



**INTERNATIONAL
SOCIETY FOR
CONTEMPLATIVE
RESEARCH**

ISCR 2025

3rd Annual Conference

November 3-6, 2025

**University of North Carolina
at Chapel Hill**



Conference Program



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SOCIETY FOR
CONTEMPLATIVE
RESEARCH

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Membership Information

Join a community of like-minded colleagues in the premier international multi-disciplinary academic society for contemplative research. Your membership supports society initiatives!

Educational programs

- Webinars on scholarly and trending research topics
- Annual flagship conference

Discounts on ISCR annual conference

- Discounted registration fees
- Conference scholarships and travel grants

Mentorship opportunities

- Access to mentorship program

Committees

- Opportunities to join/create committees within Contemplative Science community and influence direction of the society

Networking

- Interdisciplinary networking and community building opportunities

General Conference Information

Conference Venue

The Friday Center
100 Friday Center Drive
Chapel Hill, NC 27599

Conference Contact

Email: iscr@podiumconferences.com

Or contact us through the
Networking feature on this App

Staff from Podium Conferences

Conference Managers can be identified by bright orange STAFF ribbons on their name badges. ISCR VOLUNTEERS can be identified by the yellow ribbons on their name badges. Feel free to ask any of our staff for assistance.

Internet and Wifi access

Wireless internet (Wi-Fi) is available free of charge.

Wireless Network: UNC-Guest

Password: no password

Emergency details while attending the event

In the event of an emergency, please call 911 and indicate your location (The Friday Center) and the nature of the emergency.

Registration and Information Desk

The Registration Desk will be in the Convention Level Foyer of the Friday Center at the following times:

Monday, November 3

8.00am – 5.00pm

Tuesday, November 4

8.00am – 4.30pm

Wednesday, November 5

8.00am – 4.30pm

Thursday, November 6

8.00am 4.30pm

Name Badges

All ISCR 2025 attendees are required to wear their name badge to all sessions and social functions.



General Conference Information

Dietary Requests

If you have advised the Conference Secretariat of special dietary requirements, please check in at the Registration Desk on-site for further instructions.

Mobile Phones and Electronic Devices

As a courtesy to speakers and your fellow delegates, please switch off phones and electronic devices during presentations and while in session.

Duplication/Recording

Unauthorized photography, audio taping, video recording, digital taping, or any other form of duplication is prohibited in the conference sessions.

Poster Information

There are two Poster Sessions during the conference. Posters will also be available for viewing during refreshment and networking periods

Any posters that are not taken down by the removal deadline will be held at the registration desk until the end of the conference. Posters that remain unclaimed by the end of the conference will be disposed of..

Poster Session 1

Tuesday, November 4

Set Up: 8.00am – 11.00am

Session Time: 4.30pm – 6.00pm

Tear Down: 6.00pm–6.30pm

Poster Session 2 (sponsored by Mind and Life)

Wednesday, November 5

Set Up: 8.00am – 11.00am

Session Time: 4.30pm–6.00pm

Tear Down : 6.00pm–6.30pm

Monday, November 3

Pre-conference workshops

[Click here to view a detailed overview of each workshop](#)

8.00am – 5.00pm

Registration Desk Open

Location: Atrium South

8.00am – 5.00pm

Meditation Room Open

8.30am – 10.00am

Workshop 1: Part I Mind-Body Practices in Psychedelic Therapy: Developing Protocols for Research, Training, and Integration

Kirk warren brown, Fadel Zeidan, Linda Carlson, Anthony king

Location: Dogwood AB

Workshop 2: Part I The Arc of Evaluation – A Model Framework for Mindfulness-Based Interventions and Organizational Change

Michael Coplen

Location: Redbud AB

10.00am – 10.30am

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill

10.30am – 12.00pm

Workshop 1: Part II Mind-Body Practices in Psychedelic Therapy: Developing Protocols for Research, Training, and Integration

David Vago, Rael Cahn, Geoff Banthje, Michael Mithoefer

Location: Dogwood AB

Workshop 2: Part II The Arc of Evaluation – A Model Framework for Mindfulness-Based Interventions and Organizational Change

Michael Coplen



Location: Redbud AB

Workshop 4: “How is everybody going on?” A Preconference Workshop featuring an Interdisciplinary Panel and an Interactive Art Expression (ISCR REACH Committee)

