

# 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](http://www.quaker-healing.org.uk)

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*Front Cover:* Hebridean sunset by Robin Goodman

*Back Cover:* Hebridean sunrise-moonset by Robin Goodman

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## A NATIONAL QUAKER DAY OF HEALING

(a day of continuous distant healing throughout the UK)

✻ To be held on Saturday 18th March 2017 and organised by the FFH ✻

The desired outcome of this forthcoming event is that it should be a 'memorable day': no doubt it will be memorable for different reasons amongst Friends. This happening will result from local initiatives at FMH level but hopefully will be supported and encouraged by the Area meetings. We are aware that not all Meetings will wish to take part, but we can only cast our nets in faith. The detailed article in the last issue of *Towards Wholeness* has set the pattern and approach, and we feel moved to keep to that pattern.

We feel that the word 'healing' appears far more in our conversation generally than it does within our spiritual consciousness, and that as a result, the word often takes on a narrow and limited definition of what healing is really all about. For example, politicians and social leaders often refer to the need to 'heal' the economy, social ghettos, etc... but they would probably be alarmed at being associated with a ministry of spiritual healing. However, where the secular concerns of healing and the spiritual concept of healing converge, is in the vision that things should be balanced and be whole; in other words we act in order to move 'Towards Wholeness', and who would disagree with that.

What is it that could make our **National Day of Healing** so memorable? Surely it is by creating a unified spiritual act of connectiveness with gathered Friends from

all over the country in their groups, all focused on the same theme – i.e. an act of distant healing of people and concerns, an act of spiritual energy immeasurably strengthened by our corporate prayers and ‘holding in the Light’. We do not predict outcomes and should not be overly concerned on physical healing only. Whatever happens will be for the highest good of the individual or concern, and will lead in the direction of balance and wholeness. We feel that this healing day will be a good use of our FFH funding as the event will provide both effective outreach and be a powerful spiritual event in its own right.

On the practical, planning side we feel the need to publicise this happening in the following ways. We will plan an article for *The Friend* before Christmas to alert the wider Quaker community of this event and follow up with a second article in February – a month before the event – which would contain the flyer inserts we intend to produce. The flyer should ideally contain information to promote the idea of healing in its broader context, as well as giving detailed information of the event. Emphasis will be put on Healing as Love in Action, with the conscious spiritual act of prayerfully surrounding the person or concern with divine love (held in the Light) – allowing the loving energy of God to do its work. Our task is to make this process available to all Meetings and healing groups. Whether they respond or not is not our immediate concern.

We will also need a succinct and ‘snappy’ poster for use on the day. We have a proposed wording for this, but will need to give further thought to its colour, design and presentation. Throughout our design work, we intend to adopt the ADA approach – Attention – Desire – and Action.

Finally, we will give consideration to sending out a posting after Christmas, inviting all Meetings to join with us on the day. We will also contact Area Meetings and ask for their support in encouraging the LMs within their area. As far as the individual groups participating on the day, we agreed that each group would need an anchor-person, spiritually led, acting as a **co-ordinator** or elder for the day. Many existing distant healing groups may well have such a person already.

We hope that this National Healing day will give opportunities to inform groups and meetings up and down the country what we mean by healing in its true context, and to encourage people not to be afraid of using this wonderful God-given gift of a Ministry for Healing.

For Friends wishing to have further details for the planning of the day, or would like to talk through any concerns or questions, we would refer you to the previous article in the last issue of *Towards Wholeness* or alternatively contact one of the planning team below.

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Just before she was 80 my mother told me of her grief for her father whom she had never known. She grieved for her own mother who went to her grave believing that her beloved husband was not commemorated anywhere. Mother told me that her own mother was asked for money for his name to be on a war memorial which she could not afford. I thought that this was an odd story and asked her if she would like me to investigate further. She then said that she had saved and saved money so he could be on a memorial somewhere. It was one of the very few times that I felt close to my mother as I sat there, holding her hand while she spoke of these things, so important and so stored up. John, my husband, did the research and found my grandfather's name on the Menin Gate in Ypres. He even found the number of the panel, so I telephoned Mother with this news. She went silent and I was concerned. When she spoke again it was to ask if we would take her there. 'Oh no', my brain said, 'she is nearly blind, deaf and has poor health and mobility problems, NO I can't take her there'. But heard myself saying calmly, 'yes, alright, Mum, we will take you there'.

My brother was furious, thinking that the long trip to Belgium would be too much for her, he thought that it might kill her. I thought that it was something that she needed to do and if it killed her, well she would die doing something important. So in the summer off we set.

The journey did not go well. Our elderly car broke down. The insurance company were wonderful, a taxi arrived to take us to Hull and we were met and Mum carefully escorted onto the ferry. We had booked a disabled cabin for her but she was nervous of being on her own, so she just shared with us. John was wonderfully kind to her. We were met at Zebrugge by a lady from a hire car company with a car for us, it should have been the equivalent of our own, but it was a brand new Peugeot 405! I spluttered that this was not a replacement equivalent. Her kindly response was that she knew that we were taking an elderly disabled lady to the Menin Gate and thought that she would be more comfortable in this car. Oh she was, she really was and sat there looking like the cat that got the cream.

We went directly to Ypres and John found the hole in the wall where the books of remembrance are stored. We found my grandfather's name along with 'son of ....' and 'husband of Elizabeth Truman'. So not only was my grandfather remembered but there was my grandmother too. My mother let out a howl of grief, an unearthly sound, 79 years of pent up sorrow. John and I linked arms making a cocoon around her until she slowly calmed. Then we

went up the steps to the garden where the panel with my grandfather's name was and found it. My mother, whose sight was failing could not see it but she knew that it was there. She felt that she could not go that evening to the last post, but was so comforted to know that every evening he and all the others on the Gate were remembered.

