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TOWARDS WHOLENESS

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FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP OF HEALING (A QUAKER GROUP)

The Friends Fellowship of Healing is an informal group of the Religious Society of Friends (Quakers). (*Registered Charity number 284459.*)

Since its foundation in 1935, it has sought to uphold the cause of a healing ministry, and seeks to be a channel to help people towards health and harmony of body, mind and spirit, which it believes is God's purpose for everyone.

It has prayer groups attached to many Meetings, and also postal groups to enable isolated people, and those who may be unable to join a local group, to co-operate with others in the service of healing prayer.

The Fellowship holds conferences, retreats and workshops held either in its residential centre (*Claridge House, Dormans Road, Dormansland, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH*) or elsewhere.

All members annually receive three issues of *Towards Wholeness*, the journal of the Fellowship, published in March, July and November.

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Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

FFH / QSH website: www.quaker-healing.org.uk

Front cover photo: A heron encounter – Nicholas Rawlence

Back cover photo: Summer at Claridge House – Editor

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A REMINDER... *that a bursary fund is now available for those FFH members who would like to attend any FFH or QSH gatherings or courses, which may be held at Claridge House, or other venues. Reductions on the prices of these events are discretionary taking into account the individual circumstances of each person.*

Applications need to be made through an overseer of your Meeting, which should then be forwarded (either by post or phone) to the Treasurer of the FFH (name and address, etc. on the back cover of TW).

BEECH TREES

Beech trees form a canopy of palest green –
Creating a place for prayer
With the beauty of their scene –
Above so much ugliness and strife
Giving a glimpse of life
As it should be –
Unfolding peace under the canopy of trees.

Anne Smith



Anne Smith
1922 – 2014



Anne was born in Ealing and spent much of her early childhood living on a poultry farm before moving to Maidenhead with her mother and sister, Jean. They lived in a tall Victorian house where there was room to take in lodgers and evacuees providing Anne's mother with plenty to care for and Anne with a colourful childhood full of characters filling the house to its full capacity. Anne married Harry in 1944 and they lived with Anne's mother for a while until their first child was born. They moved several times before settling in Kings Langley in 1961, by which time they had four children. Harry was then working in London and Anne took a job at the local Steiner School where their children were educated.

Anne's interest in the Quaker movement began while they were living in London drawn to them by the Peace Testimony. This interest continued after moving to Kings Langley and, fortunately for her, the neighbours on one side were Quakers and soon she joined the Hemel Hempstead Meeting. Her interest in spirituality was always strong and her healing work grew as time passed. She also became increasingly creative, enjoying painting – she drew the tree above – needlework and a passion for writing.

In the late 1980s several members of Bedford Meeting decided that we needed a distant healing group within our Meeting. Feelers went out to what was then Luton and Leighton Monthly Meeting and as a result Anne, together with her friend Joanna Harris from Luton Meeting, visited us in Bedford. They were very keen and supportive and as a result a distant healing group was formed in Bedford and we have been well supported and well used since the beginning.

Geoffrey Martin

Jesus says in the Bible 'Your faith has made you whole'. Wholeness may be used as another word for healing, but perhaps one that conveys spiritual as well as physical healing. The title of this journal, 'Towards Wholeness', suggests some of the paradox of our search for wholeness, as something we long for but never quite reach.

So what is wholeness? How do we acquire or find it? What does it mean when we lose it? How can we enable it in others?

I have an image in my mind of a young girl about 6, (it could just as well be a boy). She kneels by a rock pool watching the sway of the seaweed, alert for any movement of creatures from under the stones. She dips her hand into the clear water. It looks like a strange pink creature. She thinks 'this is my hand'. And then a deeper thought shakes her. 'And I am me'. It is a moment of wonder, perhaps her first, clear conscious realisation of herself as a whole unique being.

Our sense of being grows throughout life. We call it self, identity, soul. Continuity and wholeness are of its essence and yet it is also fragile and any threat to its permanence or wholeness can be disturbing.

Any of the normal crises and transitions of life can create crises in our sense of self – leaving home, falling in love, becoming a parent, a new job or home, the death or loss of a loved person, old age. And on top of the normal life stages are the unforeseen disasters affecting whole communities or individual crushing blows. In such times of catastrophe or transition we can be gripped by uncertainty, doubt and confusion, lost in an unreal world. We may become ill or unable to cope with life any more. We survive (or sometimes fail to do so) in many ways. Therapy is one of them.

People often come to therapy when they no longer feel whole. Some have had their lives and feeling about themselves shattered by violence or abuse, illness or accident. Other situations may be less traumatic but still disabling. A young man comes because he feels slighted or 'invisible' as he faces an adult world – 'There's not a me-shaped space out there'. A woman whose youngest child has left home is distraught to feel 'I don't know who I am any more'. Others may experience the intense unease of not feeling whole in a spiritual way. The lives of great religious leaders, of George Fox or John Wesley or Jesus Himself in the desert, describe times of agonising transition in the search for a more complete wholeness, in which we may find echoes of our own journeys.

The therapeutic relationship

What can therapy, whether through dialogue or more direct healing, do in these situations?

A transition is a time of vulnerability and dependence, from which we emerge, as out of a chrysalis or egg, with a new sense of being and independence, a new wholeness. An egg is one of the most beautifully whole forms of nature, yet it has to be broken if the chick is to become more fully what it is meant to be. Sometimes we have to break the shell that others, or even we ourselves, have made around us. And sometimes we need outside help to do this. As there are catalysts in chemistry, so the therapist tries to enable a change in others.

Such enabling depends on a complex, unfolding relationship. It is a practical working relationship of times and contracts; an application of learned skills and expertise; it involves both parties through the influence of past experience in the present; it is a personal encounter between two fellow beings; it is also a meeting vitally informed by whatever we (client and therapist) believe in and value, which give meaning and purpose to our lives.

From the viewpoint of the client any of these aspects can form the primary focus of their concern and expectation. The therapist or healer will also give priority to one or more of these aspects. The pages of *Towards Wholeness* describe many ways in which the transcendent aspects of the relationship appear in healing. In other therapeutic practice the emphasis may be on learning new skills, on letting go of destructive thoughts or habits or on the exploration of the trauma of past experience. My own experience of therapy, received and offered, has been mainly of the listening/talking kind. But I believe that in the many forms of therapy and healing all the above aspects of relationship are present and have their place.

Trust, dependence and vulnerability

A therapeutic relationship is built on trust. There has to be trust in the clarity and fairness of the working arrangements; trust in the professional competence of the therapist. We need, too, to trust in their integrity as a person. Trust is needed for a healing relationship that involves an intensity that may echo and repeat significant experiences from the past. And trust (or as we may call it, 'faith') is a crucial element in the transcendent aspect of the relationship which, as I see it, underlies and underpins our sometimes wavering trust in our fellow human beings.

Trust involves an acceptance of dependence in the client. In my own experience of therapy in my twenties the therapist asked me at the first interview what

I wanted from him. My reply was that I wanted to discover truth. He replied that in that case he could see no basis for our work together. I left shaken, but after several days of turmoil I returned and said 'I need your help'. 'OK', he said, 'Let's start'. No amount of discussion of truth could help where there was not a realisation of the need for help.

