

Winter 2011



UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

# The Independent

A Newsletter for Liberal Studies

## Spring Term Services at REACH

Complete information about REACH services and programs can be found at: [www.reach.louisville.edu](http://www.reach.louisville.edu)

Learning Resource Center (Strickler Hall 107,109, 111 West):  
Scheduled **tutoring** for most 100, 200 and many **300** level courses.  
Students can request tutoring online at:

<http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/>

Also offers **free seminars** to help students prepare for the GRE, GMAT, MCAT, and LSAT graduate exams. **GRE review begins January 19th.**  
<http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/general/>

Weekly **study sessions** and **exam reviews** combined with content-specific study strategies led by student leaders often selected by faculty. Study sessions are designed for large groups, difficult courses, and offered all semester  
Schedules posted online at:

<http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/si/>

<http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/la/>

Math Resource Center (Strickler Hall 226 East) and onsite Virtual Math Center (331 East): <http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/math/>  
Check these centers out:

**Computer Resource Center** (Ekstrom Library, 1st. floor Learning Commons) and iTech ZONE (in MITC Building)

**Digital Media Suite** (Ekstrom Library, 1st. floor Learning Commons):

**Drop-in computer labs** and drop-in tutoring for computer literacy

8 AM to 8 PM M-TR / 8 AM -4 PM on Fridays in Ekstrom

8 AM to 8 PM M-TR/ 8 AM to 4 PM on Fridays in the iTech Zone

**Resources** for creating, editing and burning images and motion pictures.

Scanners for Mac and PCs/ 2007 and 2003 versions of Microsoft Office/ MathXL, SPSS, and Photoshop available for student use and tutoring assistance provided. Visual Studio and Eclipse tools for JAVA, C, C++, C#, etc.

Check these centers out at: <http://www.reach.louisville.edu/tutoring/computer/>



**If you plan to graduate in May 2011, be sure to apply for your degree by the deadline (Feb 3).**

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## Pema Chodron, from *Comfortable with Uncertainty: 108 Teachings*

A big, burly samurai comes to a Zen master and says, "Tell me the nature of heaven and hell."

The Zen master looks him in the face and says, "Why should I tell a scruffy, disgusting, miserable slob like you? A worm like you, do you think I should tell you anything?"

Consumed by rage, the samurai draws his sword and raises it to cut off the master's head. The Zen master says, "That's hell."

Instantly the samurai understands he has just created his own hell – black and hot, filled with hatred, self-protection, anger, and resentment. He sees that he was so deep in hell that he was ready to kill someone. Tears fill his eyes and he puts his palms together to bow in gratitude for this insight. The Zen master says, "That's heaven."

**Maggie's note:** I've read several books this year on various religions, focusing on those that were unfamiliar to me. The brief story above is a favorite, as it embodies perspective and wisdom, qualities that, for me, have been a long time coming and which I value highly. If you'd like to share your own wisdom in this newsletter, that would be very welcome.

## Support for Study Abroad in Asia

The Institute of International Education (IIE) is pleased to announce that it will re-launch the Freeman-ASIA Program with a generous grant from the Freeman Foundation. Applications can be submitted online starting in January 2011 for study abroad beginning in Summer 2011. Freeman-ASIA scholarships will be available for study abroad anytime through the 2012-13 academic year, with application deadlines listed on the program website.

Freeman-ASIA provides financial support to American undergraduates with demonstrated financial need to study abroad for academic credit during the summer, semester or academic year in one of 15 countries/regions in East and Southeast Asia. Award amounts vary from \$3,000 - \$7,000 depending on the length of study.

The program's goal is to increase the number of Americans with first-hand exposure to and understanding of Asia and its peoples and cultures. Upon their return to the U.S., students are required to promote study in Asia by sharing their experiences with peers on their home campuses and in their communities.

More information is available on the program website at [www.iie.org/freeman-asia](http://www.iie.org/freeman-asia).

Freeman Awards for Study in Asia (Freeman-ASIA)  
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Throughout most my life, I've been a follower. I've clung to the comfort of conformity, of the known and the safe, rarely seeing exploration and the practice of "Trying New Things" as worth the risk of failure and ridicule. Oh, I had plenty of "Great Ideas," plans I would have loved to implement, but I always kept them inside my head where they couldn't embarrass me with their idealistic nature. On the rare occasions where I did start something, I lost motivation at the first sign of a roadblock. All the fuel in the world couldn't get this little engine to think she could make a difference, so I never did.

One morning, two months before I blithely hopped out of a noisy, smelly van in the rural village of Senase, Ghana, a culturally rich but economically poor country in West Africa, I had another "Great Idea." Sparked by a class assignment to design and execute a sustainable service project in another country, I decided to go big. Out of the 6 billion people that inhabit our world, many don't have a way to fulfill their basic needs. What if I could do something to help change that? Anything is possible. I'd said it before, but this time I really believed it. I glared fiercely at my reflection, daring it to argue.

