



Dr. Connie Zweig has been a practitioner of Eastern spiritual practices for 50 years. She is former executive editor of Jeremy P. Tarcher Publishing and contributor to *Esquire* magazine and the Los Angeles Times.

Dr. Zweig is currently a Jungian-oriented therapist in the Los Angeles area who specializes in shadow work and spiritual counseling. She is coauthor of *Meeting the Shadow* and *Romancing the Shadow*, author of *Meeting the Shadow of Spirituality* and *A Moth to the Flame: The Life Story of the Sufi Poet Rumi*.

She is currently writing *Meeting the Shadow of Age*, a book about the spiritual potential of late life.

Session 1: *Meeting Your Shadow:*

The Hidden Power of Gold in the Dark Side

Like Oscar Wilde's character Dorian Gray, each of us seeks to show a beautiful face to the world. So, unknowingly, we banish those qualities that don't fit the image into a dark cavern of the mind. Then, like Dorian's painting, these qualities take on a life of their own, which appears abruptly like an unwanted stranger—a critic, an addict, a victim, a tyrant, a liar, a cheater.

This stranger, known as the shadow, is us, yet is not us. Dr. Zweig invites us to explore the shadow as a mystery, not as a problem to be solved. When the "other" arrives from the dark side, if we honor that part of ourselves as a guest we will discover that it comes bearing gifts.

Each shadow character began with a purpose, carrying a valid need. It can erupt and sabotage our adult life, wreaking havoc on self-esteem, loving relationships, and meaningful goals. But when we learn to "romance" it, or create a conscious relationship to a shadow that was previously unconscious, we cultivate a deeper self-knowledge and learn to live a more authentic life.

Session 2: *Meeting the Shadow of Spirituality:* *The Hidden Power of Darkness on the Path*

In every tradition, saints and poets speak of the soul's search for the Beloved, the seeker's yearning for the divine. This holy longing is a secret feeling with many disguises, leading us to pursue a higher union in spiritual practice, religious discipleship, even romantic embrace. It guides us to timeless wisdom and transcendent experiences.

But it also can go awry if we misplace it onto food, alcohol, drugs, or sex. Or if we project it onto an authoritarian teacher, priest, guru, or roshi who abuses power. Thereby, we encounter darkness on the path.

Many renowned teachers, past and present, have labored under these projections—and acted out their shadows in destructive ways, leaving their followers traumatized and lost. Whether the abuse is sexual, financial, or emotional coercion, we feel the shock of betrayal, our innocence is lost, and our faith is shaken. The resulting spiritual disillusionment, Dr. Zweig suggests, does not take us off the path, but is a crucial part of the spiritual journey and can lead us through the narrow gate back toward the light.



Rabbi Rami Shapiro, PhD, is the author of over thirty books on religion and spirituality, including *Holy Rascals*, *The Sacred Art of Lovingkindness*, *Accidental Grace*, and *Rabbi Rami's Guide to God*. He taught religious studies at Middle Tennessee State University for ten years and is cofounder of the One River Foundation, which envisions a just, compassionate, and thriving world guided by the Perennial Wisdom. He also hosts a weekly radio show, *Essential Conversations with Rabbi Rami*.

Based on his books *The Divine Feminine*, *Embracing the Divine Feminine*, and *Love of Eternal Wisdom*, Rabbi Rami will help us explore the nature and power of the Sacred Feminine (Mary, Kali, Shechinah, Chochmah, Sophia, Shakti, Tara, Tao, Mother, etc.), expose ourselves to her gift of radical liberation, and enter into the sacred marriage of masculine and feminine over the course of two talks:

Session 1: *From Light into Darkness:*

The Searing Love of the Sacred Feminine

Session 2: *From Darkness into Light:*

The Illuminating Heart of Lady Wisdom

"Unless we awaken to the mystery of the Mother, and allow the Divine Feminine to flow into, irradiate, illumine, and penetrate every area of our activity and to create in them all harmony, justice, peace, love, ecstasy, and balance, we will die out and take nature, or a large part of it, with us," (Andrew Harvey, The Return of the Mother, adapted).



Pablo Sender, PhD, has been a member of the Theosophical Society since 1996. He has lived and worked at the International Headquarters of the TS in Adyar, India; at the National Center of the TS in America; and he is currently at the Krotana Institute of Theosophy in Ojai, California. An international speaker, he has presented programs and retreats in India, Europe, Oceania, and the three Americas. He writes for many Theosophical journals and is the author of *The Evolution of the Higher Consciousness*. Visit his website at PabloSender.com.

Session 1: *Light and Darkness as Cosmic Realities*

The existence of suffering and evil has puzzled Western theologians and philosophers since the beginning of recorded history. The premise normally assumed is that "good" is natural, while evil is a perversion of the natural. Theosophical literature presents an alternative picture in which spirit and matter, positive and negative, good and evil, are twin aspects of the One Reality. This more organic view of the cosmos acknowledges that both light and darkness play a role in the evolution of consciousness, allowing us to understand better how to relate to life and all its complexities.

Session 2: *The Mystic Quest for Divine Darkness*

While the term "darkness" is normally related to the idea of evil, Christian mystics have frequently used it to refer to the highest aspect of God. Coincidentally, the secret Stanzas of Dzyan that Blavatsky published in her masterpiece, *The Secret Doctrine*, refer to the ultimate reality as "the Darkness." The seemingly paradoxical use of this term is not just an odd poetic license. It has an important meaning, both as a metaphysical concept and as a lodestar in the individual journey toward the Divine.



Tom Ockerse, MFA, has taught at the Rhode Island School of Design since 1971. He is known in particular for his work on the perception of meaning in visual communication design. His many design clients have included Apple Computer, Houghton Mifflin, and *World Magazine*, and he lectures internationally on design education.



Susan Ockerse, also involved in education, has interests in theater and music as well as design. Both Susan and Tom are longtime students of Theosophy.

Session: Creativity: Get Out of the Way

Creativity is a mystery, appearing to most of us a unique or inherent capacity for only a few, and a sporadic occurrence at best. Yet the reverse is quite true: without exception we all possess access to that sublime spark of light—if only we realize ourselves to be the obstacle to that access.

Similarly most of us remain blind to objects of art and their means to help us see beyond the obvious. The key to this blindness is, again, our self. We will explore what the creative process requires, especially the necessity of getting out of our own way.