The helping relationship involves trust and an acceptance of dependence while a familiar sense of wholeness is given up and a new one is shaped. But it also requires trust from the therapist and openness to the client's pain and confusion. It is a dialogue of silence and words, but also a dialogue of selves, almost a kind of merging of two selves, and a corresponding opening up and risk of self and its apparent wholeness. Paradoxically we can find a new wholeness, for others and ourselves, through our vulnerability and brokenness, as in Henri Nouwen's image of the wounded healer. At the same time the therapist has to retain something of his or her secure sense of self and authenticity, without which they and the client can become submerged in the client's suffering and confusion.

The end of life

As I began with an experience of childhood awareness of self, I want to end with the present experience of old age. What does wholeness mean, when as Eliot, says, 'body and soul begin to fall asunder', when we are faced with an increasing helplessness, a sense, sometimes overwhelming, of powerlessness and pointlessness, when our whole world seems to be falling apart?

Erikson described the time as one of crisis in which there was a struggle for a balance between despair and what he called integrity, a sense of personal wholeness which he described as 'the acceptance of one's one and only life cycle as something that had to be'. In old age, however, we have to surrender much of the identity that came from the prized secure individuality, the wonder and goal of our childhood and youth, along with the physical and mental competencies, the work and friends which gave assurance to our apparent wholeness.

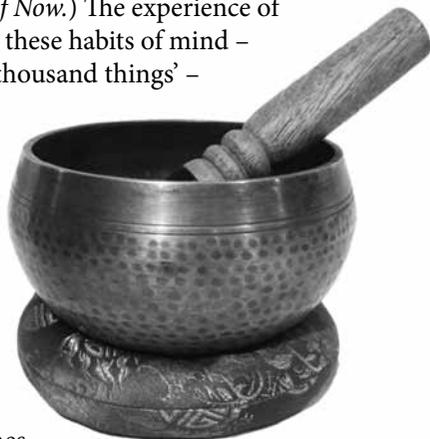
Yet perhaps we have learnt enough from life's many transitions and heartaches, and from the care and love that has sustained us, that something survives and something is added from this surrendering. We may learn that a wounded self is a necessary part of a new beginning, a new sense of wholeness that can barely be glimpsed or imagined until it happens; and that our true wholeness is as part of a greater whole of amazing beauty and love, 'within whom we live and move and have our being'. We may learn to trust like Julian of Norwich, that 'All shall be well' or, like Walt Whitman, that 'to die is different from what anyone supposed, and luckier'.

What is silence? It is so much more than the absence of sound. A meditative silence is really about a sense of inner quiet, of stillness and tranquillity, free from mental chatter as well as external sound. Often this is felt in those moments when we hover between waking and sleeping, between the in breath and the out breath. This space is so precious in these times when we have so much input from radio, television, phones, email, Facebook... it can take a big effort to drop all these distractions and actively seek out silence. And it can be challenging to drop these distractions, enter a silent space and observe what arises.

One of the great gifts of working with sound is the way it can move us effortlessly into this meditative silence – we can just rest and be carried on waves of sound. It makes it really easy for us. There is no need to sit on the meditation cushion, struggling to still the mind. Instead it's just about surrendering to the flow and following the sound into silence.

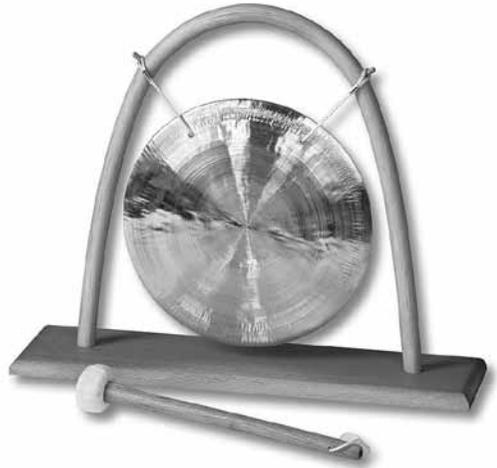
Sound releases us from mental chatter, stilling the critical voice which constantly makes judgements on our experiences. With language comes the desire to label what we perceive, and then with ego the impulse to judge whether things are going in our favour or not. This is essential for our survival and protection, but can prevent us from being in touch with our essential selves and from living in the moment. We also habitually cast back to the past and forward into the future, endlessly rehearsing what we should have said, what we might say. As Eckhart Tolle so vividly describes this: 'virtually everyone hears a voice, or several voices, in their head all the time...the voice comments, speculates, judges, compares, complains, likes, dislikes and so on.' (*The Power of Now.*) The experience of a sound bath or meditation gives us release from these habits of mind – we do come back, of course, to the world of 'ten thousand things' – but altered, because we have experienced the deep peace which lies beyond.

One of the many beauties of gongs and singing bowls, is that they create music which we can't easily define or label, which never repeats itself – it just is what it is. So the mind surrenders the search for meaning, for pattern, and for judgement. Each time we play or listen we experience a unique improvisation, with many and complex tones and overtones. Listening intently to these instruments draws



Singing bowl

our focus from the ego, softening the edges and allowing us to just be. We lose our illusions of separateness and feel the reality of our inter-connectedness with all beings. Sometimes in this state of connectedness we can experience flashes of insight or understanding, or be released from mental or physical discomfort.



Then the silence which follows these sounds is also not just an absence of sound, but is a resonant silence – the vibrations may no longer be audible but they continue to sound in the body and in the room. Holding a silence at the end of the sound meditation is a wonderful harmonious experience, as we continue to rest and integrate all we have heard and felt.

Often people report an enhanced quality of listening – as we turn our attention outward once again to engage with the material world, we can often find our enjoyment of music and sound sharpened. We can also find that we can welcome in all the sounds which arise – traffic as well as birdsong – hearing it all as vibration.

There is something special too about the experience of sharing this silence with other people – in a one to one session with the practitioner, and in a group session with all the participants. This has a different quality from solitary meditation – we feel the energies of our companions in this experience, and are drawn together. Having the presence of a practitioner who creates a safe space allows us to surrender more deeply than we would otherwise. They take the role of a guide or witness, giving a sense of security. Perhaps there is some ancient memory of needing to keep some awareness for self-protection when we are alone, preventing us from relaxing completely, and this is released when we are accompanied.

This is a big responsibility for sound practitioners, but it is profoundly rewarding and a great privilege to share the journey into sound and silence with our fellow human beings.

There is nothing in this world that proclaims the grandeur and beauty of life on earth more eloquently than silence.

Roger Housden

A Distant Healing Event at Stockport Meeting House.

A small group of healers and distant healers meets at my home every last Wednesday of each month. It has members from both Disley and Stockport Meetings, and one of the Stockport members expressed an interest in having a distant healing day, following the report in *Towards Wholeness* from Poole Meeting in Dorset, of the one they held in the Summer of 2013 (TW 136).