Zev Schuman-Olivier, Doris Chang, My Ngoc To and Richa Gawande

Location: Bellflower AB

12.00pm – 1.30pm

Lunch

Location: Blueberry Hill

1.30pm – 3.00pm

Workshop 5: Universities in Crisis: Contemplative Practices as support in Speaking Truth to Power (ISCR REACH Committee)

Jennifer Rioux

Location: Dogwood AB

Workshop 6: From Me to We: Advancing Contemplative Praxis from Inner Growth to Outer Change

Lisa Napora

Location: Bellflower AB

Workshop 7: Teaching Attention: Practical Exercises for Ethical and Intellectual Presence

Katie Leonard and Michael Vazquez

Location: Redbud AB

3.00pm – 3.30pm

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill

3.30pm – 5.00pm

Workshop 8: Beyond John Henryism: When Persistence Harms and Embodied Authenticity Heals for Black Women

Millicent Robinson

Location: Bellflower AB

Workshop 9: Six Healing Breaths and Daoist Perspective on Longevity

Jun Wang

Location: Dogwood AB

Workshop 10: The Arc of Life and Death through Radical Compassion in
Feeding Your Demons: a Jungian and Buddhist Overview and Guided Practice

Kate Greer Dickson

Location: Redbud AB

5.00pm – 7.00pm

Opening Session & Keynote Speaker

Can the Arc of Life and Death Culminate in a Single Moment?

Bridging Worlds of Body and Consciousness in Tibetan Tukdam Meditation

Tawni Tidwell, PhD, TMD ([click for bio](#))

University of Wisconsin-Madison

Location: *Grumman Auditorium*



Tuesday, November 4

7.00am – 8.00am

Contemplative Practice Session

Karen Bluth: Compassion for Self and Others

Location: Windflower AB

8.00am – 4.30pm

Registration Open

Location: Atrium South

8.30am – 10.00am

Keynote Speaker

Griefwork as Contemplative Practice: Reframing Mindfulness through Humanistic Inquiry

Anne Vallely ([click for bio](#))

University of Ottawa

Toward a Science of Awakening

Kathryn Devaney, The Consciousness Foundation



Location: Grumman Auditorium

10.00am – 10.30am

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill



10.30am – 12.00pm

**Panel 1 – Innovations in Resilience Research for Contemplative Science:
Opportunities for Optimizing Whole Person Health Restoration (v)**

*Jennifer Baumgartner, NCIH,
Elissa Epel, University of California,
Emily Lindsay, University of Pittsburgh,
Caitlin Conley, University of Kentucky*

Location: Grumman Auditorium

Oral Session 1 – Mindfulness Based Interventions

01.1 Evaluating Complementary and Integrative Health Interventions to
Reduce Stress Related Illnesses in African American and Hispanic Populations:
A Systematic Review

Raven Wright-Smith, The University of North Carolina

01.2 Evaluating the effectiveness of mindfulness practice in the general
population through personalization – a randomized controlled experiment
Sarah Strohmaier, Victoria University Melbourne

01.3 Integrating Brief Mindfulness Interventions into Routine Medical Pathways:
Pain and Anxiety Relief in the Clinic Waiting Room
Kennedi Childs, Florida State University

01.5 A Full Circle Model of Trauma-Informed Communication for Health Care
Providers and Patients on the Cancer Journey: Highlighting the Role of
Mindfulness

Barbara Ley, University of Delaware

Location: Dogwood AB

**Oral Session 2 – Contemplative Approaches to Learning, Career, and Self-
Discovery in Higher Education**

02.1 Cultivating curiosity for well-being: findings from a first year course at a
STEM-focused university

Alicia Walf, Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute



O2.2 Mindfulness and the Arc of Becoming: Cultivating Career Adaptability Through Emotional Intelligence

Hyunhee Kim, University of Tennessee, Knoxville

O2.3 Personal Transformation Through an Undergraduate “Walking Seminar”—A Thematic Analysis and Gallery

Donald Mccown, West Chester University of Pennsylvania

Location: Redbud AB

Oral Session 3 – Life, Death, Breath and Knowledge: Buddhist and Daoist Investigations

O3.1 A Thread in the Life–Death Matrix: Revisiting the Garbha Metaphor in Early East–Asian Buddhism

Michel Mohr, University of Hawaii at Manoa

O3.2 Daoist Microcosmic Orbit Meditation (Xiǎo zhōutiān 小周天): Kinesthetic Contemplation as Transformative Epistemic Technique

