

# Meditation for inner peace

By Julie Seaman



British writer, educator, and widely acknowledged expert in curriculum values, Charity James will conduct a 5-session meditation workshop beginning Feb. 2.

Better grades are one of the results for many students who take up the practice of meditation.

Grade improvement is an ironic by-product of learning to meditate, however, because the grasping, fearful orientation to life that often accompanies the struggle for grades and achievement is precisely what meditative techniques seek to alter.

If feeling less frantic from day to day appeals to you, consider joining a rarely offered, 5-session meditation workshop being offered on campus by Charity James, a British writer, educator, and widely acknowledged expert in curriculum values. It begins on February 2, and the cost will be \$8 for students, \$15 for faculty, \$20 for others, and will be held on Tuesdays at 4:30 in Founders.

"It really is our birthright to meditate," says Charity, who studied under the great spiritual master Muktananda for one year, and then ran a meditation center full time in the mid-70s. "We have this inner self, this inner peace, this inner power and joy. We keep on scrabbling about, doing the best in our lives, and so much dependent on other peoples' opinion of us, how it's all going, will we get work...so many reasons for anxiety and tension. Yet

within us—I know, because I meet that being in meditation—there is the wisdom that strengthens us to meet our problems."

The sort of meditation that Charity will be teaching is called Siddha Yoga, which is not a yoga of exercises like Hatha Yoga. Participants in the workshop will be given instructions, will spend part of the time actually meditating, and may do some chanting and singing "if people like it; if not, then we won't." The sessions will be informal, and Charity stresses that "there's an attitude toward life behind it, but there isn't any dogma attached to it."

"It's not about going off into a cave somewhere, but rather, just doing your work in the ordinary way, living your life, but with that wonderful inner contact that one has."

Charity calls her meditation program Affirmal Life because she notices that "we spend a lot of time wishing our lives were otherwise instead of changing them from within." She is convincing without trying to be, and by her own buoyancy, uplifts her hearers as she explains the wisdom and strength that can be gained from going into the "inner silence".

Earnestly, she says that meditation has shown her to "just love your life as it unfolds."

Those interested in joining the meditation workshop should contact the Center for Personal Growth.

## Album Review

# Has Costello gone country?

By Constance Irving

The music industry has finally made a connection that was forced on me years ago. The obsessively melancholic lyrics of certain new wave artists finds its perfect counterpoint in (sit down now), classic country-western.

Elvis Costello's *Almost Blue* is a collection of country western songs sung by this usually new wave artist. Costello makes this connection stick, sometimes brilliantly, sometimes just oddly.

Costello is a George Jones buff

who performed in a tribute to the "Possum" last year. Costello showed up despite a case of the mumps, and announced to the audience "I'd have gotten up out of my deathbed to sing with this man."

And with Jone's classic, "Why Don't You Love Me Like You Used To Do," Costello begins his slightly schizoid endeavor with a country-riffed, new waved explosion of anxiety. This number in particular may put off fans of traditional country, but Costello's "Sweet Dreams About You," will

win them back. Despite a somewhat limited vocal range, Costello's version is very nearly as full of heartache as the Patsy Cline original.

Costello fares best with the rufel numbers. "A Good Year For Roses" is also well-done. Who but George Jones or Elvis Costello could linger so ef-

fectively over such agonizing detail as "I can hardly bear the sight of lipstick on your cigarettes there in the ashtray/

Lying cold the way you left them, but at least your lips caressed them while you passed". Such lines sound positively silly when quoted, and indeed, too often sound silly when sung, but Costello handles the maudlin lyric with the maudlin tang of real life. Therein lies the essence of country music, and on numbers such as "Too Far Gone," he proves he can descend into country's desolation with the best of them.

It must be admitted that Costello has a few more lessons to learn. His version of "Success" is far from being one. "Brown to

Blue," another of those wonderfully awful country gems that either soars or sours, does the latter.

Still, the good numbers alone would make this album worth the price of admission for any open-minded C&W or Costello fan. His Honky-Tonk versions of "Tonight the Bottle Let Me Down" and "Sittin' and Thinkin'" also shine. Costello understands both angles of a "Good-old-boy-gone-wrong" number, and he performs with both humor and desperation.

"I'm Your Toy (Hot Burrito No. 1)" though, is easily the best number on the album. The combination of the Burrito Bros., subtle lyrics with Costello's aching, knowing, and lonely vocal is not to be missed by anyone who loves a sad song.

Costello's offering to C&W is an acceptable one. If you like Elvis Costello or Country-Western, keep an open mind and listen to *Almost Blue*. It is a treat for those who can appreciate such bizarre syntheses.

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