We discussed this at length, and finally decided we would give it a go. Poole Meeting was contacted, and they were delighted to hear from us; they were very helpful and answered our questions about how they ran the event.

In some trepidation, we prepared posters to be sent to every Meeting in our Area, and an explanatory leaflet to be handed to all comers on the day. We decided to use the hours from 11.00 am to 3.00 pm, and Friends were advised to bring lunch if they wanted to stay any length of time, and we would provide drinks and biscuits for in-between times.

All was to be conducted in silence, and names of the sick could be mentioned in the quiet, either aloud or from within. Friends could stay for as long or short a time as they wished, and there was always an 'elder' present for queries, and these changed every hour.

The day itself was awful, weatherwise; it rained all the time, but an intrepid group was there in force, and prepared to stay the full four hours.

Sixteen Friends took part, and all who came entered into the spirit of the event, and the quietness and peace were almost palpable.

We felt it had all been worthwhile, and thanks are due to everyone who helped to make it special.

Like Poole, we hope to encourage other Meetings to have a similar event, and will give what help we can. We in our group hope to have another Distant Healing Day some time.

Leonora Dobson
(Disley Meeting, East Cheshire Area.)

It began with a prompt – a spiritual prompt that wouldn't go away. With encouragement from Elders, approval from my Meeting, and armed with references, I was interviewed and accepted into the ecumenical chaplaincy team at Poole Hospital. Following a CRB check and a one day hospital induction course, I then completed the in-house chaplaincy training and a three month probationary period before being let loose on my own . Further training took the form of a lay pastoral assistant's course . In this work, one has to be careful to observe hospital protocol, especially in matters of confidentiality and non-involvement of any kind regarding the patient's medical condition and treatment. It didn't take long to realise that sitting on the patient's bed was also a no-no. Learning these boundaries of acceptable practice has made the team's contribution very acceptable to the hospital authorities.

The hospital has a strong ecumenical team (virtually all denominations represented including the Jewish Faith) with 2 full-time lead chaplains and up to a dozen voluntary part-timers like myself, assisting with the spiritual, pastoral, social support and care of both patients and staff. Lay chaplains are assigned to designated wards, specific locations or follow a special ministry e.g. hospice work. We visit all patients regardless of faith tradition or no faith at all. Thus we fulfil a generic role within our regular hours (in my case 4 hours a week) but are also on call at other times to visit patients of our own denomination.

As a team we meet on Thursdays for a 30 minute chapel service followed by a briefing before going to our wards. Not only have I been fully accepted as a Quaker lay chaplain, but I am also asked to arrange semi-programmed Meetings for Worship from time to time. The opportunities for Quaker outreach are many, and the chapel library contains several Quaker books including *Quaker Faith and Practice*. To date, I have worked within the team for 6 years, and been involved with the hospital's work in different ways including written contributions to chaplaincy leaflets and participation in the annual hospital service. The team thrives on celebrating differences and diversity in a loving and compassionate manner. Yet we are all bonded together as team-players with a common purpose.

Within the ethos of our visiting programme, we are conscious of the fact that we are not there to preach, proselytise or put forward our own denominational bias. As a Quaker I have no difficulty with this, as I try to see that my Quakerism is based on how I live my life rather than on what I say I believe. Religion is not specifically mentioned unless initiated by the patients either by word or by non-verbal cues. Our main role is to show that we care, that we are able to give

time, and that we are there to listen reflectively to their stories. The interaction is always focused on a patient-led agenda, wherever the patient is coming from.

Let me describe some aspects of a typical day. I'm given a minimum of two wards to cover plus a small list of specific referrals, of whom some will have been seen previously. Lately I have been visiting the two stroke units, acute and rehab. On entering the ward, I first make myself known to the staff sister or ward receptionist and request permission to talk to patients, at the same time finding out who is in particular need of a chaplaincy visit. I try to focus on patients who may not get visitors. One such clue is to see whether the patient has get-well cards or not.

Having introduced myself to the patient and checked how they're feeling today, I let them set the agenda in terms of what they want to talk about. This usually happens spontaneously though occasional prompts can also help. Patients will often tell you things they wouldn't mention to the medical staff or their own relatives. Their stories range from harrowing to inspiring.

As a Quaker lay chaplain, I'm working on two levels, the cerebral level while listening to their story, but also very much at the spiritual level. At this unspoken, un-observed level, I am attempting to let that of God within me reach out to that of God in the patient, with the belief that healing can be given on this plane of being. I ask to be used as a channel for His healing. By being aware that we are within and surrounded by the presence of God, my intention is that the patient receives healing from God for their highest good, whatever that may be. I then have to 'let go and let God.' The only observable signs may be relaxation, a sense of calm, and a deeper feeling of being cared for. In extreme cases, we hope that we can help the patient to have 'a better death'.

In conclusion, we treat all patients as individuals, respecting their privacy and dignity. We are all-inclusive, non-judgemental, recognizing that our diversity is a strength. I have felt very privileged and fulfilled to be a part of this wonderful example of 'best practice'.

O the comfort, the inexpressible comfort, of feeling safe with a person neither having to weigh thought or measure words, but only to pour them right out, just as they are – chaff and grain together – knowing that a faithful hand will take and sift them, then, with a breath of kindness blow the rest away.

George Eliot – *The Mill on the Floss*

THE NEW DEPARTURE

There comes a time when the door is opened and shut
And the last guest has gone; and we must close this house
Which has given graciously, and in the fullest enjoyment
its hospitality. So, when the fire is raked and the hearth swept,
and the fine crumbs shaken from the cloth,
We can no longer lie awake and talk of evening
But must take one case, and only one, and pack it,
Because the house is no longer our home.

And why are we compelled to take leave of these faces,
And this room, where the warmth and light linger,
And the air is delicate with food and wine,
We do not know: only the necessity is there.
And where we are to go, and in what direction
We are not told; only that we must leave
For somewhere alien, to greet a stranger.
Whichever way we take will be the right one
Because our destination is at the end of all lanes.
And whoever we greet will be the right person
Because all strangers come from home.

With expectation, and a little sorrow,
For all partings are sad, we shall go forth.
And we thank the roof that has housed us
And the faces that have smiled on us,
Because we are grateful: and then we turn away,
To travel on in hope. And in great joy,
To the next turning.

Jean Stubbs

This poem was also reproduced in *Reaching Out*, the magazine
of the Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies, Spring 2014.
www.quakerfellowshipforafterlifestudies.co.uk

ANOTHER INSPIRATIONAL HUMAN GIVENS STORYTELLING WORKSHOP

This was the second Human Givens workshop that I have attended, the first being two years ago and entitled *How to tell stories that heal* (See TW 133, Summer 2012). Due to a combination of reasons I had not taken full advantage of the inspiration generated by that first course, but the experience was certainly enough to make me book a place on this new variation, *How to create and use stories that help emotionally distressed children* as I am determined in 2014 to finally stop talking and start writing.

