

Bread of Life

Cultivating attitudes, skills and practices that transform lives, organizations, and communities.

Twenty Years of Life!

In entering our 20th year of life last week, it was fitting that 24 of us gathered for the opening retreat of our *Listen to Your Life* program.

Allusions to bread were abundant. As companions (panis=bread)



we engage the practice of ‘breaking open the bread of our lives’ together. It’s a profound process in which we allow simple pieces of life stories to ‘speak’ in fresh ways. Rather than listening to our *opinions* of our lives, we listen to life as it is for its hidden treas-

ures. As the worn-out stories we tell fall away, a remarkable thing happens. In a world consumed by fear, anger and division a focus on genuine LIFE nourishes and strengthens the spirit for effective choice-making ahead.

Such practices are what Bread of Life offers to a world in turmoil. With your generous support we’ve been preparing for this time and we’re ready. Together we can ground flailing energies and offer the potent combination of practices that work and companions who engage them. We look forward to this year with you!

~ Sandra Lommasson



Winter-Spring Offerings

- * **Let’s Talk and Let’s Listen**
Tuesdays, 6:30-8:30 pm, February-March, facilitated by Jean Holsten
 - * **Dynamic Dialogue Foundation Days in Sacramento**, facilitated by Jean Holsten and Dialogue team members
 - Awareness: March 24
 - Compassion: March 25
 - Creative Freedom: February 9; April 20
 - Interdependence: February 10; April 21
 - * **Affiliate Membership**
 - A pilot 2017 program for all who tend souls in a wide range of capacities
 - * **Spiritual Direction Groups**, one for women; one for men.
 - Beginning this spring (ask for details)
 - * **Spiritual Direction with a Trained Spiritual Director**
 - one-on-one monthly sessions with one of our 10-member team of directors
- To learn more and register for any of these offerings, please visit www.breadoflife.org, or call (916) 648-1803.

Thank you for Your Service!

Five years ago, Erin Maurie, Communica-



tions Media Officer at First 5 Sacramento discovered art at *Bread of Life*. This chance discovery created a passion in her to awaken and nourish her own soul. When

invited to serve on the Board of Directors, she felt the suggestion that she had something to contribute was in itself a gift. Since then, she has found it an honor and privilege to be part of a true organizational transformation.

Erin believes that what she witnessed and learned from her experience with *Bread of Life* over the past five years defines the meaning of a real calling. It is clear to her that the kind of organizational rebirth she saw this past year was possible thanks to

these qualities that staff, Board members and other volunteers, donors and friends possess: passion for the mission, perseverance in staying the course, patience in weathering the storms, determination to get back on track, taking time to mourn losses without letting them erode the essence of the organization and befriending uncertainty while making important decisions. In her mind, these are the assets that’ll help take *Bread of Life* further and higher on its path.

As a Board member and a friend of the organization, Erin experienced significant personal growth and awareness that came from being surrounded by a grounded leadership team. She is endlessly grateful for that, as well as for the kindness and joy that emerged from knowing and working with all at *Bread of Life*. As she is finishing her term of a Board member, she is filled with ever-growing hope for the amazing journey that the organization has ahead of it. Thank you, Erin, for your guidance and dedication!

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Dynamic Dialogue in My Life



DynamicDialogue™
Beyond business as usual

Dynamic Dialogue is quickly finding its way into the lives of many in our community. Individuals, families, groups, organizations in the business and social service fields are committing to practicing daily the principles of Dialogue.

Michael Tompkins, a Practicum participant, shared: “It occurs to me that the practice of Dynamic Dialogue is more important now than since I began the practice in 2010. Having attended several four-day retreats in three different settings and communities, two workshops, and two religious community business meetings, I admit that I am still finding my way in the practice. I am very committed to the personal as well as organizational practice of Dialogue.

As a marriage and family therapist, I teach aspects of Dialogue to couples and families. As a spiritual director, I teach aspects of Dialogue to help folks listen to themselves as

well as the voices deep in the well that cry to be heard and surfaced. As a husband, I flail around until compassionate awareness makes itself evident, and the rest of the practice kicks into gear. As a friend, colleague, mentor and human among humans, I believe Dialogue



to be a reliable tool kit as well as a grounding spiritual practice for conscious living.”

Mary Richardson, who has deepened her practice through a number of Dialogue opportunities, sees the impact of Dialogue this way: “How has Dialogue benefited me? More to the point, how (or where) has it not benefited me? When someone mentions awareness, I say to myself, yes, I practice that, too. When someone talks about compassion, I say to myself, yes, I practice that too. I practice seeing and experiencing the in-

ter-connectedness of all. And I practice. It is not a skill or a competency, although yes, those attributes are a part of this. It is a practice. I have a cohort, a Community of Practice, which supports me in my practice. It is the presence of this practice, and my practice of presence, which benefit me continuously.”

Another participant in the Dialogue Practicum, **Jane Rabin**, adds this to the feedback we get from many others who discover the benefits of the program: “The Dialogue program has been truly transformative for me. It has led me to see myself and others in a much kinder and gentler way and to engage people accordingly. What I most love about the program is that there is nothing mechanical about it -- it has freed me up to change from a place deep inside myself -- from my soul. I am especially grateful for how well thought through the program is and how we've been gifted with wisdom and understanding to last a lifetime.”

P (cont'd) - Z

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Let's together make this year's Day of Giving, May 4, the most successful one yet, and help *Bread of Life* be an agent of transformation for more people in the community.



What makes a community great? Among other things, we believe, its ability to gather around important initiatives; like the Big Day of Giving. Last year, we proved that—even in the face of serious technical difficulties—we can come together and be a great community. We hope you join us this year again, on **May 4**, to celebrate the spirit of giving as we demonstrate our commitment to make the community a better place. Everyone can be an agent of good change when generosity guides whole communities and makes life better for all.

Learn more, get involved, and support the important work of *Bread of Life*.
Visit www.breadoflife.org or call (916) 648-1803.