By now we were all tired so we went to Brugge where I had booked a small apartment. They were very expensive so I booked the smallest, but had asked for a ground floor because of Mother's disability. When we came to the flat it was gorgeous and large and airy. I phoned the office to say that I thought that a mistake had been made as I had booked only a small apartment. The reply was something along the lines of taking an elderly, disabled lady to the Menin Gate and the company thought that she would be more comfortable. Oh the kindness! My mother was indeed more comfortable. She had a lovely cool bedroom looking out over a quiet square with trees. What kindness to find. The following day we made her have some fun exploring Brugge, chocolate, lace and canal trip.

Then on the Sunday we went to Tyne Cot, where, if his body had been found at all, he would be buried. Mother said that she wanted to take some flowers, but John thought that that was not permitted. I found a tiny florist shop and asked advice and was told that a single bloom was acceptable, so I asked for a single red rose. The florist wrapped it beautifully and then refused any payment, it was for my mother and she hoped that my mother found her father. John tactfully wandered off among the graves, leaving Mother and me to our thoughts. We ambled among the graves. It was distressing and overwhelming to find so many, so young, and I renewed my conviction that war is wrong, I wondered how I could go to such a place where so many were buried with my pacifist beliefs but found that the ghosts of the dead there understood. Suddenly my mother stood up straight. 'I am going the wrong way' she said and promptly turned her walking aid around and scooted off with me trotting to keep up! She crossed the main avenue, headed towards the gate and then along one of the rows, screeching to a halt beside a grave. 'Read it', she demanded. I read 'A Soldier of the Great War, Known unto God. A fusilier.' My grandfather had been a fusilier. My mother announced that she had found her father, he was right there under our feet. Would I please place the single red rose there. How clever of me to know that red roses were his favourite flower. Well, well, I was convinced that if we dug him up and did a DNA he would indeed prove to be my grandfather.

Mother and I went to the gun emplacement where the gun that had spewed so much death and destruction in the terrible mud of that appalling day had

been. This day the sun was shining and it was warm and calm. It was true at least on that day, that there is a silence over the graveyard and not even birds sing. Mother and I sat there for I know not how long before she was ready to move on. She was walking straighter and more smartly than she had for a long time. She even smiled (a rare event) and said that she had found her father and a weight of grief had fallen from her.

She did not die on the trip, and lived for another 6 years knowing that her father was commemorated and remembered with dignity. I promised that I would take each of my grandchildren there, when they were ready, so that he would not be forgotten. Peter actually went with a school trip and his sympathetic teacher took him by himself to find both the name and the grave. Clara has been told the story and will go when she is ready. Melissa is autistic, has severe learning difficulties and a maturational age of about eight, so I guess that she will not be able to understand. I am sure that wherever my mother is she too will understand.

I have fond lingering memories of the incredible kindness that we met along the way, the car hire company with the big comfortable car, the apartment company with the luxurious flat and the gift of a red rose for my mother to take to the grave. All these people had wanted to ease my mother's journey, to ease her grief. Kindness is comforting.



## DEEP DOWN

*Deep down we all know what the time is;  
Deep down we know it's simply our biz;  
Deep down we sense too it's Judas' kiss;  
Deep down – oh deep down! – we want more, yes;  
Deep down, but there's something gone amiss;  
Deep down even, no-one can resist;  
Deep down, pile on pile, pressure, stress;  
Deep down, deep down, going on, unless  
Deep down One waits, where only One can bless.*

*James Sale*



The English language is an amazing thing. Perhaps it is the British nation's greatest gift to the world. It has so many ways to describe the healing experience.

Nobody can be really certain how many words comprise the English language, at least fifty thousand, perhaps in excess of seventy thousand. More than quantity however, is the manner in which words can be strung together. Somehow, regardless of the rules of grammar the language has the ability to permit effective communication whether spoken in 'Oxbridge English', 'Pigeon English', 'Slang' or just street talk.

Thirty-eight years ago one of my toddler daughters was watching her mother getting dressed. As Mum was putting on her bra, my daughter asked 'Are you hanging up your boobs Mummy?' Recently, at the other end of the age spectrum, my wife's aunt was recounting details of her medical treatment. Auntie has been confined to home for several years; she could hardly walk and as one can imagine her sedentary life-style attracted many conditions that adversely affected her health. She was saying how the district nurse visits in order to tend and dress her leg ulcers twice a day. Auntie is a bright and cheerful soul and was happy to advise her nurse that she had diabetes, 'in both feet'.

A radio article I heard during the last week of January 2007 was about a new heart surgery technique. It was the replacement of a heart valve but via keyhole surgery and was to be conducted later that day on an eighty-nine year old woman. When asked how she felt about it, she chatted on for a while and then said 'Medical history has got to move forward.' Examination of her phrase will show that it was illogical and nonsensical but not incomprehensible. I presume she was saying 'We can't stay in the past. It's nice to be a part of history in the making.' I think I know what she meant, but it was not what she said.

I am mindful that it is the light within the words of others, as well as the light that is deep within us all, of which we should be so careful to be aware for it is not the words that can bring healing but the Light that they show.

It is a characteristic of English that, rather than being a "pure" language, it is more of an amalgam of the languages of the invaders and immigrants to these isles during the last two thousand years. Moreover, words have entered our lexicon because of our colonial activities. We are fortunate to have such a rich and varied medium for communication. Nonetheless, as is the case for medical technology, our language must move forward.



Recently I chanced upon a word for which there is no English equivalent. It is Sanskrit and the word is “Mudita”. (Pronounced *mewdeetah*.)

Mudita is a word meaning rejoicing in another’s good fortune. Mudita is sometimes considered to be the opposite of *schadenfreude*, (which is pleasure derived by someone from another person’s misfortune).

The term mudita is usually translated as the total joy in the well-being and good fortune of others. It is the feeling of exaltation and complete happiness in another person’s condition. Sympathy, altruism, pity, compassion do not really encompass the comprehensiveness of mudita.