So, on January 23rd, under the experienced guidance of Pamela Woodford, herself an author of several books in the *Brighter Little Minds* series, some 30 people, including a couple of craftsmen (electrician and plumber) looking to change careers, plus workers from a wide variety of child-related healthcare fields, assembled in the sympathetic ambience of Friends House in London. I think I was the only one who described herself as primarily a writer. Many were looking for tips on how to create stories but I knew that my main aim for the day would be on learning about how to focus my stories.

Working through a series of exercises, in pairs and later in groups of three or four, and following readings and examples by Pamela from her own books, we concentrated first on metaphors and developing story lines from sample metaphorical sentences. My imagination, which needs to be grounded in experience, was triggered by: “When they listened to the story the children were glued to their seats”, as this took me back to the previous week when I had taken my Pets As Therapy dog in to a class of eleven-year-olds with autistic/Asperger spectrum challenges.

The second exercise was to list metaphors and brainstorm all their possible symbolic uses and how they could be incorporated in a plot. We were given a free script handout of one of Pamela’s stories, King Giggle, which she read to us in entirety before working in our groups to unpack what we thought were the problems being addressed and the metaphors used. We then moved on to identifying and extracting any embedded suggestions and this proved to be the area that “really spoke to my condition” as I’ve had a lifelong distrust of the preliminary softening up stage because of experience of greater susceptibility to control thereafter. It was unexpectedly therapeutic therefore for me to understand more about how the process works and also how it can be used for positive rather than negative purpose. Finally, after lunch we considered the five senses and how they can add vital colour and texture to storytelling, before working in our groups to select a specific problem or case and use what we

had learned to creatively address it. An hour was allocated for this task and the results were then read out and enjoyed by everyone.

This Human Givens programme proved to be another hugely rewarding experience and I also liked those of my fellow delegates I managed to talk to in the breaks. As always, and particularly due to a not very restful night in a hostel dormitory, I felt annoyingly soporific after lunch, and I do find working in more than pairs quite difficult, but the day was well planned without being stressful and yet deceptively effective. Together with bountiful refreshments; an excellent set of complementary notes, an amusing copy of a certificate from “The Society of Childlike Persons” and a formal Certificate of Attendance completed the day’s package and sent us buzzing on our different ways.

Jenny Chantler

TALKING FRIENDS, is a registered charity (Number 299656) run by Quakers, to provide visually impaired Friends and Attenders in Britain Yearly Meeting with access to Quaker periodicals and books at low cost.

Recordings for the visually impaired are made and distributed on USB memory sticks by small teams of Quaker volunteers in their homes around the country.

Duplicating and distribution of *The Friend*, *Quaker News*, *Quaker Voices* and *Towards Wholeness* is carried out by staff of Quaker Life at Friends House in London.

We do not edit or make selections from periodicals; our policy is to record the entire contents.

An opening index, plus audible ‘cues’, enable the listener to read the periodical in any order, choosing or skipping articles at will.

For further information and an application form please contact:

General Talking Friends enquiries:
Alan Johnson,
8 Norman Road,
Northfield,
Birmingham B31 2EW
Tel: 0121 476 0217
Email: info@talkingfriends.org.uk

The Alphabet

*A's for arthritis;
B's the bad back,
C's the chest pains, perhaps cardiac?
D is for dental decay and decline,
E is for eyesight, can't read that top line!
F is for fissures and fluid retention,
G is for gas which I'd rather not mention –
H for high blood pressure – I'd rather it low,
I for incisions with scars you can show.
J is for joints, out of socket, won't mend,
K is for knees that crack when they bend.
L for libido, what happened to sex?
M is for memory, I forget what comes next.
N is neuralgia, in nerves way down low,
O is for osteo, bones that don't grow!
P for prescriptions, I have quite a few.
Just give me a pill I'll be good as new!
Q is for queasy, is it fatal, or flu?
R is for reflux, one meal turns to two.
S is for sleepless nights, counting my fears,
T is for tinnitus, bells in my ears!
U is for urinary, troubles with flow,
V for vertigo – that's dizzy, you know.
W for worry, NOW what's going round?
X is for X-ray, and what might be found.
Y for another year I'm left here behind,
Z is for zest I still have – in my mind.*

*I've survived all the symptoms, my body's deployed,
And I'm keeping twenty-six doctors fully employed!*

Anon

You are as young as your faith and as old as your doubt;
As young as the confidence in yourself, as old as your fear;
As young as your hope, and as old as your despair.

Samuel Ullman

CLARIDGE HOUSE PROGRAMME

Bursary assistance available, depending on individual personal circumstances. Please enquire when booking. For booking details – and other tariff, including daily rates and special breaks – please contact David Huxley, Claridge House, Dormans Road, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH. Email: welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk Website: www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk Tel: 01342 832150.



CLARIDGE HOUSE IN 2014

A reminder that on the weekend of the 15-17th August we will be celebrating our 60th Anniversary.

We will be doing this in style, so do not miss the opportunity to spend an enjoyable weekend here in the company of those involved in Claridge House – past, present and future. We look forward to seeing you here!

For those who are discouraged by the cost of the courses and residential stays in these financially challenging times the good news is that the Bursary Fund is currently well endowed. So the Trustees have decided that the fund should be made available to all. For the foreseeable future everyone will qualify for one Bursary per calendar year for a course or Residential Break. All you have to do is mention the Bursary fund when you are booking.

On the **first Wednesday** of each month there will be a Led Day Retreat **£40**

August 6th **Alexander Technique** led by *Barrie Hope*

September 3rd **The ‘Excellency of Peace’** led by *Cherry Simpkin*

December 3rd **Circle Dance for All** led by *Sandie Wade*

July 14th - 18th **ENRICH YOUR JOY OF KNITTING** **(£340)**

Spend a rewarding week learning new skills including Portuguese style, Sculptured knitting, Horizontal chain stitch, Six ways stocking stitch..... Also, gain an insight into the neuroscience of knitting as well as having a relaxing Knatter. *Hilary Grundy, a lifelong Quaker and passionate about knitting as a therapeutic activity.*

August 1st - 3rd HERBS FOR HEALING (€200)

Share, discuss, learn, about growing and using herbs using the gardens of Claridge House. Learn about harvesting and drying herbs that aid relaxation and preparation of teas. Culinary and medicinal herbs will be mentioned. Optional visit to nearby 15th century herb garden with over 170 culinary, medicinal and household herbs. Please bring outdoor shoes.

Katy Beck, a teacher turned professional gardener, who looks after the gardens of Claridge House.

August 8th - 10th CALLIGRAPHY AND ILLUMINATION (€200)

Learn, improve, experiment with various scripts, use them in the lay-out and design of short texts. Explore simple illumination with gold leaf, with an illuminated, decorated individual letter or copying an animal from a Mediaeval bestiary. Suitable for all levels, beginner to advanced, tuition on an individual basis, frequent group demonstrations.

Gaynor Goffe, a well-known calligrapher and tutor with over 30 years' experience of teaching calligraphy, a Fellow of Calligraphy & Lettering Arts Society, and the Society of Scribes and Illuminators.

