



Monday, March 21, 2011

[Talking Points](#) | [Weekly Bulletin](#) | [Looking Back](#) | [People](#) | [Story Archive](#) | [About Us](#) | [Submit Item](#)

Search News

GO

Events

[Campus Calendar](#)
[Athletics](#)
[Fine Arts Center](#)
[Five Colleges](#)
[Library](#)
[Mullins Center](#)
[Music and Dance](#)
[Theater](#)

Services

[Construction Updates](#)
[Disability Services](#)
[Equal Opp. & Diversity](#)
[Health Services](#)
[Human Resources](#)
[Job Listings](#)
[OIT](#)
[Ombuds Office](#)
[Parking Services](#)
[Transit Services](#)
[UCard Office](#)
[University Club](#)
[Workplace Learning](#)

Benefits

[Credit Union](#)
[Delta Dental Plan](#)
[GIC](#)

Connections

[FiveCol-soc](#)
[News Office](#)
[UMail](#)

[RSS Feed](#) 

TALKING POINTS**A simple equation for turning suffering into healing**

Professor Richard S. Ellis' new book, "Blinding Pain, Simple Truth: Changing Your Life Through Buddhist Meditation" (Rainbow Books) chronicles his decade-long journey from relentless headache pain and torment to unmedicated joy and equanimity through Buddhist teachings and meditation.

Ellis began to experience incapacitating headaches in 2000, but physicians found no illness and prescribed myriad personality-altering pills. One physician recommended meditation, which has worked to heal Ellis's suffering from the pain.

Meditation, he says, is now an all-encompassing approach to his life. While no physician could explain the origins of Ellis's headaches, he is sure that stress played a major role.

"Buddhist teachings and daily meditation empower me to heal both physically and emotionally," says Ellis, who teaches Complex Variables and Real Analysis II in the Mathematics and Statistics Department. "After years of struggle I am able to let go of the suffering and the image of myself as a victim."

The National Centers for Health Statistics report that, in 2006, 76.2 million people in the U.S. suffered from pain, exacting a huge cost in lost work time and personal distress. "As I have learned," explains Ellis, "so can others also learn to reexamine their experiences with pain and suffering and eventually to embrace their lives with equanimity, gratitude, and joy."

Ellis also serves as an adjunct professor in the Department of Judaic and Near Eastern Studies Department and has taught courses on the Torah, the Book of Job, and the writings of Franz Kafka. He has also published papers on literary themes in the Torah, the poetry of Emily Dickinson, the art of Michelangelo,

Buddhist teachings, says Ellis, have also provided him with a new lens to discover healing insights in the Bible. Meditation teacher and author Joseph Goldstein ("A Heart Full of Peace" and "One Dharma") calls the book "an intriguing blend of Buddhist insight meditation and a fascinating interpretation of key Hebrew Bible passages." Shinzen Young, author of "The Science of Enlightenment" and "Break Through Pain", describes Ellis's book as "Delicious for the intellect, nourishing for the soul."

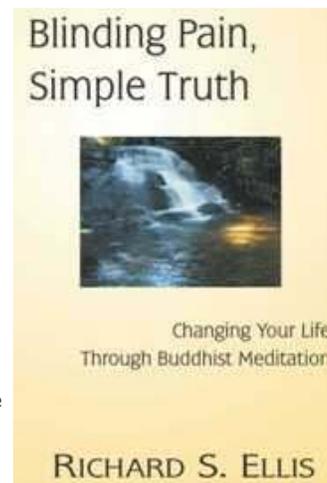
Ellis will discuss his book and his experiences with meditation on Thursday, April 14 at 8 p.m. at Amherst Books.

Ellis's field of research is probability with applications to statistical mechanics and other areas. He has also published two research-level monographs (the second with Paul Dupuis). Ellis's 1985 monograph, "Entropy, Large Deviations, and Statistical Mechanics", was reprinted by Springer-Verlag in 2006 in their Classics in Mathematics series.

More Information

[**Richard Ellis Profile - Hampshire Life, March 8, 2011**](#)

March 17, 2011.



 [E-mail story to a friend](#)  [Printer-friendly version](#)

[/more talking points/](#)

© 2011 University of Massachusetts Amherst. Site Policies.
This site is maintained by In The Loop, part of the Office of News and Information.