Mudita is the pleasure that comes from delighting in other people’s well-being rather than begrudging it. Many Buddhist teachers interpret mudita more broadly as referring to an inner spring of infinite joy that is available to everyone at all times, regardless of circumstances. The more deeply one drinks of this spring, the more secure one becomes in one’s own abundant happiness, and the easier it then becomes to relish the joy of other people as well.

There is a possibility, especially with a growing awareness in this country of Buddhism and eastern mysticism, that mudita will become more common and will enter more frequently into our common parlance. However, more than that, I hope that mudita becomes an emotion that is experienced far more frequently. With such emotions the path towards healing must be made more smooth not just for oneself but those one meets when healing paths cross.

*A human being is part of a whole, called by us the ‘Universe’, a part limited in time and space. He experiences himself, his thoughts and feelings, as something separated from the rest – a kind of optical delusion of his consciousness. This delusion is a kind of prison for us, restricting us to our personal desires and to affection for a few persons nearest to us. Our task must be to free ourselves from this prison by the widening of a circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty.*

*Albert Einstein*



**PLEASE NOTE: YOUR SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE DUE AT THE BEGINNING OF JANUARY** (before, if possible) IF YOU PAY BY CHEQUE.

If you’re not sure how you pay, please contact the Membership Secretary, Stephen Feltham – contact details on inside back cover.

I sit in the car, looking out over hedges to sloping fields beyond. The wind furiously rattles the ribbon attached to my aerial and from time to time strong gusts buffet the car. Smoke billows in the distance from what would appear to be a bonfire. The sun makes watery appearances as grey clouds scud across the sky. It isn't an immediately inviting day for walking and writing, but I needed to get out of the fug of my winter-time home and connect once more with something bigger than myself through the elements, distant views, and with the physicality of walking. Today the urge to get out overcame my soggy inertia and I'm here, ready to be battered by wind and probably wetted with drizzle if not heavy rain. Now the palaver of toggling up with boots, gloves, scarf and hat – Aargh, winter!

Writing outdoors is not easy at this time of year, both from the point-of-view of temperature for my hands (I'll get some fingerless mitts) and finding a surface for my book to rest on while I write. But, adversity being the mother of invention, there are ways around it. Just now, the information board about Cud Hill Common (which is what I'm seeing in front of me) provided me with an excellent desk at which to write.

The ground is sodden underfoot, though mercifully, it's not flooded to a serious extent as has been the case in so many areas of Britain. The road is covered in puddles, grit, mud and debris. In places the watery sun makes the road shine, even dazzle. There's beauty everywhere when I have the eyes to look.

Small birds twitter in hedges and trees and rise in flurries, wafted in the wind until they settle elsewhere. How birds – their songs, their flight, their shapes, their everything – raise my spirits and open my heart!

My next writing station is an elevated can on posts (for animal feed perhaps?). I'm exposed here and I'm getting increasingly cold. But I know no better way of bringing myself to peace than walking slowly, and with full awareness of all my senses to my surroundings. It's worth the streaming nose, the runny eyes, cold fingers and toes.

The thinking mind, the sparking neurones in my brain, can move so fast and have a momentum that soon destroys my equanimity and appreciation of life. But out here, all that subsides, and my deeper mind, soul, or whatever other inadequate name I give to it, has a chance to float up its wisdom, joy and guidance. Here, in this state, despite all the ghastly things that are going on in the world right now, I feel a serenity within me that is the greatest gift of all, not only to me but, I believe, what I can radiate out to our troubled world. It is my prayer, God's prayer in me.

I've been delighting in the trees that flank the pathway on which I'm walking. I love the individuality of them, their wonderful uniqueness; not one of them is the same as another. I look at old trees with their gnarled bark, broken off branches, scarrings, weathering and the way they host both plants and animal life. We revere old trees; talk about their beauty. It's a shame that ageing bodies aren't seen the same way in our society.

I marvelled at the subtle shades of green, grey and brown of the lichens, the moss, the infestations that cover the tree trunks, branches and twigs. I pulled a twig from a tree, wanting to take it home with me and then winced when I saw the open gash I'd left behind on the branch. I felt shame seeing the damage I'd caused, whilst my quickly justifying brain leapt in with pruning being good for plants and that it would soon recover. How horribly easily I can excuse away my thoughtlessness. Trees are living beings too. I don't know if they hurt like we do, but I felt what I'd done. Perhaps, earlier in my walk, I might not even have registered this, which all shows how important it is for these times of soul-return.

Now back in the car, and exceedingly grateful for shelter from the wind, I look out on the scene ahead of me, which is not much different than when I started out. The bonfire continues to billow smoke, the sun to make watery appearances and grey clouds scud across the sky. The ribbon on my aerial rattles furiously and gusts of wind buffet the car. But it has not rained.

Time to go home and have a hot drink!

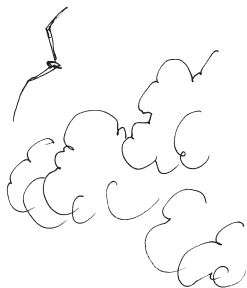


*Living a spiritual life does not demand high ideals or noble thoughts. It requires our caring and kind attention to our breath, to our children, to the trees around us, and to the earth with which we are so interconnected. The monks following the Buddha were prohibited from cutting plants or trees. Their non-harming and reverence was extended to embrace all of the life around them...*

*In widening our circle of practice, we discover the capacity of our heart to bear witness to the suffering of the world and experience our heart expanding, connecting us in compassion to all life.*

*The Bodhisattva within us knows that true love is irresistible, conquerable and that it transforms whatever it touches. Amazingly, to live a life as a Bodhisattva is not grand or idealistic. It is simply bringing to every circumstance a spirit of love, openness and freedom. Then our very being transforms the world around us.*

**Jack Kornfield**



## ON A DAY IN SPRING

*As they laughed and talked with my neighbour,  
I thought they were there from the council  
to tell us of a road-widening scheme;  
but they had come to tell me of your death –  
sudden death, on the thirteenth green,  
the green at the end of a long, twisty lane.*