August 11th - 15th SILENT RETREAT FOR ABUNDANCE (€340)

Using Mindfulness meditative techniques, this totally silent retreat offers us an opportunity to be still in the summer fecundity, and enhance our fulfilment and equanimity. *Anne Simpson, experienced Course Facilitator and Quaker Healer.*

August 15th - 17th CLARIDGE HOUSE 60TH ANNIVERSARY (€180)

We are planning a garden party on Saturday afternoon in the grounds, followed by a musical soirée in the evening. Celebrate in style by staying here over the weekend. For the latest news, either visit www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk or phone 01342 832150.

August 22nd - 24th THE ART OF SINGING FREELY (€200)

Begin by connecting how you sound and how your whole body sings in a dynamic and centred way – using spiritual practices, singing technique and personalized coaching. Feel better and freer as you bring more of yourself into play – the singing flows from there! Everyone welcome from beginners to experienced.

Mary Benefiel, a full-time singing and voice teacher, currently leading groups in Europe and the UK.

Aug 29th - 31st DEVELOPING REWARDING RELATIONSHIPS (£215)

Discover who you really are and how to make choices that work for you. Rewarding relationships start with your relationship with yourself. When you really know, like and trust yourself you will be able to develop fulfilling relationships with others. An informal, interactive weekend with a workbook to assist you through the process.

Sue Plumtree, Life Enhancing Coach, Author of 'Dancing with the Mask: Learning to Love and Be Loved'.

September 8th - 12th MINDFULNESS MEDITATION WEEK (£340)

Come and deepen your meditation practice to experience healing on a physical, mental and emotional level. Deep relaxation will be taken daily. Longer periods of sitting will be encouraged and walking meditation will be done too. The practices will be from Yoga and Tibetan traditions, as well as those of mindfulness meditation techniques. *Lina Newstead, a British Wheel of Yoga teacher who runs private classes, retreats and Yoga teacher training courses.*

September 12th - 14th CONCERNING SPIRITUAL GIFTS (£200)

A principle fruit of meditation, and Meeting for Worship, is the discovery of our spiritual gifts, such as healing, discernment and the creative arts. We will focus on simple yet profound ways of unfolding our personal gifts, allowing them to flow naturally from the Oneness, the root of most spiritual traditions.

Jim Pym, spiritual healer, meditation teacher with more than 40 years' experience, author of "What Kind of God, What Kind of Healing".

**September 18th ESTABLISHING A HOME MEDITATION PRACTICE (1)
(Course price £99)**

The first day of a 3-day course spread over 3 months enabling you to bring a mindful meditation practice into your daily life. It is for those who have had some experience of meditation but can't quite manage to make it part of their daily routine. This course will be tailor-made for each student.

Continued on **October 16th** and **November 13th**.

Led by Lina Newstead, a British Wheel of Yoga teacher who runs private classes, retreats and Yoga teacher training courses.

September 22nd - 26th VOLUNTEER MAINTENANCE WEEK (£125)

Enjoy the fellowship of working, relaxing and shared Quiet Times, whilst helping the House with your skills – decorating, carpentry, gardening, sewing, etc. Please phone us for details on 01342 832 150.

September 26th - 28th QSH – Support weekend (€180)

For full or probationary members of Quaker Spiritual Healers.

October 10th - 12th MINDFULNESS YOGA WEEKEND (€200)

Come and practice Yoga in a whole new way – taking more time and attention to your postures, breathing practices and deep relaxation techniques. There will be opportunities to enhance practice with hand mudras (gestures), mantras (positive affirmations) and meditation.

Lina Newstead, a British Wheel of Yoga teacher who runs private classes, retreats and Yoga teacher training courses.

October 17th - 19th WHERE AM I? – where am I going? (€200)

Explore your spiritual journey through psychosynthesis, also called ‘psychology of the soul’. Psychosynthesis is based on the assumption that life is a process of unfolding potential guided by the Higher Self. You will have opportunities to deepen spiritual connection and insight using creative visualisation, drawing, writing and group work.

Angela Schütz, a Quaker, Painter and Counsellor.

October 24th - 26th KNITTING TO SOOTHE THE SOUL (€200)

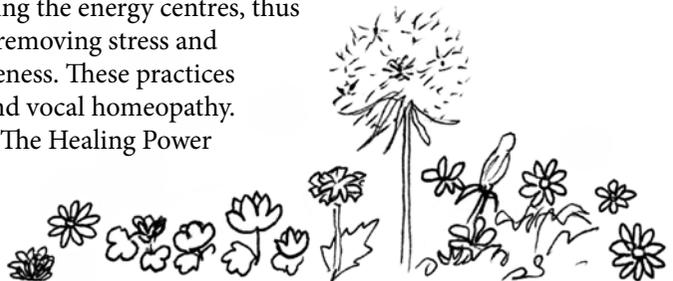
Knitting is not just a way of producing useful garments it is also a healing activity that can be combined with some meditation traditions. We will share the frustrations and rewards of knitting and crochet and discover the secrets of knitting without judgement.

Hilary Grundy, a lifelong Quaker who promotes knitting as therapy.

November 7th - 9th THE HEALING POWER OF VOCAL SOUND (€200)

The natural vibrations of our voices can unlock the fine energies of the chakras and re-vitalize the organs of the body. Applied therapeutically, the voice is the perfect instrument for tuning the energy centres, thus purifying our psychology, removing stress and gaining a heightened awareness. These practices are forms of sound Yoga and vocal homeopathy.

James D'Angelo, author of ‘The Healing Power of the Human Voice’ and ‘Seed Sounds for Tuning the Chakras’



QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWS and EVENTS

QSH 'TRAINING COURSE': Unfortunately, because there are no trainers available this year, there is no QSH training course scheduled for 2014. The next one will be Mon/Fri March 23rd - 27th at Claridge House in 2015, and further details of this should appear in the Autumn issue of *TW*. Please do not book until then.

If you are a full healer and feel that you would like to become a tutor for the QSH please contact Kay Horsfield (horsfield.k@googlemail.com) or Anne Simpson (simpsonanne54@gmail.com) about it.

QSH SUPPORT WEEKEND – September 26 - 28th 2014, at Claridge House.
Please book directly with Claridge House, Tel. 01342 832150. **£160**

THE QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWSLETTER

Good News!

This has now been taken over by Ed Warne, 31 Milford Drive, Levenshulme, Manchester M19 2SA, and his email is ed.warne@care4free.net

Please send any contributions for the Newsletter directly to him from now on.

A LISTENING MEDITATION

Sit, or lie, in a warm comfortable room.

There is a self-transcending quality to music. It can fill our sense – and infiltrate our defences – like nothing else can. It seems to awaken a remembrance of bliss and wholeness, taking us out of the world of ordinary cares and concerns into a greater sphere of harmony and aliveness.

Maybe the effect of the music is actually to harmonize the body's energy fields – and with the stimulation of the music, body areas that are not ordinarily sensed may emerge into the awareness.

You may become conscious of blockages in your own energy flow.

It is possible to relieve any discomfort by imagining a flow of energy or a wash of colour through the congested area.

Go through a short relaxation process.

