



CONTEMPLATIVE SCIENCES CENTER
UNIVERSITY *of* VIRGINIA



The Active Series: Finding Breath and Movement

By [Malaika Rehman](#) | Student Staff, Communications

With the beginning of a new semester comes a mix of excitement and stress for students. Between classes, extracurriculars, and the constant demands of college life, it can feel overwhelming to keep everything in balance. Fortunately, the University offers a range of programs designed to help students find calm, recharge, and stay grounded. One of the newest offerings is the Active Series, a yoga practice at the Contemplative Sciences Center that blends tradition with accessibility, giving students a space to breathe and reset.

The Active Series was created by Sharath Jois, the most advanced practitioner of Ashtanga Yoga and the only person to have mastered all six series of its traditional practice. Ashtanga is a physically dynamic style of yoga that links breath with movement through a sequence of postures, known for building strength, flexibility, and focus.

[Read the full story.](#)

Malaika Rehman is a third-year student at the Batten School, double majoring in Politics.

[Learn more about Malaika.](#)



SENSEmaking Symposium:

Exploring the potential of contemplative technologies and arts for cultivating community, wellbeing, and compassion

Reflections by [Michael Overstreet](#)

SENSEmaking: A Symposium on Contemplative Technologies was held by the Contemplative Sciences Center and its Contemplative Innovation + Research Co-Lab (CIRCL) on October 9 and 10. Contemplative practices in esoteric and religious traditions have long sought to explore the horizon of human cognition and sensorium. How can these traditions inform the ways we make sense of our worlds? And can modern innovations in design and technology help enrich, expand, and empirically understand this relationship between contemplation and the human capacity for sensemaking?

The symposium addressed these questions to a dazzling array of artists, scholars of religion, philosophers, social scientists, engineers, astronomers, medical researchers, and contemplative practitioners who gathered to discuss cutting-edge research on the triangulation of technology, contemplative practices, and the human senses. Discussion ranged from psychedelic-assisted contemplation and sensory deprivation to the creation of imaginal interlocutors, the embodied origin of emotions, and the potential of grief for transforming one's perception.

"A collaboration between modern science, technology, and ancient wisdoms"

Through an exploration of the ways that immersive technologies can support the transformation of unhealthy or unconscious habits in the human experience, the symposium shed light on the potential of contemplation for cultivating community, wellbeing, and compassion in the world today. A collaboration between modern science, technology, and ancient wisdoms, SENSEmaking showed that the horizons of human cognition are prone to expanding beyond the reaches of one's own perception, thus allowing our understandings of the human to dilate into more relational conceptions. *[Pictured: Oludamini Ogunnaike]*

Learn more and view event photos *(All panel videos will be available in the coming weeks)*

Michael Overstreet is a PhD Plus intern and Contemplative Sciences Center Graduate Research Assistant. [Learn more about Michael.](#)



SALON: Spontaneity

Thursday, November 13, 2025

3:30-5:00pm

Contemplative Commons, The Alchemy

Free, open to the public. [Learn more and register](#)

Save the date for the November Salon—an in-the-round discussion on the topic of spontaneity. Led by Zac Irving, Associate Professor of Philosophy, this conversation will explore themes of creativity, technology, and the mind. Attendees are encouraged to lend their own experiences and thoughts to enrich the conversation.

[Learn more.](#)

The Contemplative Sciences Center's Salon is a monthly open dialogue on cutting-edge research related to contemplation and flourishing with UVA and local community members in the Contemplative Commons, hosted by the Contemplative Sciences Center's CIRCL: Contemplative Innovation + Research Co-Lab.



Contemplative Commons Wins Design Excellence Award

The Society for College and University Planning (SCUP) recognized the University of Virginia's Contemplative Commons with a 2025 Design Excellence Award. SCUP honors achievement in strategic, integrated planning that results in exemplary buildings and grounds, institutional success, and careers that inspire. The Contemplative Sciences Center facility was honored in the category of Excellence in Architecture for a New Building. *[Photo: Tom Daly]*

Jury Comments

"...exceptional project . . . first-of-a-kind mission to enable contemplative learning, creating a place for students to engage with others, sensory learning, and nature . . . dynamic spaces, warm materials interact effectively with the outside . . . programs blend and merge nicely . . . daylight and natural textures work together to give the building a soul..."

[Learn more.](#)



BEYOND THE NOISE: Kelly Crace

[View the Video](#)

Kelly Crace, Executive Director of the Contemplative Sciences Center, delivered the "More Than The Score" faculty lecture, "**Beyond the Noise: Flourishing Through Life's Uncertainties.**" The August 30 talk was part of UVA's Lifetime Learning program, given by University faculty on the morning of home football games.

About the talk

In a world defined by constant demands, rapid change, and relentless noise, how do we stay grounded and thrive? View this inspiring lecture on how UVA is cultivating spaces for contemplation, connection, and research to support human flourishing.

[View the video.](#)



In The News

Project GenZen; Contemplative Commons is "First of its Kind"

- Rolling Stone published an article by Contemplative Sciences Center student intern, Jack Korngold who worked with us during this past summer and the summer of 2024. Read the story: [Gen Z Is Being Crushed By Anxiety. One Teen Is On A Mission To Help Them Cope](#) [Photo: Getty Images]
 - The Contemplative Commons was featured recently by NBC29 News. View the story: [New Contemplative Commons Building is First of its Kind, Architects Say](#)
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JOB OPENINGS & RESEARCH STUDIES

The Contemplative Sciences Center is seeking candidates to fill the positions or participate in the studies below:

Operations Coordinator, Contemplative Commons

The Operations Coordinator supports the daily operations and overall functionality of the Contemplative Commons. This role oversees student Operations Assistants, ensures the facility is maintained to a high standard.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

Event Coordinator, Contemplative Sciences Center

The Event Coordinator assists with a variety of event activities, including processing facility reservation requests, supporting client accounts, maintaining vendor relationships, and helping to plan and execute events.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

Meditation in Nature Study

CSC's research team seeks adults aged 18-24 to participate in a study exploring the link between environments and meditation. This is a paid opportunity.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

Lucid Dreaming, Lucid Waking: Virtual Reality Study

CSC's research team seeks adults aged 18-70 to participate in a study exploring contemplative experiences in Virtual Reality (VR), sleep health, and cognitive flexibility. This is a paid opportunity.

[Learn more and apply.](#)

UPCOMING EVENTS

November 13: Salon - Spontaneity

December 11: Salon - Grit & Grace

ONGOING PROGRAMMING

Mondays - Fridays: Midday Mindfulness

Mondays - Fridays: Ashtanga Yoga

Monday - Thursdays: Active Series

New series: Wednesdays - Peer Led Yoga

New series: Wednesdays - Yoga for Grief, Loss, & Life Transitions

New series: Fridays - Yin Yoga & Meditation for the Heart

Fridays - Chai & Chats

Fridays - REST FEST:
Sound Bath, Yin Yoga, & T'ai Chi

VIEW ALL EVENTS

Give here to support the Contemplative Sciences Center at UVA and programming opportunities at the Contemplative Commons.

GIVE



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