*I seemed to accept the words they spoke  
like just another irrelevant fact,  
not as important just then  
as the needs of my dog in the car,  
waiting and panting for relief  
in the field at the end of our long and twisty lane.*

*In the field at the end of our long and twisty lane  
I cried, sobbed and howled;  
while my dog stood watching and puzzled  
by the noise and my stillness  
as I sought relief and release  
in the field at the end of our long and twisty lane.*



*Some relief came as I walked across fields and meadows,  
through woods to the top of the hill.  
Some relief came as I breathed the clean air deeply,  
and gazed at the distant hills.  
Turning at last, my dog running ahead for home,  
leaving the field at the end of our long and twisty lane.*

**Rosemary Bartlett**

I have been thinking about courage and bravery. I wonder if I am brave, if I have courage. Is it something you can know in advance, or will I have to wait to know by being tested in some way?

These thoughts came about because I read a very interesting book by Caroline Moorhead. It is called *Village of Secrets* and it deals with villages near Lyons on the plateau above which hid Jewish children from the Nazis during the Second World War. As soon as was possible the children were taken to the border with Switzerland and into safety. There were some problems with Switzerland who initially were reluctant to accept these children. The guides went back to the villages to be available as *passeurs* for future children. Between 1943 and 1944 over a thousand children were taken to safety in Switzerland.

One of the guides, Marianne Cohn, was not so lucky and was caught with 28 children about 200 yards from the border. She and eleven of the older boys and girls were taken to prison. Word was got into the prison to tell Marianne that plans were being made to spring her. She refused, saying that the children would suffer.

Marianne was imprisoned by the Gestapo in Annemasse prison. She was tortured but passed this poem to the Jewish children who were released and survived. A month after her imprisonment she and five other members of the resistance were taken to an isolated spot where their captors beat them to death with spades. The poem which I find very moving became one of the defining poems of the Vichy years.

*I shall betray tomorrow, not today.  
Today, pull out my fingernails,  
I shall not betray  
You do not know the limits of my courage,  
I, I do...  
I shall betray tomorrow, not today.  
Tomorrow.  
I need the night to make up my mind.  
I need at least one night.  
To disown, to abjure, to betray.  
To disown my friends,  
To abjure bread and wine,  
To betray my life,  
To die.*



*I shall betray tomorrow, not today.  
The file is under the windowpane.  
The file is not for the window bars,  
The file is not for the executioner,  
The file is for my own wrists.  
Today, I have nothing to say,  
I shall betray tomorrow.*

I have come to the conclusion after much thought that courage is all about love. If you love something or someone enough you will find the courage needed to resist. Courageous and brave people are determined, even stubborn, and prepared to face the danger without fear. I hope I would be too.



## **LEY LINE PROBLEMS**

*Jan Etchells*

Three years ago on a visit to the Isle of Wight Lavender Farm I had an interesting conversation about ley lines on the farm. The farmer was convinced that the municipal waste dump was interfering with the energy from this line.

He wanted to know from me if I thought he could move it by dowsing. I said I was a healer, but I thought I could find out the answer to his problem.

I came home, did some research into ley lines and discovered there were two kinds. The first kind was a line that joined two points of interest in the landscape, for example, a church and a hill top. The other was much more interesting and was a line of energy. I appealed for help through the pages of TW and the information flowed in. I was sent email links to explore, people very kindly phoned with information and I made new friends. I passed all the information on to my farmer friend. I also decided to send him healing directly to help things along until he began dowsing for himself.

On my visit last year I wasn't able to speak to the farmer. He wasn't around. This year we met again and I asked him about his ley line. I think he'd forgotten about it! However he seemed to think that things had improved. As he said, he knew I was sending healing (or doing my whoo whoo as he explained it) so he didn't try and fix the problem by dowsing. He felt that the healing had worked and the fortunes on the farm had turned a corner.

We then went on to talk about things that happen which cannot be explained, spiritual presences, the way his dowsing rod twitched in his hands and spiritual healing. This man is fully in tune with nature and we both rejoiced in the power of the unknown or the unexplained.



For Christians, and for many others with belief in higher power of some kind, healing is an important part of faith and belief. But when we pray for healing, whether for ourselves or for others, what are we actually asking for?

The origin of the word *heal* is *whole*; when we pray for healing we are therefore asking for wholeness. Although we are made “in the likeness of God” and possess the divine potential, our perfection is not yet final, and human lives are often fragmented and broken. Only God demonstrates the ultimate and complete pattern of wholeness and it is towards this example that we look. We strive for and pray for this as we “toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow.”

But perhaps it doesn't need to be that way. Suffering, and therefore healing, cannot be viewed in isolation. “No man is an island...” As members of the body of Christ, when others suffer, we suffer, whether we realise it or not. It's distressing to see those we love, or indeed anyone else, experiencing pain and discomfort.

Why do we (need to) undergo the experience of illness or apparent misfortune? Whether we believe it is the will of God (arbitrary or otherwise) or just chance, we usually bow to the inevitable and accept, with as much grace as we can muster, whatever may come our way. Some will say that suffering is noble and good for the character, but I'm not sure that is entirely true. However, like most that happens to us, perhaps it is not without a purpose. If suffering is the result of random chance, then there is no point in praying for healing. But if we believe it is God's will, then we can only pray, “Thy will be done.” However, “God's ways are not our ways” and God's will does not always appear to make sense. Healing can of course be found in accepting our situation in faith.

But should we, or can we, question – or even attempt to bend – God's will? But what exactly is “God's will”? If the spark of the Divine resides in each of us, then God's will and our will are very closely linked – two aspects of the same thing. Far from fatefully accepting God's will (without question and with a faint whiff of doom), we discover instead a dynamic interaction and co-operation between the human and the Divine, in which we recognise our role as co-creators. It is in this mystery that we may sense the origin of our joys and also of our sorrows. In this light, we must look at our own choices and decisions, within the limiting 3-dimensional framework of our present human understanding.