Spurred on, I considered my options and connections, and picked a need—clean water—and a method—water purification. Again, I asked my inner correspondent "Is it worth trying, putting in all that effort? What if I work so hard, and still the project doesn't come together?" The answer came in a rush of energy that caused my spine to shoot straight up, as if it were the channel for an eruption from Old Faithful. My head followed, snapping up with a jerk of astonishment at this crazy revelation: "It doesn't matter. It doesn't matter if you can or if you can't, you will."

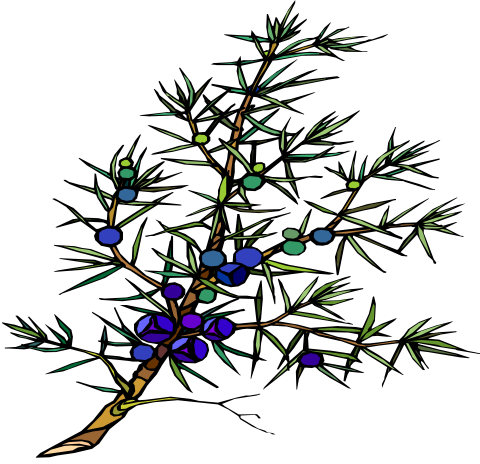
With this almost-divine feeling of purpose, I worked throughout the next two months as I had never worked before. Emails, phone calls, and research out the wazoo. I dreamed of small children dying of diarrhea, and felt I was getting a true taste of the all-consuming work of humanitarian Greg Mortensen, of "Three Cups of Tea" fame. Having assumed a sense of responsibility for the welfare of others, I had a hard time justifying a seven hour long slumber, knowing there was always more that I could do.

Despite being in a completely foreign place, when the final project team of seven arrived in Senase, the frequency of the roadblocks that cropped up was all too familiar. Miscommunications with our Ghanaian liaison, Fred, had led to the water storage tanks the village had bought being coated on the inside with tar, and there was no secure location near the water source to build the system. As if that weren't enough, no car battery had been purchased to power the purifier, as each group thought the other was taking care of it. As all these surprises were hitting us, the skies decided to add a dash of irony with a downpour of oceanic proportions, soaking us head to toe and making it even harder to communicate.

Any one of these could have been cause for giving up by an earlier Ellie. Instead, this newer, upgraded model kept her head and continued searching for solutions. The tarred tanks were driven to a nearby town and exchanged for plastic ones, and a little shelter to hold the system was quickly constructed, while Fred and I raced off to purchase a battery. By the time we were finishing up the installation process, the sun was fast sinking below the horizon. Did that stop us? No way! I began to demonstrate how to operate the purifier by flashlight. Then, we hit a snag that could shut down the entire operation: when we turned on the circulation pump, one of the joints of the system started leaking. A small spark of fear flared in my already unsettled belly as I contemplated what such a reality could mean to the success of the project. Murmurs ran through the assembled crowd, and the village Elders looked dubious. I told the gathering "I am not leaving Ghana until this filter works", and boy, did I mean it! I'd been trained on how to use the system, knew the importance of our project to the community, and was damn well going to work all night and find my own way back if that's what it took. Fortunately, I did not have to do so, as we were able to fix the leak and continue the process through to the finish.

The next day, as we presented the purifier to the Village Chief and Queen Mother, I took my first drink of the newly purified water. As the cool liquid slid down my throat, happiness itself bubbled up in my belly. A wild sense of joy overtook me, and I grabbed my friend Erin around the shoulders, squeezing her tightly and shaking with relief. We jumped up and down in sheer glee as if we were the same age as the children all around us, both overcome by the enormity of the moment and humbled by it. The late nights and the uncertainty, the physical and mental discomfort I had gone through... all of it was nothing compared to this moment.

*Cont'd on page 4...*



UNIVERSITY OF LOUISVILLE

LIBERAL STUDIES PROGRAM  
320 GARDINER HALL  
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY 40292  
502 852 2249  
WWW.LOUISVILLE.EDU/A-S/  
LBST

Maggie will be out of the office December 17 - January 3.  
Have a wonderful winter break!

**Don't Stop Believin' *cont'd...***

**Ellie Nolan**

Buttressed by our individual sense of commitment to a shared vision, we had done it. We ALL had done it. When I think back to the person I was in high school, I smile at her reticence to take initiative, to believe in her capacity to affect the world. Little does she know, by thinking she can do it, she will. I sing to her, as an older sister to a younger one, words I have now come to know by experience as the truth:

On your journey, wherever it may take you, listen to your inner voices, and don't stop believin'.

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**Journey to the Stars with the American Museum of Natural History**

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUn\\_Pe52F-E](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUn_Pe52F-E)

In an effort to combat less daylight and more cabin fever, this brief video may widen your view. The film, which couples art and science, is stunning (and yet another lesson on perspective).