Steven Geisz, University of Tampa

O3.3 When Breath is not Breath: Daoist Contemplative Perspectives

Larson Di Fiori, Brown University

Location: Bellflower AB

12.00pm – 1.30pm

Lunch

Location: Blueberry Hill

12.30pm – 1.30pm

Mentorship Session

Location: Dogwood AB



12.30pm – 1.30pm

Science of Awakening Social



Location: Redbud AB

12.30pm – 1.30pm

Contemplative Practice Session

Beth Palmer – Expressive Journeys: Therapeutic Engagement with Mixed Media Art

Location: Windflower AB

1.30pm – 3.00pm

Panel 3 – Exploring the Nexus of Life and Death at the Intersection of Indo-Tibetan Buddhist Contemplative Traditions and Science (v)

*Renee Ford, Aarhus University,
Michelle Walsh, Contemplative Practice Lab*

Location: Grumman Auditorium

Panel 4 – The emerging science of advanced meditation: Interdisciplinary investigations of advanced meditative absorption, insight, and cessations of consciousness

Matthew Sacchet, Massachusetts General Hospital, Michael Lifshitz, McGill University,

*David Zarka, Université Libre de Bruxelles,
Winson Yang, Massachusetts General Hospital, Shawn Prest, Monash University*

Location: Dogwood AB

Panel 5 – Mindfulness and Social Well-Being: It's More Complicated than We Thought

*Polina Beloborodova, University of Wisconsin,
Erika Blair, Virginia Commonwealth University, Daniel Berry, Radford University,
Kirk Warren Brown, Carnegie Mellon University*

Location: Redbud AB

Oral Session 4 – Mindfulness and Mindful Self-Compassion Interventions

O4.1 Mindful Self-Compassion Decreases Symptoms in Anxiety Disorders and Depression

Elizabeth Hoge, Georgetown University Medical Center

O4.2 Self-critical rumination as a mediator between adverse childhood experiences and therapeutic effects of a mindfulness-based intervention

Diane Joss, Cambridge Health Alliance, Harvard Medical School

O4.3 Uncovering Mechanisms of Change in Compassion-Based Interventions: Is Self-Criticism the Key? A Mediation Meta-Analysis

Aida Palacios, Instituto Polibienestar, University of Valencia

O4.4 What do patients with chronic pain gain from mindfulness interventions? Phenomenological cluster analysis in a clinical trial of Mindfulness-Based Pain Reduction (MBPR)

Wolf Mehling, University of California

Location: Bellflower AB

Oral Session 5 – Neuroscience & Contemplative Practice

O5.1 Testing the Relationship Between Anxiety, Mindfulness, and Cognitive Control

Resh Gupta, Washington University

O5.2 An Initial Neuroscientific Analysis of Contemplative Sleep Practices

S. Gabriela Torres Platas, Northwestern University



O5.3 Note More Worry Less: Neural and Behavioral Insights into the Noting Technique for Reducing Worry

Lia Antico, Brown University

Location: Azalea

3.00pm – 4.00pm

Contemplative Practice Session

Rebecca Acabchuk: Tactical Reset

Location: Windflower AB

3.00pm – 4.30pm

Roundtable 1: Rehearsing Death: demystifying and preparing for death and dying in art institutions, spiritual communities, and public spaces

Location: Dogwood AB

Roundtable 2: The Virtue Gap: Rethinking Scientific Ethics Through Personal Virtues and Contemplative Practice

Location: Redbud AB

4.30pm – 6.00pm

Poster Session 1 with drinks

Location: Atrium



Wednesday, November 5

7.00am – 8.00am

Contemplative Practice Session

Lama Justin von Bujdoss: Ati Yoga

Location: Windflower AB

8.00am – 4.30pm

Registration Open

Location: Atrium South

8.30am – 10.00am

Keynote Speaker

Towards a Developmental Contemplative Science

Robert W. Roeser, PhD ([click for bio](#))

Emory University

Location: Grumman Auditorium

This session will include a short presentation from Suzanne Bond, President of the Mind and Life Institute



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10.00am – 10.30am

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill

10.30am – 12.00pm

Panel 6 – From Micro-Practices to Meditation Retreats: Dose-Response Effects of Meditation Training

Yuval Hadash, Carnegie Mellon University,

Simon Goldberg, University of Wisconsin,

Sarah Strohmaier, Victoria University Melbourne,



*David Creswell, Carnegie Mellon University,
Nicholas Bowles, University of Melbourne*