This incomplete understanding can only be provisional; we see only the tip of the iceberg, and moreover we see it “through a glass darkly”! We must not



## CLARIDGE HOUSE *News and 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 Roberta Monticone Claridge House, Dormans Road, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH.  
Email: [welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk](mailto:welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk)  
Website: [www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk](http://www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk) Tel: 01342 832150*



### PROGRAMME

#### DAY RETREATS

##### **Wednesday 7th December MEDITATION – soul food**

Explore sacred food that links us to festive traditions, with meditation on that which nourishes us. *Led by Lina Newstead, a British Wheel of Yoga Diploma Course Tutor, who runs private classes, meditation retreat weekends and longer yoga courses.* £40

##### **Wednesday 4th January MEDITATION ON WINTER**

*Led by Lina Newstead, (see above)* £40

##### **Wednesday 1st February MEDITATION ON THE CONCEPT OF TIME**

*Led by Lina Newstead, (see above)* £40

##### **Thursday 9th Feb CELTIC ODYSSEY – IMBOLC – SEASON OF BEGINNINGS**

Immerse yourself completely in the season of Imbolc and celebrate the end of winter. The joys of seasonal living and how writing can be used therapeutically. *Led by Penny McFarlane, a published author and short story writer with a background in teaching and dramatherapy.* £40

##### **Wednesday 1st March MEDITATION ON SPRING**

*Led by Lina Newstead, (see above)* £40

##### **Thursday 23rd March CELTIC ODYSSEY SPRING EQUINOX – SEASON OF NEW GROWTH**

Immerse yourself completely in the Spring Equinox – a time to mirror nature's decision to grow and to make decisions about the future, the joys of seasonal living and gentle exercise, and how writing can be used therapeutically. *Led by Penny McFarlane, (as above)* £40

### **November 18th - 20th THE HEALING POWER OF VOCAL SOUND**

The natural vibrations of our voices can unlock the fine energies of the chakras and re-vitalise 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.*

**Depart 4pm Sunday**

**£240**

### **December 2nd - 4th SOULCOLLAGE**

SoulCollage® is a creative, satisfying collage process. Each collage card represents an aspect of your personality or Soul. We will be considering cards that represent the archetypes that guide you in life. Some possibilities are Healer, Shaman, Creator, Teacher. You do not choose your archetypes – your archetypes have chosen you. *Priscillia Joseph, trained psychotherapist counsellor, who has specialised in running Mindfulness-based Stress Reduction programmes.*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£225**

### **December 9th - 11th READING ALOUD**

Do you love reading books? The beginnings of literature were with the spoken word. Listening to stories is part of the human condition and brings comfort, joy and sometimes personal insights. Come and hear stories and poems that will inspire and heal the spirit. Please bring along a short story, a book or a poem that has meant something to you for the sharing session on Saturday evening. *Lina Newstead, a 'British Wheel of Yoga' Diploma Course Tutor who runs private classes, meditation retreat weekends and longer Yoga courses*

**Depart 4pm Sunday**

**£240**

### **December 16th - 18th CHRISTMAS, WHAT CHRISTMAS?**

Escape the pre-Christmas chaos and relax in the calm of Claridge House, enjoying peaceful, comfortable surroundings, and energising walks in the surrounding countryside.

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£185**

### **December 24th - 28th CHRISTMAS BREAK**

Enjoy a quiet Christmas, away from the normal pressures. Relax, go for walks or play games. Gather for our daily Quiet Times. Come together to share favourite music, poetry and writings.

**Depart 10am Wednesday**

**£540 – deposit £100**



## **December 30th - January 3rd    NEW YEAR RETREAT**

Enjoy an informal New Year Retreat with a mixture of activities and relaxation.

**Depart 10am Tuesday**

**£460**

## **January 13th - 15th    THE SPIRIT OF POETRY**

“In the beginning was the Word.”

We shall bring along, hear and look at poems that move us. We will share poems we have each written, speaking out for ourselves. We will experience resonance on various levels. We may find new meaning for ourselves in light of our time together. “A poet’s autobiography is his poetry; anything else is just a footnote.” Yevtushenko. *Francis Standish, has had a long career in learning and development. He has been a student of English since his teens, with a special interest in how we communicate our significant experiences.*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£225**

## **February 10th - 12th    CHINESE BRUSH PAINTING – ‘Capturing the Spirit’**

This ancient and beautiful art form originating from China challenges us to create more than a representation of a subject, but to ‘capture the spirit’ of it. Learn to paint flowers and other traditional subjects with brushstrokes from your heart. Suitable for all levels and beginners are very welcome.

*Julia Martin, Chinese brush painting artist and tutor.*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£225**

## **March 3rd - 5th    RESTORATIVE YOGA – Sounds and Shapes for the Soul**

Throughout this relaxing yoga weekend, using a variety of restorative and nurturing practices, including using sound and Yoga Nidra, Nikki will guide and support you along your inward journey to wellbeing.

*Nikki Tuke, regularly runs restorative yoga workshops and has witnessed first-hand the transforming and profound effect that comes from working closely with the breath and the healing, grounding forces of gravity.*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£265**

## **March 10th - 12th    DEEPEN THE CONNECTION TO YOUR VOICE**

Learn to love your voice and your own unique expression. Connect your singing voice to your inner voice of intuition, wisdom, peace and centredness. We will explore mantras, movement meditation and silence, as well as our ability to sing freely. All welcome, no singing ability required!

*Narayani, Kirtan singer and Voicework Facilitator.*

**Depart 4pm Sunday**

**£240**

### **March 17th - 19th YOGA RETREAT – to celebrate the Equinox**

The Spring Equinox is a time when the earth is poised in balance of light and dark, and in most cultures marks the beginning of spring. It provides an auspicious opportunity to manifest new wishes into our lives. We will do this using a series of yoga, meditation and visualisation techniques, simultaneously enjoying a weekend of thanksgiving, celebration and friendship.

