

Volume 1 | Issue 1
Fall 2021

Wisdom's Edge Foundation, Inc.

“To be a philosopher is not merely to have subtle thoughts, nor even to found a school, but so to love wisdom as to live according to its dictates, a life of simplicity, independence, magnanimity, and trust.” – Henry David Thoreau



We thank our supporters who gave in this last round of fundraising. We raised \$2,135.00 from our Facebook campaign and \$226.30 from our Philosophy in Nature Series. We still need \$4000 to support two philosophy 12-session series in St. Cloud, MN. We invite you to ask friends and families to contribute to our fundraising campaign on Giving Tuesday on [Facebook Page](#). Tuesday, November 30th, 2021.

Philosophy in Nature End of Summer Series

Melissa Landis of Lake Worth Water Keeper collaborated with Sophia Stone of Wisdom's Edge Foundation, Inc. to raise funds for their organizations. Sophia, with the help of Baylor University's philosophy graduate student Kelsey Maglio, collected philosophy quotes from Ralph Waldo Emerson, Henry David Thoreau, Lao Tzu, Sir Isaac Newton, and Virginia Woolf.



Each session was carefully placed at a location emphasizing a particular natural object: a tree, a lake, the ocean. Each session began with a mindfulness activity, connecting the participants with nature. They read and discussed the philosophy passages on the handout. Melissa gave out field journals and Sophia lent handmade water colors and paint brushes for participants to use as everyone wrote, drew, and painted in their journals.

After the first session focusing on trees, here is what one of our participants wrote:

Under the shade of an old oak tree in one of the “wilder” sections of Delray’s Orchard View Park, Sophia and Melissa seamlessly facilitated a morning of conversation, contemplation, and creativity in nature.

The lover of nature is he whose inward and outward senses are still truly adjusted to each other; who has retained the spirit of infancy even into the era of manhood. –

Ralph Waldo
Emerson



I have lost loved ones and I learned to cope with the loss and the pain. I learned about the Ecclesiastes, ‘There is a time for everything, A time to keep and a time to throw away.’ This helped me realize and helped me go through my deceased daughter’s belongings and move on with the grief-student in Dr. Houston’s class about Human Flourishing.

Philosophy in Nature, cont’d

As a lover of water colors, the highlight of the morning for me was painting that old oak tree in the Journal that we each received as part of the class fee. Melissa shared her experience in, and passion for, the art of meditative journaling and sparked a beautiful new way for me to commune with the natural world. Thank you, Sophia and Melissa for providing this unique and meaningful series. I look forward to more!!

We will have our second Philosophy in Nature series in January, the last three Sundays of the month.

Teaching to Intergenerational Students

Professor John Houston has taught two courses for Wisdom’s Edge through the Community Outreach Education Program in Waite Park, MN. One course focused on the nature of *eudaimonia*, or human flourishing. The other was a course on ancient wisdom for modern times. Both courses comprised intergenerational students from 13-83 years of age. Students encountered classical philosophical texts from the east and west. Students unanimously stated that they would recommend the courses to others.

Professor Houston will be offering one more course this fall. It is a course titled “What is the Right Thing to Do? 21st Century Applied Ethics.” This course will have an intergenerational audience and will be offered through the 742 School District of Saint Cloud. It will focus on contemporary moral problems related to crime and punishment, medical ethics, racial equality, and more.

Breaking Bread Community Healing Circles

A Better Day Than Yesterday Assoc., and Wisdom’s Edge Foundation collaborated to create online healing circles to families that have been negatively affected by long term incarceration, long term military deployment, or personal tragedies such as the loss of a loved one. Sessions were held weekly on Zoom. We discussed philosophical texts from the East: *Bhagavad Gita*, *Sermon at Benares*, *Tao Te Ching*, *The Pillow Book*.

Participants shared about their relationships that they were struggling with, confiding that they don’t usually have a safe space to feel comfortable sharing the details in which they shared with us. We discussed the concepts of ‘duty’, self-less service, non-attachment, compassion, non-judgmental observance, acceptance and letting go. Participants learned different meditation practices from various traditions in the East as well as mindful breathing techniques to center one’s self in difficult situations. We will begin our Breaking Bread Community Healing Circles again in December. If you are interested in joining, please [register](#). Registration closes December 1st. Limited space available.

<p>Mutual respect. Compassionate listening. A safe space to explore ideas as they relate to your worldview.</p>	<p>REGISTER BY DEC 1 Limited slots (30 available) Registration link</p>	<p>Dec 05 Introductions/ Plato's Allegory of the Cave</p> <p>Dec 12 Plato's Apology</p> <p>Dec 19 Plato's Crito</p> <p>Dec 26 Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics (Selections)</p> <p>Jan 02 Stoics</p> <p>Jan 09 Sor Juana de la Cruz</p>
<p>Led by Dr. Sophia Stone, Ph.D. President & Founder Wisdom's Edge Foundation, Inc.</p>	<p>There is no charge/fee for attending. However, donations through Facebook are always appreciated.</p>	<p>Reading materials will be provided to registered participants.</p>

The Tao doesn't take sides; it gives birth to both good and evil. The Master doesn't take sides; she welcomes both saints and sinners. – Lao-Tzu/S. Mitchell translation of Chapter 5, *Tao Te Ching*

Wisdom's Edge at [The Lord's Place](#)

Sophia finished the second six-session series of philosophical outreach at Burckle Place, a transitional home in Lake Worth, Florida, exclusively for single women who have been homeless. The second series focuses on transformative texts from the West: Plato's Apology, Crito and the Republic; Aristotle's Nicomachean Ethics; and various selections from the Stoics. Due to the pandemic, these sessions were taught on Zoom, however, because of internet connectivity issues, Sophia taught the last class in person. Wisdom's Edge allows the Dialogue Facilitator to select additional texts as they see fit for the participants. The last class focused on Jean-Paul Sartre's concept of *mauvaise foi*, or 'bad faith', when we believe in a pleasing falsehood or disbelieve an uncomfortable truth. We are in 'bad faith' when we think we cannot change what can be changed or try to change what we cannot change. The participants discussed how we seem to be in bad faith about the pandemic. Many in Florida are behaving as if the pandemic has ended, for example. One of the participants raised the question of whether the law or the prostitute was in bad faith? They considered and discussed the inconsistency of the laws that govern women's bodies. If a movie or publishing house can profit from sexualizing women's bodies and treating them like objects, why can't women do the same? What is the difference, or is there? Why is it that women are expected to remain virtuous (i.e., celibate if unmarried) while in media, advertising, film and entertainment, sex is allowed to be sold and profited by others?

Most of these texts will be used for the Online Community Healing Circle, beginning in December.

Wisdom's Edge philosophical outreach offers the opportunity for the public at the margins of society to think more reflectively about their lived experience with the aid of philosophical texts. The Dialogue Facilitators do not try to change the participants' views, but rather, provide them tools for critical thinking and logical reasoning about their lived experience.

Ways you can support Wisdom's Edge:

- Start a Facebook Fundraiser for your birthday, choosing Wisdom's Edge. (The first Tuesday after Thanksgiving, "Giving Tuesday" is the best day to do the Facebook Fundraiser).
- When purchasing at Amazon, choose Wisdom's Edge on [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-2745117): <https://smile.amazon.com/ch/84-2745117>.
- "Like" our Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Wisdoms-Edge-Foundation-Inc-109120038172321>; share any news with your friends.
- Donate to Wisdom's Edge by sending an initial email inquiry to: wisdomsedgefoundation@gmail.com