Location: Dogwood AB

Panel 7 – Numadelic Virtual Reality as a Medium for Exploring Mortality, Contemplative Practice, and the Neuroscience of Self-Transcendence

Justin Wall, CiTIUS~Centro Singular de Investigación en Tecnoloxías Intelixentes,

Melanie Boly, University of Wisconsin,

Joseph Hardy, Numadelic Labs,

Adam Liddle, University of Virginia

Location: Redbud AB

Panel 8 – Curiosity and Openness: Building technologies for transformation

Jesse Flemming, University of Nebraska,

Cassandra Vieten, University of California,

Marjan Sharifi, University of California

Eve Ekman, Greater Good Science Center

Location: Bellflower AB

Oral Session 6 – Critical and Philosophical Perspectives on Contemplative Practice (v)

O6.1 Zen Buddhism on the Limits of Knowledge and the Practice of Wisdom

Bret Davis, Loyola University Maryland

O6.2 Role of Death Awareness in shaping Human Existence – A Philosophical Inquiry

Ashmeet Kaur, University of Delhi

O6.3 Fractal Epistemology for Past Lives: Hunting the Hidden Dimension

Cai Carvalhaes, Pacifica Graduate Institute

O6.4 The Mindfulness Revolution and Zizek's Critique

Karsten Struhl, New School for Public Engagement

Location: Grumman Auditorium



Oral Session 7 – Contemplative Training in Educational and Clinical Contexts

07.1 Standards-based approaches to contemplative studies for adolescent learners

Sasha Manu, Pine Street School

07.2 The development of emotion regulation competence for in-service teachers through mindfulness-based interventions: a literature review

Dumitrita Margineanu, Babes Bolyai University

07.3 Understanding Why Healthcare Professionals Attend a Workplace Resiliency Training Program

Phoebe Franco, Dell Children's Medical Center

07.4 Healing Historical Trauma among Vietnamese Americans through Contemplation: A Pilot Study of the WEALTH Program

My Ngoc To, Colorado State University

Location: Azalea

12.00pm – 1.30pm

Lunch and AGM (Begins 12.45pm in the Grumman Auditorium)

Location: Blueberry Hill

12.30pm – 1.30pm

Contemplative Practice Session

Claudia Wang: Baduanjin (Eight Pieces of Brocade)

Location: Windflower AB

1.30pm – 3.00pm

Panel 9 – Looking Within to Reveal the Mechanisms of Mindfulness Meditation: Internal Attention and Internally-Directed Cognition

Yuval Hadash, Carnegie Mellon University,

Amit Bernstein, University of Wisconsin & University of Haifa,



*Sahib Khalsa, University of California,
Norman Farb, University of Toronto*

Location: Redbud AB

Panel 10 – Yoga and Spirituality: The Underlying Psychophysiology and the Research Evidence in Healthy and Patient Populations

*Sat Bir Khalsa, Harvard Medical School,
Crystal Park, University of Connecticut,
Stephanie Sohl, Wake Forest University School of Medicine*

Location: Dogwood AB

Panel 11 – Understanding the Neuroscience of Mindfulness for Migraine and its Importance for the Pipeline through Undergraduate Neuroscience Education (v)

*Rebecca Wells, Wake Forest University School of Medicine,
Fadel Zeidan, University of California,
Zev Schuman-Olivier, Cambridge Health Alliance,
Michael Datko, Harvard Medical School,
Licia Grazzi, Fondazione Istituto Neurologico*

Location: Grumman Auditorium

Oral Session 8 – Moral and Social Dimensions of Contemplative Practice

08.1 Moral effects of long-term meditation: A large-scale, in-person cross-sectional study of real-world ethical cognition, emotion, and behavior

Kevin Berryman, Monash Centre for Consciousness and Contemplative Studies

08.2 Beliefs about suffering and responses to hypothetical challenges and real-life intergroup conflict

Christine Lathren, University of North Carolina

08.3 Views Regarding Mindfulness-Based Program Participation in Emerging Adults from Different Racial/Ethnic Groups

Christyn Dolbier, East Carolina University



08.4 Examining Self-Compassion and Subclinical Cardiovascular Disease in Black American Women

Kennedy Blevins, University of California

Location: Bellflower AB

Room 5 – Oral Session 9 – Religious Studies & Psychology

09.1 The Defining Line of Life and Death in Buddhist Psychology

Chulthim Gurung, McGill University

09.2 The Resurrected Self – An Enactive Lens on the Goals of Classical and Contemporary Jewish and Islamic Contemplative Paths