*Ceri Lee, has taught yoga for professionally for 15 years and runs retreats and workshops in the UK and abroad. [www.yoga-light.com](http://www.yoga-light.com)*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£280**

### **March 24th - 26th ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE – for beginners and refreshers**

The Alexander Technique is a learned skill which improves health, balance and co-ordination and is medically proven as a long term solution to back pain (BMJ 2008). This gently-paced course uses explanation, lying down, guided activities, hands-on work and discussion to explore the principles involved. Please bring comfortable clothing.

*Jill Payne, teaches the Alexander Technique in Beckenham.*

**Depart 2pm Sunday**

**£225**

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### **POETRY**

*Poetry is a wild horse  
Galloping madly across the plain,  
Its mane and tail catching the wind  
Hooves pounding.  
Sometimes it can fly.  
Occasionally it can be sweet tempered  
And deceptively passive  
But  
Go too near, offer it an apple  
And it will bite you.*

**Kay Horsfield**

### **Children's answers to Biblical questions**

*When Mary heard she was the mother of Jesus, she sang the Magna Carta.  
Jesus was born because Mary had an immaculate contraption.  
Solomon, one of David's sons, had 300 wives and 700 porcupines.*

## QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWS and EVENTS

Plans are underway for a possible QSH Healer training course in the Spring in Sunderland.

It is also hoped there will be a course at Claridge House later in the year.

Plans are being made for a Healer **Support weekend** at Claridge House later next year. Claridge House is beautifully refurbished and a great place to meet fellow healers for nourishment and support. Details will be given in the Spring edition of Towards Wholeness.

If any full Healers are thinking they may want to become Tutors for the QSH Training course please contact Kay Horsfield Email: [horsfield.k@gmail.com](mailto:horsfield.k@gmail.com).

To all healers a quote from a book of blessings:

*The light which shines in the eye is really the light of the heart.*

*The light which fills the heart is the light of God.* **Rumi**

**THE OUKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' NEWSLETTER.**

Please send any contributions for the Quaker Spiritual Healers' Newsletter to Ed Warne, contact details on inside back cover.

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IF YOU PAY FOR YOUR  
FFH SUBSCRIPTION BY CHEQUE,  
THEN YOUR RENEWAL IS DUE AT THE START OF JANUARY.  
Please note too, that our membership secretary's details have changed.

**You should send your cheque to Stephen Feltham**  
(details on the inside back cover of this *TW*).

**If you would like to pay by standing order,  
then please contact him for a form.**

If you already pay by standing order then you need do nothing. Thank you.

*"There is no greater power on this earth than story."*

*Libba Bray*

We are all fairly familiar with the word – dementia. Some of us are more familiar than we’d choose to be, given our personal circumstances, especially as carers. But recently I have been reading about another term which relates to this condition: this debilitating, demeaning, degenerating and deteriorating condition. And it gave me hope in so far as many of the ramifications of dementia can be ameliorated to a certain degree, though, as we all know, not cured. At least not at the current time although a great deal of research is currently being done, mostly on mice which is not much help just now. But it should be appreciated that many researchers are giving years of their lives to trying to find out just what happens within the brain that leads eventually to the death of brain cells.

So what is this word which is giving me cause for feeling more up-beat about things? It’s – rementing, (and yes, my computer hasn’t heard of it either apparently!). It’s a concept coined by Tom Kitwood in his excellent book *Dementia Reconsidered*<sup>1</sup>. It leads to a noun which could also be used, rementia. (Not acceptable to my computer again.)

One could say that the opposite to dementia is rementia, and dementing’s opposite might well be rementing. And what comes across from these expressions is the thought that as carers we can do a lot to slow the progress of dementia, to make life more amenable and pleasant for both the sufferer and the person/s caring for them. Therefore allowing for a certain amount of remission of the illness.

So often a person with moderate or later stage dementia has their personhood undermined. As soon as it’s obvious that someone’s mind is not working as it should be, or as we all think it should be, there is a change of attitude, a change in how others speak to them, and do not include them in the everyday minutiae of life. Tacit assumptions seem to take control during which the person might be subjected to a number of unpleasant, and often unnecessary, comments and even slights. They might feel ignored and undervalued as a person. We have probably all been into care homes for those with any form of dementia in which we see a large room with chairs placed around the walls and residents just sitting forlornly unoccupied, with blank or even hopeless expressions on their faces. And while I know there are many care homes in which the staff are wonderful in their caring for people and we can be grateful to them, there are also places where, though adequate physical care is given, there is no real rapport between staff and residents. What’s physically needful is done, but no mental stimulus, no engagement on a mental level is apparent, so the person

with dementia just sinks further and further into the apathy which so often accompanies it.

The idea behind the concept of rementing is that we try our best to reverse the process by which the personhood is diminished. Researchers have made studies of what they term “homely homes” i.e care homes which provide the very highest care of *all* aspects of the residents’ personalities. They found clear evidence of definite recovery of powers that had apparently been lost, a decrease in depression, a slowing down in the cognitive decline: a kind of remission or rementing. However we might recognise that the mental processes are deteriorating we must still treat that person as we always have done. Speak to them, even when there’s no reply, or perhaps just a nod of the head. Carry on talking about things and allow for the fact that your conversation is getting through at some level. Let them keep their dignity, their mental dignity, as still valued companions. Encourage them to try and continue with previous interests and hobbies, at least as long as possible.

