

# Being Contemplative in a Digital World

Spiritual Directors International

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*"I have lived too long where I can be reached."* Rumi



## Ecstasy

*"'ex-stasis' of moving out of one's daily trance for a moment, transcending the mundane particulars of mortality, shedding one's ordinary waking consciousness, to make direct contact with the numinous. Unlike the Jivaro of Amazonia or the ancient Greeks at Eleusis, we postindustrial urbanites have no socially sanctioned method of putting aside our everyday consciousness and quenching our thirst for direct experience of the mysterium tremendum et fasinans\*. Unlike most adults of the past 100,000 years we were never initiated in fear, trembling, and joy. We never made acquaintance with our own birth and learned about our connection with death. The illusion of the self was never demonstrated in myth, song, dance, chant, and direct confrontation. The old teaching stories weren't whispered to us in moments of awe and terror.*

*We are swept along in a digitized hyperreality that is not of our making. And now we are suffering in ways most of us don't understand."*

Virtual Reality, Howard Heingold p. 355

\*"mysterium tremendum et fasinans" Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy

"There is no greater disaster in the spiritual life than to be immersed in unreality, for life is maintained and nourished in us by our vital relation with realities outside and above us." Thoughts on Solitude Thomas Merton

"To allow oneself to be carried away by a multitude of conflicting concerns.

To surrender oneself to too many demands  
To commit oneself to too many projects  
To want to help everyone in everything  
Is to succumb to violence.

More than that is it cooperation in violence.  
It destroys his own inner capacity for peace.  
It destroys the fruitfulness of his own work,  
Because it kills the root of inner wisdom  
Which makes the work fruitful."

Thomas Merton

**Being Contemplative**

**Being Digitally Driven**

Relaxed \_\_\_\_\_ Tense  
\_\_\_\_\_

Aware \_\_\_\_\_ Oblivious  
\_\_\_\_\_

Reflective \_\_\_\_\_ Impulsive  
\_\_\_\_\_

Patiently Waiting \_\_\_\_\_ Urgency/Speed  
\_\_\_\_\_

It is enough! \_\_\_\_\_  
More! \_\_\_\_\_ More!



Immersed in LIFE \_\_\_\_\_  
Escapes from life  
\_\_\_\_\_

In Relationship with Creation and People \_\_\_\_\_ Isolation  
\_\_\_\_\_

Eyes Open \_\_\_\_\_ Eyes Fixed, Dry  
\_\_\_\_\_

Peaceful \_\_\_\_\_ Restless  
especially \_\_\_\_\_ when  
not \_\_\_\_\_ online  
\_\_\_\_\_

Body Conscious \_\_\_\_\_ Unaware of body  
\_\_\_\_\_

## **Books**

Bunt, Gary Islam in the Digital Age: E-Jihad, Online Fatwas and Cyber Islamic Environment (Critical Studies on Islam) and Virtually Islamic: Computer-mediated Communication & Cyber Islamic Environments

Carnes, Patrick et al. In the Shadows of the Net, published by Hazelden, 2001  
Cooper, Al (Anything by him is recommended. Look for his research on the Internet and Cybersex)

Greenfield, David Virtual Addiction, New Harbinger Publications, 1999

Hailer, Gretchen RSHM and Rose Pacatte FSP Media Mindfulness

Hayes, Mike Googling God The Religious Landscape of People in their 20's and 30's

Heim, Michael Virtual Realism and The Metaphysics of Virtual Reality

Piatt, Christian and Amy MySpace to Sacred Space, God for a New Generation

Postman, Neil Technopoly and Amusing Ourselves to Death

Prokes, Mary Timothy, FSE Theology and Virtual Reality

Rosen, Jonathan The Talmud and the Internet

Vedro, Stephen Digital Dharma: A User's Guide to Expanding Consciousness in the Infosphere

Whyte, David Crossing the Unknown Sea as a Pilgrimage of Identity - Work

Young, Kimberly S. Caught in the Net, 1998

Young, Kimberly and Klausung Patrice Breaking Free of the Web, 2007, St. Anthony Messenger Press

## **Web Resources:**

[http://www.vesakday2008.com/tranghoithao/tieng\\_anh/subtheme\\_7/an\\_overview.html](http://www.vesakday2008.com/tranghoithao/tieng_anh/subtheme_7/an_overview.html)

Symposium on Buddhism and the Digital Age

<http://www.myjewishlearning.com/> Judaism and Technology and

<http://www.jasonbrzoska.com/press/timesunion0107.pdf>

[http://www.2muslims.com/directory/Computers\\_And\\_Internet/Islamic\\_Free\\_Downloads/Divine\\_Islam\\_Software/index.shtml](http://www.2muslims.com/directory/Computers_And_Internet/Islamic_Free_Downloads/Divine_Islam_Software/index.shtml)

## **Internet Addiction:**

[www.netaddiction.com](http://www.netaddiction.com) (Center for online and internet addiction has self tests)

<http://www.common sense media.org/advice-for-parents/sink> Dr. David (Kits to educate children)

[www.stresscure.com/hrn/addiction.html](http://www.stresscure.com/hrn/addiction.html) Internet Addiction Survey

<http://www.internetaddiction.com/> Internet Anonymous

[www.virtual-addiction.com](http://www.virtual-addiction.com) Dr. David Greenfield

[www.pan-arts.com/era/humor/addiction-quiz.htm](http://www.pan-arts.com/era/humor/addiction-quiz.htm) (humorous self test)

## **For Meditation:**

Learning Meditation <http://www.learningmeditation.com/>

40 minute meditations for 40 days (Sufi) <http://www.winterfeastforthesoul.com/>

Sacred Space: [www.jesuit.ie/prayer/](http://www.jesuit.ie/prayer/)

Pray as You Go <http://www.pray-as-you-go.org/>

Online retreats [www.Goodgroundpress.com](http://www.Goodgroundpress.com)

3 Minute Retreat: <http://www.loyolapress.com/3-minute-retreats-daily-online-prayer.htm>

Other6.com and YouTube Videos