Nathan Fisher, McGill University

09.3 The Psychology of Tsongkhapa's Analytical Meditation on Death

Jacob Lindsley, Oregon State University

Location: Azalea

3.00pm – 4.00pm

Contemplative Practice Session

Jena Leake: He(art)work: Meeting the Moment with Courage, Creativity and Compassion

Location: Windflower AB

3.00pm – 4.30pm

Roundtable 4: Contemplative Arts / Contemplative Action

Location: Dogwood AB

4.30pm – 6.00pm

Poster Session 2 with drinks

Sponsored by Mind and Life



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Thursday, November 6

7.00am – 8.00am

Contemplative Practice Session

Carlos Santiago and Felipe Kalatauma Rosario: Sonya's Sequence

Location: Windflower AB

8.00am – 4.30pm

Registration Open

Location: Grumman Auditorium

8.30am – 10.00am

Keynote Speaker

The Arc of Life and Death: Courageous, Contemplative Reflection on Family, Foundation, and Future to Foster Harmony and Well-Being

Cheryl Woods Giscombé, PhD ([click for bio](#))

UNC-Chapel Hill School of Nursing

Location: Grumman Auditorium

10.00am – 10.30am

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill

10.30am – 12.00pm

Panel 12 – Psychedelics and the Self: Mechanisms, Methodologies, and Mindfulness (v)

Fadel Zeidan, University of California,

Eric Garland, University of California,

Patrick Finan, University of Virginia,

Luana Colloca, University of Maryland Baltimore

Location: Grumman Auditorium



Panel 13 – Nurturing the Mindful Researcher: Integrating Contemplative Practices to Promote Life Giving Cultures in Mindfulness Research

Caitlin Elsaesser, University of Connecticut,

Gio Iacono, University of Connecticut,

Jeffrey Proulx, Brown University,

Vivien Roman-Hampton, University of Connecticut

Location: Dogwood AB

Panel 14 – Transforming higher education through contemplative practices in diverse settings: From individual classes to institutional change

Jennifer Daubenmier, San Francisco State University,

Yikuan Lee, San Francisco State University,

Andrea Malouf, Salt Lake Community College,

Ranjeeta Basu, California State University

Location: Redbud AB

10.30am – 12.00pm

Contemplative Practice Session

Kessonga Giscombe: "Speak Less, Listen More: The Power of Mindful Communication"

Location: Windflower AB

12.00pm– 1.30pm

Lunch

Location: Blueberry Hill

1.30pm – 2.30pm

Panel 15 – Meditation and Psychedelic Assisted Therapy

Anthony King, The Ohio State University,

Michael Lifshitz, McGill University,

Rael Cahn, University of Southern California,

Simon Goldberg, University of Wisconsin

Location: Dogwood AB



Panel 16 – Bringing evidence-based contemplative practices into clinical settings: Lessons from the OPTIMUM trial (v)

Jessica Barnhill, University of North Carolina,

Isabel Roth, University of North Carolina,

Holly Thomas, University of Pittsburgh,

Gabriela Castro, University of North Carolina, Keturah Faurot, University of North Carolina

Location: Grumman Auditorium

Panel 17 – Using Mindfulness Training to Support College Students' Stress Management, Mental Health, and Academic Engagement

Brian Galla, University of Pittsburgh,

Matthew Hirshberg, University of Wisconsin, Madison, Zishan Jiواني, University of Wisconsin,

Polina Beloborodova, University of Wisconsin

Location: Redbud AB

2.30pm – 3.00pm

Coffee Break

Location: Blueberry Hill

Sponsored by the Program on Integrative Medicine, within PM&R at UNC



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and Rehabilitation

3.00pm – 4.00pm

Panel 18 – Interdisciplinary Reflections on Psychedelic Science, Contemplative Practice, and Mystical Experience in Grief Healing: UVA PIRC

Jennifer Penberthy, University of Virginia,

Tamika Braveheart, University of Virginia,

Donna Chen, University of Virginia,

Melissa Frost, University of Virginia ,

Adelaide King, University of Virginia

Location: Dogwood AB

Panel 20 – Exploring the Role of Mindfulness in Advancing Equitable Instruction in Schools (v)

Doris Chang, New York University,

Lindsay Romano, University of Colorado Boulder, Patricia Jennings , University of Virginia,

Dennis Williams II, University of Virginia

Location: Grumman Auditorium

4.00pm – 4.45pm

Closing Session

Location: Grumman Auditorium

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