

# Stone Women *Dancing*

Moving Feminine Spiritual Leadership Forward in the World

## **Stone Women Dancing**

We are a consortium of women teachers brought together by friendship and the desire to explore the edge of feminine leadership in spirituality and bring it forward in the world.

Today's times are frenetic and uncertain. Stone Women Dancing's classes, rituals, and meditations offer a pathway to deeper refuge and peace of mind, a support for spiritual development, and a platform for honoring the voice of women echoing throughout the world.

The name "Stone Women Dancing" is taken from a ninth century Chinese Buddhist spiritual text. It symbolizes the concrete and fluid, the mundane and sacred coming together in the moment to form a joyous, gratitude-filled dance of life.

### **Our mission is:**

- To offer spiritual teachings from East, West, and indigenous traditions.
- To open gateways of spiritual practice to all levels of seekers.
- To empower the next generation with the benefits of spiritual practice.
- To support and encourage women teachers.
- To embody living from love and freedom in daily life.



Front: Merrra Young, Ellen Hufschmidt. Back: Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart, Marilyn "Myo-O" Habermas-Scher, Judith "Byakuren" Ragir.



### **Judith Byakuren Ragir**

Judith Byakuren Ragir is a senior Zen practitioner and priest. She has a background in bodywork and healing which includes having been a professional modern dancer and a doctor of Oriental

medicine using acupuncture, acupressure, and Chinese herbs.

She studied with Dainin Katagiri roshi from 1973-1990 at the Minnesota Zen Meditation Center in Minneapolis. Following his death in 1990, Judith was instrumental in founding the Clouds in Water Zen Center in St. Paul where she was a senior teacher for nine years.

Presently she teaches meditation and Buddhism at various centers around the metropolitan area where one of her hallmarks is the application of ancient compassion practices to daily living. She makes her home in the St. Croix River valley with her husband and two sons.

**Judith Byakuren Ragir**  
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### **Ellen Hufschmidt**

Ellen's extensive background in consulting, facilitation, and process work psychology has influenced her as a Ritualist for 25 years. Her studies in prayer and ceremony with indige-

nous leaders from Africa, Guatemala, and Native America — coupled with her own Celtic heritage — has made Ellen a fluid and creative facilitator of life transitions.

She works with people of all ages and backgrounds to honor life transitions such as, welcoming new babies, moving from adolescence to adulthood, or grieving life's losses.

Communities have been touched by Ellen's collaborations on Illuminations with Heart of the Beast Puppet Theater and her annual Honoring Caregivers Ceremony, sponsored by over 15 local cancer organizations. She also helps organizations to merge acquired cultures, integrate new leadership and accept new direction.

Ellen's current passion is helping people be present to death so that they can be present to life. She lives with her husband Steve, enjoying their garden together.

**Rites of Change: Honoring Life Transitions**  
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## **Merra Young, LICSW, LMFT**

Merra is an innovator in the integration of psychotherapy with meditation and mindful movement practices. She has created programs, led workshops and retreats for a variety of people

from hospice workers to teens to healthcare and prison settings.

Founder of River's Way Insight Meditation & Psychotherapy Center, she has 28 years experience in both disciplines that she applies to her clients and students. In addition to her private psychotherapy practice, Merra teaches as an adjunct faculty at the University of St. Thomas/ College of St. Catherine Graduate School of Social Work & Spirituality Institute and at the University of MN: Center for Spirituality and Healing.

Merra is a dedicated meditation practitioner in the Vipassana, mindfulness tradition and enjoys Qigong and yoga. She has completed numerous intensive trainings and retreats at Spirit Rock Meditation Center, Vipassana Metta Foundation and The Forest Way. People describe her as a generous, compassionate teacher with a gift for opening the hearts of her students. She lives with her husband, teenage son and their cat.

### **River's Way Insight Meditation & Psychotherapy Center**

**a place for awakening the heart**

**3357 36th Ave. S. , Mpls. MN 55406**

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## **Marilyn Myo-O Habermas-Scher**

Marilyn Myo-O Habermas-Scher is an ordained priest and senior practitioner at the Minnesota

Zen Meditation Center in Minneapolis where she teaches classes, lectures and leads mindfulness retreats. Previous to her work there, she spent three years as an assistant teacher at Clouds in Water Zen Center in St. Paul. Her primary teacher was the venerable Dainin Katagiri roshi, the first Japanese Zen teacher in Minnesota, with whom she studied from 1975–1990. She has been practicing in the Soto Zen and Vipassana Buddhist traditions for nearly thirty years.

Marilyn has an extensive background in the performing arts and she is also trained in a number of body mind practices, including T'ai Chi, Yoga, Qi Gong and Body Mind Centering™. She is the originator of VoiceWork, body based voice training, which she offers in private practice as well as having taught at a number of colleges and universities. Marilyn has offered Voice Healings at Pathways, a complementary healing center, for over ten years. She is the mother of a college age daughter and lives with her husband and two cats in Minneapolis.

### **Marilyn Myo-O Habermas-Scher**

**VoiceWork**

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## **Thérèse Jacobs-Stewart, MA, LP**

Thérèse, psychologist and author of *Paths Are Made by Walking: Practical Steps for Attaining Serenity*, is a trailblazer in exploring the science of spirituality and its impact on both business and personal lives. She has been an organizational consultant, certified Spiritual Director, and mindfulness meditation practitioner for more than 25 years.

Among others, Thérèse has studied with Tibetan monks in Nepal, the Dali Lama in India, Christian priests in a Carmelite hermitage, and has completed Jon Kabat-Zinn's famed stress and relaxation program.

Her present zeal is working with the "edge" of modern brain science and ancient contemplative practices—making them easily available to others in an open and warm environment, free from religious and cultural baggage. Thérèse is the founder of MindRoads Center for Spirituality where she offers retreats, workshops and individual coaching. She lives in St. Paul with her husband Jim.

**Classes and workshops held at  
MindRoads Center for Spirituality**

**2046 St. Clair Avenue**

**St. Paul, Minnesota 55105**

**651-208-0749 • www.mindroads.com**