Play (*Bach, Schubert, Beethoven, or any suitable music...*)

KNITTING

Cables on an Arran jumper
may hold memories so firmly
that stitch work can impoverish
or deeply wound the wearer.



Kindness creates clothes to fit,
suffering twists and knits to
convert yarn into straight jackets
tightly buttoned and punishing.

Yet memories can be altered,
a difficult pattern unpicked
becomes a fresh ball of wool
simple, strong, uncomplicated.

A reknitted garment might be
sensitive, kindly disposed to
past decisions taken in pain
at times of great intensity.

Lovingly handled needles
may create a delicate shawl
crafted to heal the deepest wounds.



Sylvia Edwards

(A reminder that there are to be
two weekends on the therapeutic
value of knitting at Claridge House –
14-18th July, and 24-26th October, 2014.)

For many years I have taught children privately as a home tutor helping them catch up with their general school work when they have slipped behind. It has been the most rewarding work, and work that I have much enjoyed. Firstly getting to know the children has been great, then getting to know their parents too has been good.

When the credit crunch came, the private work dried up and I had very little work. One day over lunch with a friend she asked me what I did. I told her I helped children catch up when they slipped behind at school. She asked me if I was familiar with the reading manual *Toe by Toe*. I said, without thinking too much, that it was a brilliant book, used in schools and to great effect used in prisons.

She said she had been searching for someone just like me for a very long time. Would I teach her daughter to read? She is fifty years old with learning disabilities. That was a facer. I am not in the habit of teaching adults anything, let alone anything as long and slow and difficult as teaching reading. Then throw in learning disabilities to the mix and it's a whole new ball game. As it happens I am very good at teaching reading to children. I accept that it is never a fast process, it is usually a slow slog. But she was so certain I was the right person, I found myself agreeing to at least have a go! First off I met her daughter, Fiona, and explained it wouldn't be a quick process. She had to realise it wouldn't happen overnight. I arranged my first session and went home wondering what I had let myself in for.

The first mistake I made was assuming that her carers would hear her practise her letters. They didn't, so the progress I thought she would make didn't happen. Honestly, I don't think Fiona was that keen to have a stranger listen to her faltering progress. So in the end we settled down to her reading only to me once a week. I accepted that it was going to be slower progress than I initially expected. Then one of her carers thought she should try and practise apart from me as she was paying me a lot of money for no progress. I discussed with Fiona what else she wanted to spend this money on if not her reading, but she had no other preferences. We decided to continue on plugging away each week.

I have been working with her now for ten months and she is making slow progress. Her biggest hurdle is her lack of self-belief. Often I know she can read the word, but she hesitates because I am sure over the years she has either been overlooked or told she can't do it. Her carer tells me she now reads some food labels when they go shopping which is encouraging.

Almost as soon as I started working with Fiona I was approached by one of the

agency staff to teach another of their residents. This one was a young man, 28 who needed some extra tuition for reading, English and maths. This young man could read a bit and the next problem was finding a suitable reading book. I asked my local library for help and to begin with they didn't realise exactly what I needed.

Eventually I asked the librarian who had worked at our local prison with young offenders to tell me about the books they had for them. She arranged for the librarian in the nearby young offenders' prison to send me a selection of books for me to look at and I was able to choose a suitable simple reader with an adult content for him. My sessions with him lasted only a few weeks as he couldn't remember the time of the lesson and was often out.

Then I was introduced to another young man with severe learning difficulties who wanted to read. I started him on *Toe by Toe* in September. I had learnt by then it was no good asking him to practise with anyone else. He is making slow progress, but again has no self-belief in his abilities. One day his housemate approached me asking for help with maths, so I have started teaching him too!

It has been a steep learning curve for us all. For me, I had to ditch a few preconceived ideas about teaching adults, especially adults with learning disabilities. For them, they have had to learn the discipline of actually being there in time for their lesson: there is a temptation to go out or stay in bed. Unless they contact me to cancel the lesson they still have to pay me.

Every year the agency holds an awards ceremony for their clients who have achieved something during the year. I am hoping that by the time the ceremony comes around this autumn I can suggest my pupils will be worthy of an award for learning to read or for their improving their maths. That I think would help greatly with their lack of confidence in themselves. To have a visible pat on the back for learning to read would be wonderful. So that's what I am working towards with them all. It is a wonderful experience to work with people who have been ignored or offered less than excellent teaching over the years. This is their belated chance to shine in their own special way.

*A woman invited some people to dinner.
At the table, she turned to their six-year-old daughter and said,
'Would you like to say the blessing?'
'I wouldn't know what to say,' the girl replied.
'Just say what you hear Mummy say,' the woman answered
The daughter bowed her head and said,
'Lord, why on earth did I invite all these people to dinner?'*

Despair is a shadow, a dark shadow that can descend on us casting negative feelings of gloom, distress and anguish in all the corners of our lives. In its full presence, it helps to create a profound sense of estrangement and helplessness within us that can sap our energy to the point where we feel that we can no longer face life, no longer carry on living....

Life is difficult, very difficult at times, and we have to confront this reality. Trouble and suffering, hardship and strife can sweep through our lives, sometimes through no fault of our own, exposing us to conflict and insecurity. No one, who is fully present in the world, can really escape this experience because it is an intricate part of the very fabric of life. In its darkest moments, when it is felt most deeply and intensely, we are stripped of our sense of self-worth and well-being, our sense of purpose and belonging, and brought, face to face, with despair. And it is here, in our moment of darkness, that we must meet our greatest test, our greatest challenge in trying to turn things around and go forward with a sense of renewed vigour.

LIFTING THE SHADOW

When we feel low and despondent, unable to deal effectively with our troubling emotions, then that is the very time we need to talk to someone. We need to explore, within a supportive, confidential and caring environment, ways to understand our pain in order to transform it. We must utilise the psychotherapeutic art of transformation to turn our negative emotions into hope; a realization that what we are feeling at a certain point in our lives is transitory, something that we can look beyond to a better and brighter future. We CAN turn things around, step into a new life that does not repeat the mistakes of the past, and it is hope that is there to guide us. Hope can lead us out of the shadows, can take us to a place of optimism, a place of growth, a place of healing. ...

Everything we set out to achieve in life starts in the imagination (a thought, an idea, a dream, a vision) that needs to be supported and sustained by the underlying power of action; and hope is no exception. When we support our hope in this way it can never be considered blind and foolhardy. Hope gives us direction and acts as a marker, staked in the future to work towards. There are, of course no guarantees here but it is better to be filled with optimism and creative energy, working towards a goal in purposeful activity, rather than be gripped by hopelessness that drains our energy and undermines our confidence in whatever we try to do.

In Greek mythology Pandora opened a box that unleashed, upon the world, many evils. But what we sometimes forget about this story is that at the very bottom of the box (underneath all the negative forces that were eventually inflicted upon the world) was one simple element – hope. And just like Pandora’s box, deep inside all of us, underneath our fears and anxieties, our uncertainties and troubles, lies hope, just waiting for our attention, just waiting for our engagement and commitment to activation. So who of us wants to forget this?