But, avoid asking direct questions, or their opinions on things, as trying to find an answer will often cause agitation and a realisation of their inadequacies. And, when strange ideas bubble to the surface it’s important not to contradict, not to try and ‘put them right’ – not to score points! Just agree; after all what does it matter in the long run if what they say is not correct, as long as it is not injurious in any way? Also it helps them to retain their own sense of self-respect. A book produced by the Contented Dementia Trust<sup>2</sup> gives just such advice as this, stressing three things – don’t question; don’t criticize; don’t contradict. Of course, this isn’t always easy for the carer, but after a while it becomes second nature just to let things be and go along with life as it is, and it makes for a certain degree of contentment for both/all parties.

It is well known that hospitalization, a course of very strong anti-biotics or a transference to a care home can cause sudden and drastic changes which are usually irreversible. So it’s most favourable if any of these things can be avoided (though there often does come a time when a care home becomes necessary for the mental and physical health of the carer, and should be a guilt-free decision on their part, especially as, in most cases, they have spent years already in their caring role). Even though certain cognitive powers are eventually lost, there still remain strong emotions, and these can be quite overwhelming for the person with a lack of understanding of what’s happening to them: fears (of abandonment, humiliation); senses (of persecution, menace, panic – grief); anxiety; anger; frustration are all emotions which it may well be difficult to express, so sensing when these are present, and listening when they are expressed in any way, is a vital part that the carer can play in alleviating the



misery and distress of their loved ones – or those they care for.

The vital thing is that the sufferer can still sense the feeling of love, even when everything else around them seems to be disintegrating. So, small intimations, and little or even large gestures can cut through the mist that envelops them, and they will still feel a sense of being valued and loved. Love is the most important thing!

It's a vast subject, and caring on a day-to-day basis for someone with any form of dementia, no matter how much one loves them, is a hard job! We need to bear in mind all the time that, in spite of appearances, they are still the same person underneath it all, their basic essence is the same, their soul is the same. But the fog which descends with increasing intensity has made it well-nigh impossible for them to continue with their previous life, and they are now totally dependent on our care and compassion.

<sup>1</sup> *Dementia Reconsidered: the person comes first* by Tom Kitwood. Open University Press, first published 1997, and republished several times since – ISBN: 0-335-19855-4.

<sup>2</sup> *Contented Dementia* by Oliver James. Vermilion. 2008 and subsequent reprints. – ISBN: 978-0-09-190181-3.

## REPORTS

**Yealand Meeting Prayer Group for Healing and Wholeness** has been meeting monthly for quite a few years. We average six or so Friends each time. A few months ago we met together to take stock and review the way we approach our prayer meetings. Our revised way of doing things seems to suit us well and may be of interest to others.

We have adopted the following points:

1 At the beginning of each Prayer Group whoever is leading the session reminds us of the need for confidentiality and for speaking clearly, and checks out whether everyone is comfortable with Therapeutic Touch (see third point)

2 We begin with a period of silence

3 We then go round the circle in order of sitting with each person saying the name of the Friend next to them and, if comfortable with doing so, laying a gentle hand perhaps on the arm of the named Friend. This allows the Friend who has just been upheld to take as much time as they need to centre down before saying the name of the next Friend and so on, until each Friend present

has been upheld by the group.

4 After this we bring forward the name(s) of any members of the prayer group who are prevented from coming.

5 We then bring forward, at random out of the silence, the names of people known to each of us who have asked to be upheld. We had been finding it difficult, when just a first name is given, to guess whether that person is someone you know and therefore whether or not you need to say their name. We have come up with several solutions to this problem. We now say the name and, if we feel it to be appropriate, give a little information about the person. Alternatively we give first name and surname. Or we might say, "My neighbour, xxx" or "My cousin, xxx".

6 Some of us find it useful, when a name is given of someone we don't know, to channel energy through the Friend who has brought the name forward.

7 We like to end with a prayer or a blessing as this seems to give closure and a positive ending to our meeting.

*Lesley McCourt*

(on behalf of Yealand Prayer Group)

In **Bath Local Meeting** the same five committed members have been meeting monthly since June 2015. We have changed our practice in that we hold our prayers of healing first, and then share thoughts on a topic prepared by one of the group. This is because Bath Meeting has only the one extremely large meeting room and Friends begin to arrive early, thus bringing activity and intrusion to our quietness. It seems to work for us, and allows uninterrupted 20 or so minutes from 10.00 for our healing thoughts. We have also changed our structure and have simplified our introduction to healing prayers as we have got to know our needs and each other more. We seek in the quiet to relax, opening ourselves to the Light, asking for God's protection and then offering our prayers for ourselves, gradually extending our thoughts further and further into the world. We bring names both spoken and silent; we remember groups of people in need; we feel free to use the time as appropriate for our Meeting. We end with a formal prayer and/or saying the grace, holding hands.

Simplicity is our main attribute as our time is short and we have various physical restrictions such as times of buses, disability and ageing! Nevertheless we are mostly 100% in attendance, our time together is valued, and we plan to continue. We could do more to encourage others to attend, and perhaps that is an area we should investigate.

*Hazel Mitchell*

(on behalf of Bath Distant Healing Group)

Pauline and I attended a seminar on Spiritual Healing in Kenya and Britain at Glenthorne on 14/5/16. Allan Holmes, Jane Holmes and Patrick Muganda gave the seminar. Patrick Muganda is a pastor in the programmed tradition of East Africa Yearly Meeting. I said to a fellow delegate that I had questions concerning the programmed tradition. So did she. Patrick brought a letter of introduction from his Area Meeting, which I took as entitlement for reception by me as a Friend, but not as a pastor.

Initial reservations began to dissolve as he spoke. There was no ego discernible in him. He described the American missionary activity that introduced Quakerism to Kenya starting in 1902 and the revival that took place in the 1930s. Numbers grew to about 1900 in 1949. There are now nearly 20 Yearly Meetings under the umbrella of Friends Church Kenya.

He described his reception of the gift of healing in 1992 and spoke about his ministry. Like all other healers, he cannot say how the gift works, only that it sometimes does. Privately he told me that HIV patients can live for 30 years. This is encouraging for me as one of those on our Wooldale healing list has the virus. He spoke of his wife and four children, and about the other children that live with them. One of the earliest of these is now 19 years old and about to start independent life. He warmly thanked his biological children for incorporating the others into the family. He has no money, but somehow the necessary provisions appear.

