations to advance a collective understanding of the underlying dynamics of contemplative practices. We are bringing together leading specialists for an exploration of these practices in light of contemporary philosophical inquiry and psychological research on effort and effortless, self-emergent experiences. Themes of effortlessness and

self-emergence in Indian and Tibetan Buddhist contemplative practices will be addressed in four overlapping domains: (I) Cognitive Effort and Control Practices, (II) Nondual Awareness Practices, (III) Dream and Illusion Practices. (IV) Self-Emergent Visionary Practices. Each domain will involve a creative mix of Buddhist Studies scholars, scientists, philosophers, teacher-practitioners, and experts in the arts and technology with distinct bodies of expertise - textual, experiential, and empirical.

Participants

Session I: Cognitive Effort and Control Practices

1. Zac Irving (Philosophy), University of Virginia
2. Sonam Kachru (Buddhist Studies), Yale University
3. Chandra Sripada (Psychiatry), University of Michigan
4. Karin Meyers (Practitioner), Mangalam Research Center
5. Georges Dreyfus (Buddhist Studies), Williams College

Session II: Nondual Awareness Practices

1. John Dunne (Buddhist Studies), University of Wisconsin-Madison
2. Cat Prueitt (Buddhist Studies), University of British Columbia
3. Antoine Lutz (Neuroscience), University of Lyon, France
4. Willa Miller (Practitioner), Natural Dharma Fellowship
5. Bryce Huebner (Philosophy) Georgetown University

Session III: Dream and Illusion Practices

1. Michael Sheehy (Buddhist Studies), University of Virginia
2. Jake Dalton (Buddhist Studies), University of California-Berkeley
3. Andrew Holocek (Practitioner), Edge of Mind
4. Ken Paller (Neuroscience), Northwestern University
5. Melanie Boly (Neuroscience), University of Wisconsin-Madison

Session IV: Self-Emergent Visionary Practices

1. David Germano (Buddhist Studies), University of Virginia
2. Per Sederberg (Neuroscience), University of Virginia
3. James Gentry (Buddhist Studies), Stanford University
4. Anne Klein (Practitioner), Rice University

5. Dave Glowacki (Technology), CiTIUS Intelligent Technologies Research Centre, Spain
6. Susan Magsamen (Neuroaesthetics), Johns Hopkins University

This is an in-person public event designed to foster dialogue with an international community of specialists. The symposium will not be on Zoom or otherwise broadcasted. Sessions will be recorded and disseminated at a later date.

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<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/generative-contemplation-symposium-tickets-525849188077>