But a word of warning: hope should never be forged solely in the fire of self interest and self preservation; that would restrict and distort it, making it of less value than it could otherwise be. Rather it should be forged in the greater, collective fire, not only for ourselves but for the benefit of ALL sentient beings. Then, in our engagement with this higher hope we find that wisdom and compassion are present in their fullness, in their certainty, and from this anything could happen, and often does....

Life is full of pain and suffering but it is also full of people with courage and fortitude who manage to rise above their difficulties, who transform their problems into opportunities, who view adversity as a series of lessons in life that need to be learnt on the path to personal growth.

“Once struggle is grasped, miracles are possible.”
Chinese proverb

When faced with life’s inevitable difficulties the imperative always remains the same – to cultivate a seedbed of hope that will give us a harvest of healing in the future. Hope can nourish and sustain us by giving us a ‘pledge’ for a better life, provided we commit ourselves to actively supporting it in whatever way is needed to see its fulfilment. Hope is a form of personal empowerment that can lead us into action to change what is restricting us and holding us back. We must actively seek out hope, infuse our lives with it in order to build new possibilities, and providing we do this, change for the better will come. Perhaps not in the way we might want (as an explosion of positivity on some grand scale) but in quieter ways, little by little. Hope is always there to motivate us, to enrich and sustain us; we must believe this.

“Wherever you are, you are the master.”
Rinzai

Hope however, is never ‘fixed for all time’: it has to be continuously assessed, and re-assessed, against the benchmarks of pragmatism (what realistically can

be achieved) to ensure its relevance and effectiveness in meeting the changing conditions in and around our lives. Hope can operate on many levels, but it's best to narrow it down, focus it on clearly definable, specific goals that we can pursue in confidence, within comfortable time frames.

Go hand in hand with hope – into your work, leisure and relationships, let it fill your whole being, your whole existence for the coming of better days. Hope is always there, always full of surprises, so who of us can afford to renounce this gift of affirmation?

Let hope fill your heart and mind, then live the way you are told, the way hope is leading you. Hope is a gift, full of surprises. Trust in its magic because it is probably all we really have....

Sometimes, in a summer morning, having taken my accustomed bath, I sat in my sunny doorway from sunrise till noon, rapt in a reverie, amidst the pines and hickories and sumachs, in undisturbed solitude and stillness, while the birds sang around or flitted, noiseless, through the house, until by the sun falling in at my west window, or the noise of some traveller's wagon on the distant highway, I was reminded of the lapse of time. I grew in those seasons like corn in the night, and they were far better than any work of the hands would have been. They were not times subtracted from my life, but so much over and above my usual allowance. I realised what the Orientals mean by contemplation and the forsaking of works. For the most part, I minded not how the hours went. The day advanced as if to light some work of mine; it was morning, and lo, now it is evening, and nothing memorable is accomplished. Instead of singing like the birds, I silently smiled at my incessant good fortune. As the sparrow had its trill, sitting on the hickory before my door, so had I my chuckle or suppressed warble which he might hear out of my nest.



Henry Thoreau
(from his book *Walden*)

DECISIONS! DECISIONS!

Sybil Harvey-Lago

We all make them, all through the day, every day. The first is probably; 'Shall I get up now, or have a few minutes more?' Then comes; 'What shall I have for breakfast?' or even; 'Shall I have any breakfast to-day?'

Sometimes though, this is not the first decision we struggle with. We wake with the thought of the choices left over from last night. Perhaps we have even wrestled with them throughout the night or dreamt about them.

In this age we are bombarded with so much information and urged to make this or that decision for acceptance, for economy, or the state of the planet. This pressure is making things more difficult for us all. Unresolved conflicts or decisions not made can damage our health.

Some of the choices we make involve others; on occasions they are life changing, but quite often what bothers us is something far less significant in the grand scheme of things.

Are there any techniques that can help us? Rather than merely worrying about a decision, there are questions we can ask ourselves. Sometimes the choice is not ours to make. We are concerned about the outcome, but we need to leave it to others in their personal lives, in an organisation, or the life of the nation. So, is this a matter I must confront? Will my choice affect someone else's or my own well-being?

Is this a relationship conflict?

What would happen if I did nothing? Is this the right time to decide? Do I have all the facts? Am I putting off making a fairly unimportant decision, or would it be wise to think constructively now?

If I make a wrong choice, is there a chance to change my opinion and admit it? Are the consequences final, or would there be an opportunity to apologise if I get it wrong?

Am I over concerned about people's good opinion of me? Am I trying to do what they think I ought to do, or be the person they think I ought to be, rather than staying true to the core of who I am?

Writing points down, even numbering them, can be a great help. Perhaps two columns for pros and cons. A further stage of crossing out items that are very obviously wrong when they are down on paper, is a step forward.

Talking to an empathetic listener can very often lead us to a conclusion, without the other person uttering a word. I had an illustration of this very

recently when I said to someone I don't know at all well; 'I'm panicking!' It was something fairly minor that was to happen the next day. She listened patiently without comment and, as I talked, I could see the easy answer. The emphasis here is on empathetic.

We all have a wealth of experience. Of course we get things wrong sometimes but beating ourselves up, judging ourselves too harshly, is not helpful. If we are in a similar situation to an event in the past, we can learn from the decisions we took then.

I have gone through far too much of my life expecting to arrive! We are counselled to live life adventurously, which means running the risk of making the occasional mistake.

If we are truthful, we don't always find it easy to 'wait in the Light.' When we do take this trustful step of handing over the problem however, guidance will come, often from very unexpected directions.

'It's our choices, Harry, that show us what we truly are, far more than our abilities.'
J.K. Rowling

About Cancer

*What cancer can't do
Cancer is so limited...
It cannot cripple love,
It cannot shatter hope,
It cannot corrode faith,
It cannot eat away peace,
It cannot destroy confidence,
It cannot kill friendship,
It cannot shut out memories,
It cannot silence courage,
It cannot invade the soul,
It cannot reduce eternal life,
It cannot quench the spirit,
It cannot lessen the power of resurrection.*

anon



An Aspect of Fear by *Grace Sheppard*.
Darton-Longman-Todd. 2011. 111pp.
ISBN: 978-0-52869.

This is a courageous and very readable personal account by Grace Sheppard, the wife of the Bishop of Liverpool. Written with humour and compassion she explores her long struggle with agoraphobia and anxiety and discusses how time and again she found the inner strength to overcome the challenges that this difficult condition presented. She refers often to her strong Christian belief that supported her in this.

Grace speaks about the vital need to acknowledge fear and face it while also having the humility to ask others for help. The realisation that we are all vulnerable in one way or another and the value of sharing our fears with each other brings help, comfort and peace. This is a remarkably warm and honest account and I also valued the threads of wisdom to be found throughout the book.

It is said that fear constricts and love expands, and she writes about her prominent public role and the struggles she had to deal with the fear and panic attacks that disabled and tormented her in her daily life. She describes how she kept it to herself until she found the courage to overcome her fear and started to talk to other people; as a result of this she formed many friendships. At one time she called on the help of a counsellor and says how the total acceptance by another person helped to liberate her.

