



# CMPS

Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies

*Presentation*

## The Trauma of Being Alive: *Perspectives from Buddhism and Psychoanalysis*

If there is one thing that Buddhism and psychoanalysis can agree on, it is that trauma does not happen to just a few unlucky people, it happens to everyone. Illness and death eventually impact us all, but even the everyday sufferings of loneliness and fear can be traumatic. Psychoanalysis has described the developmental, or relational, trauma of the mal-attunement of early life. Buddhism has emphasized the inherent precariousness of the impermanence of life. But both disciplines concur that trauma, of one kind or another, is something that everyone must face sooner or later.

Many in Western psychology teach that if we understand the cause of trauma, we might move past it, while those drawn to Eastern practices often see meditation as a means of rising above, or distancing themselves from, their most difficult emotions. But dissenting voices occur in both traditions. Ranging from the contributions of analysts like D.W. Winnicott, Michael Eigen, and Robert Stolorow to the undercurrent of loss in the Buddha's own biography—the death of his mother when he was a week old—this evening's discussion holds that not only do the little T traumas of early life condition how we respond to the “big T” traumas all around us, we can use the traumas of daily life to open our minds and hearts.

2 CE Credits for Licensed Psychoanalysts, Social Workers, and Psychologists

■ **FRIDAY, JANUARY 11, 2019 • 7:30 - 9:30 PM** ■

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PRACTITIONERS AND GENERAL PUBLIC: \$40 | STUDENTS: \$10



**Mark Epstein, MD**, is a psychiatrist in private practice in New York City. He is the author of several books about the interface of Buddhism and psychotherapy, including *Thoughts without a Thinker*, *Going to Pieces without Falling Apart*, *Going on Being*, *Open to Desire*, *Psychotherapy without the Self*, and *The Trauma of Everyday Life*. His latest work is *Advice Not Given: A Guide to Getting Over Yourself* (Penguin Press). He received his undergraduate and medical degrees from Harvard University.

### CONTINUING EDUCATION INFORMATION

**LEARNING OBJECTIVES:** Participants will be able to (1) describe the symptoms of trauma, (2) differentiate between acute trauma and relational (or developmental) trauma, and (3) describe the differences between the techniques of Buddhist mindfulness and Western psychoanalytic psychotherapy in the treatment of trauma.

**Licensed Psychoanalysts:** *The Center for Modern Psychoanalytic Studies (CMPS) is recognized by the New York State Education Department's State Board for Mental Health Practitioners as an approved provider of continuing education for licensed psychoanalysts (#P-0032).*

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