

Dent Gitchel Jr.

How many classes/years have you taught at LifeQuest?

- This is my first time teaching at LifeQuest.

Please list your most recent job title:

- I am an Associate Professor and Graduate Coordinator of Rehabilitation in the College of Counseling, Human Performance and Rehabilitation at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock.

What is your educational background?

- I am a 1993 graduate of Hendrix College (philosophy). I have two Masters Degrees. I hold a PhD in Rehabilitation Education and Research from the University of Arkansas, as well as Post-Master's Certificates in Educational Measurement and Quantitative Research Methods. I was a Walton Distinguished Fellow during his doctoral studies.

Please list experiences, awards or recognition you've had which are related (or not!) to your upcoming class topic:

- I have been a student of meditation since January 1991. In 2013, I became one of the first persons certified to teach Stanford's Compassion Cultivation Training program developed and inspired by Thupten Jinpa at the Center for Compassion and Altruism Research and Education. Dr. Jinpa is best known as primary translator for His Holiness the Dalai Lama. I have also studied in the Mindfulness Based Emotional Balance Teacher Training Program with teachers Margaret Cullen and Gonzalo Brito, and will begin offering this curriculum in the fall. I have been chosen three times as a Senior Investigator at the Mind and Life Summer research Institute, and have just completed studying Microphenomenological Interviewing with Claire Petitmengin, Professor Emerita at Institut Mines-Telecom and member of the Archives Husserl, Ecole Normale Supérieure Paris. I currently serve as a mitra (spiritual friend) in the Dzogchen Cycles Program through Dawn Mountain in Houston, Texas under the supervision of Anne Klein and Harvey Aronson.
- I teach meditation courses and workshops across Central Arkansas and the region, as well as present about contemplative practices at academic conferences. I have studied and attended retreats with many teachers including Roshi Keido Fukushima, Lama Dudjom Dorjee, Geshe Damdul Namgyal, Lama Tharchin Rinpoche, Dechen Yeshe Wangmo, Sharon Salzberg and B. Alan Wallace. My current teachers include Geshe Thupten Dorjee (Tibetan Tsongkhapa LamRim tradition), Anne Klein and Harvey Aronson (Tibetan Longchen Nyingtik tradition), and Gonzalo Brito and Margaret Cullen (secular-based mindfulness and compassion-focused practices.) I have long been interested in opportunities and challenges of integrating Buddhist Spiritual practices into a modern Western context I also practice Christian-based contemplative practices. I am a member of Christ Episcopal Church in Little Rock.

Please tell us why you like to (or are interested in) teaching at LifeQuest:

- I love and enjoy sharing contemplative practices with the community.

List three distinctive personal facts about yourself:

1. I love to go hiking and camping.
2. The greatest and most rewarding for me has been parenthood (I have a ten year old daughter and a seven year old son).
3. The first mayor of Little Rock, Matthew Cunningham, was my great great great grandfather, and I grew up in the house built by my great grandparents (Guy and Eura Gitchel).