Her courage and philosophical approach to life shines through these pages. 'Making mistakes can feel like small threats, but is part of being human' she says and discusses the importance of taking risks and picking oneself up after a tumble.

Grace also talks of dreams and how they can offer vision, and she stresses the importance of creativity and how it supports personal growth, saying that although there is also risk in creating, the rewards can be found in doing rather than not. She speaks of joy and also how we must 'give ourselves away a little, to die a little, if we want to keep on growing'. Later she speaks of pausing, taking stock, reviewing and then dreaming some more; the secret is to keep a creative balance between doing and being.

On a practical note I found this is a well laid out book and a comfortable read written in an everyday style by someone who offered her human experiences as a gift to us all.

Sadly, Grace Sheppard died four years ago.

Maggie Jeffery

Martin Israel: An Appreciation. Written and compiled by *John Wyborn*, with additional material by the Reverend Alex Wedderspoon. CFPSS. 2013. ISBN: 978-0-902666-47-4. £9.00

When I started raving about this wonderful doctor and mystic my CFPSS (Churches' Fellowship for Psychological and Spiritual Studies) friends were surprised that I had only just discovered him. I was envious that they had actually met him during his lifetime – 1927-2007. Perhaps, at 78, I am a late developer! However, I am now getting to know him through this *Appreciation* and through greedily devouring all his books, of which there are about twenty.

Martin Israel began life in South Africa in a Jewish family. He ended it as an Anglican priest, pathologist, surgeon, spiritual director and psychic, in England. This book was published to coincide with the sixtieth anniversary of the CFPSS. This fellowship of many churches (like our own Quaker Fellowship for Afterlife Studies) supports those who have spiritual/psychic experiences, and who find it difficult in their place of worship to speak about what are often treated as taboo subjects. As someone who has had an NDE (Near Death Experience) and premonitions (precognitive experiences), I value groups like CFPSS and QFAS. They both accepted and included me when some in my Meeting saw me as weird!

The book begins with a biography of Martin's very diverse and interesting life. Then there is a chapter on 'Reminiscences' from those who had known and loved him and benefited from his work – scientific, spiritual and compassionate guidance. The quotations, showing his wit and wisdom and intuitive counsel, bring him very much alive. A chapter follows – 'Reflections on published works' which is a series of synopses of all his books. These inspired me to seek out the originals.

Many say that Martin Israel wrote and spoke as though he were channelling direct from the Holy Spirit – 'ministries and leadings.' He was very pro-Quaker, valuing our silent worship and our listening, discerning and contemplative practices. He wrote about death, dying, healing, praying, meditating and everything that makes up spiritual and mystical experiences. An end chapter in the book gathers together all his wisdom as seen by an Anglican priest, Alex Wedderspoon. This is gleaned not only from his books but also many other booklets and pamphlets, sermons, talks and tapes. As a member of QSH I particularly value Martin's writings about suffering, healing and compassion.

And all these may be obtained from the CFPSS (www.churchesfellowship.co.uk), Tel. 01507 358845.

As Quakers, we have an experiential faith rather than creed or dogma. Martin writes intuitively and from experience, so his books become 'leadings' which can deepen one's spiritual journey.

Elizabeth Angas

You have breath for no more than 99 words. What would they be?

Collected by Liz Gray. Darton, Longman and Todd. Approx. 80 pp.
ISBN 978-0-232-52889-3. £10.99

Liz Gray, a former TV commentary producer, compiled this book over a period of seven years. The inspiration for it came out of an accident which left her unable to read, write or talk for more than a few minutes at a time. This condition, as she says, crystallised her growing weariness with the volume of incoming messages in modern life. Liz hit on the idea of choosing ninety-nine words as the maximum allowed for expressing what matters most in life. This was followed by the decision to create an anthology of these limited words from people whom she loved: well-known, and lesser-known ones.

All the many responses helped Liz through a time when she had to accommodate to the knowledge and effects of an underlying genetic condition. Other people could undoubtedly be helped who are in a similar situation.

The book contains many famous names, including Nelson Mandela, Wendy Cope, Fergal Keane, Robert Macfarlane and Desmond Tutu, as well as others that I did not recognise. The contributions range from just fourteen to ninety-nine words, and from light-weight statements to deeply profound ones.

I found it an interesting, inspiring, rich and moving book, and it may stimulate readers to find their own ninety-nine words.

N.B Ninety-nine pence from the sale of each book goes to Peace Direct (a conflict resolution charity).

Judy Clinton

The Dance between Hope and Fear by *John Calvi*. 225 pp. 2013.

True Quaker Press. ISBN: 978-0-9893285-0-0.

Obtainable from Quakerbooks.org and Amazon.com \$14.95.

How refreshingly different it is to come across a book about healing which contains songs and the music which accompanies them! Though, of course, as it says in the Introduction, it is not a book about healing as such, but rather a book about one American healer's journey into healing, written mainly in an

autobiographical style. So it's not a how-to-do healing book, but one about the things *John Calvi* learned: about himself, about healing, spiritual honesty and giving over to Divine leadings during the course of his more than thirty years as a Quaker healer.

And he is a very honest person, describing himself as a 'short, fat, gay, Italian Quaker', and, in fact, one of the main attractions of the book is his very honest and self-perceptive admissions. Another is the easily readable and concise, even snappy, short accounts into which one can dip, and then put aside to dwell upon.

He uses the metaphor 'soaking in a bath of peaceful silence' to describe his early experiences of Quaker Meetings, 'being washed of all the noise in my life and taking in the calm and quiet'. After a difficult adolescence he found that the Quaker ethos helped him to understand the world in a completely different way, a way in which he could accept himself unreservedly and become the person he truly was, and is.

The book is divided into useful sections and the first is the Dance between Hope and Fear; and surely this resonates with most people as life itself swings most of us back and forth between these two emotions. The second section is based on his Early Years and there is a very telling piece entitled 'Courage' in which, while teaching in a prison, he experienced the terror and grief of young people with AIDS, and those with psychiatric illnesses. He concludes this account with 'Courage is not being without fear so much as it is finding a place for the fear that will not interrupt going forward'.

Other sections, Hands on, Healing Trauma, From the Journals, and Home Life contain a wealth of experience and an understanding of the compassion which has motivated and sustained John throughout his spiritual journey, including his many physical journeys that he has made around the world.

The last section, Healing America, Ending Torture, has a piece entitled 'To go where there is no Light', in which an awful conclusion is reached which is that 'The perfection of torture has been an American creation'. He is not afraid to look at the darkest side of humanity, and yet still see 'that of God' in it.

Rosalind Smith

An article, SIX HEALING SAYINGS by John Calvi, was featured in *TW 112* on page 3. This originally appeared in *Massage Therapy Journal / Spring 1990* and was reprinted with the permission of the author.

John Calvi's website is www.johncalvi.com

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IF YOU ARE THINKING OF MAKING A WILL...

Have you considered leaving something to the FFH?

A specimen form of words could be:

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