He and Allan Holmes both spoke briefly of the Baptism in the Holy Spirit. Towards the end of the seminar I availed myself of the offer of individual healing. They used the gift of tongues quietly in their ministry. The skin trouble which I came with, I left with, nevertheless it was a powerful experience, full of confirmation and encouragement.

Allan spoke about his ministry, including an account of Graeme, who was healed of a serious brain tumour when on the brink of death, and who then died some seven months later. He also spoke of a lady partially healed of hearing loss following a fractured skull, and of a second healing after which she could hear Vivaldi's piccolo concerto.

The final session of the day was facilitated by Jane Holmes, and was a powerful and beautiful meeting for distant healing. People who had asked for individual healing came and went during this session. The experience of the day was altogether remarkable, though hard to describe in words. It was as though we had been in a better place. And we carry away with us the knowledge that we experienced this, and the experience itself goes with us.

*"After nourishment, shelter and companionship, stories are the thing we need most in the world."*

**Philip Pullman**

Once I strode through life, bumping into friends and colleagues, saying: "Hello, sorry, I can't stop, sorry, I must dash, sorry. I'll catch up later, I'll phone you." So busy, busy, busy....

Now that I'm retired life takes on a different spin, or rather a non-spin because I'm able to stop and engage with people, even strangers and not be pressurized by time. My inner dialogue seems to be saying: "Hello, I *can* stop, I *can* have a chat with you, I'm *not* busy, busy, busy." How wonderful this is! And how revealing!

Recently I met a man, a complete stranger, who shared with me his extraordinary life of travel from which I learnt so much. Later another told me something of his life in the RAF during the Second World War and his subsequent life trying to adjust to civvy street. I even met a man who spent two years (National Service) in Germany, after the war, as a prison guard for Rudolf Hess, Adolf Hitler's deputy!

Every one of these individuals had a story to tell, in their own unique way and I felt privileged to be able to listen to them. And what I noticed most of all was the more I listened – without indicating through body language or speech any sense of boredom or unease about the passing of time – the more they opened up and shared with me. People are often operating in busy mode, especially those in full-time work and feel unable to give others their full attention, and that's understandable, but in all this busyness something precious is lost – an opportunity to learn, to grow.

A close friend of mine, in his younger days, was in total despair and intent on suicide. London Bridge was the venue and he was ready to jump. The voice of an approaching man caught his attention and he pulled back momentarily. The man expressed his crucial concern over this desperate act and offered to help in any way he could. They retired to a nearby coffee shop and shared their life stories with all the dramatic highs and inevitable lows. Because of this man's intervention, his obvious communication skills and his willingness to give my friend his time, a life was saved.

Even when we are leading busy lives there are still times when we are compelled to stop and listen to people.

It's good to talk, it's good to listen and it's good to share. We must always try to make time for others and be aware of what we might potentially be missing out on.

I recall reading a story about a young American student studying English Literature. He came from a relatively wealthy background and was asked by his lecturer what the name of his cleaner was? When he said he didn't know the lecturer suggested he should try to find out and asked if he could write up her story as a college assignment. The woman was delighted when approached with this idea. She was Mexican and had had an inspiring, interesting life which somehow surprised the student. When he eventually shared the story with his lecturer he said he was grateful indeed for 'being awakened' by the process – of being exposed to another person's story, their richly woven life. His taken for granted mind-set had been truly shaken thorough this experience, and for the better.

In the intervals, gaps and slots of our busyness lies life, another life, a life that we can share with others. I am so pleased and grateful that my working, busy life is behind me now thus giving me time to relax, reflect and share more with others. I've come to the realization that everyone is interesting in their own unique way and to be able to spend time with people, to listen to their stories, to relax around them, to allow them to make a presence in my life is not only a great privilege but it also represents, for me, the most valuable thing that I can do on the spiritual path.

*When you meet with people, at work or wherever it may be, give them your fullest attention. You are no longer there primarily as a person, but as a field of awareness, of alert Presence. The original reason for interacting with the other person – buying or selling something, requesting or giving information, and so on – now becomes secondary. The field of awareness that arises between you becomes the primary purpose for the interaction. That space of awareness becomes more important than what you may be talking about, more important than physical or thought objects. The human Being becomes more important than the things of this world. It does not mean you neglect whatever needs to be done on a practical level. In fact the doing unfolds not only more easily, but more powerfully when the dimension of Being is acknowledged and so becomes primary. The arising of that unifying field of awareness between human beings is the most essential factor in relationships on the new earth.*

## Eckhart Tolle





**The Honest Mums Club** by *Hannah Oakland*. Darton-Longman-Todd. 2016. 192pp. ISBN: 978-0-232-532227. £9.99.

If you are interested in mental health, especially post-natal depression and the trials of being a young mum or dad, then this book has a lot to offer. Someone once likened depression to a feeling of being separated from oneself and I related to this personally recalling the few days following the birth of my second baby when I was deep in that “Baby Blues” period experienced by so many new mums. I distinctly remember being at one side of my body and “watching myself” as I stood by the fridge crying helplessly and swamped by an overwhelming despair and anger that seemed to be operating independently of the real me. My husband, meanwhile, looked on baffled, frustrated and obviously feeling pretty helpless.

This is a brave book that opens the lid on many issues faced in just one year of experiencing post-natal depression. The focus on mothering in those early years is drawn from extracts of the author’s blog, [www.walkingwiththemoon](http://www.walkingwiththemoon). Despite the theme, vibrant anecdotes and an earthy humour fly off the page as she tells it just as it is. The result is a delightful book that makes for light, easy reading and I’m sure the antics of her three-year old especially will bring back memories for many of us!

The author describes her battles with lack of sleep, deep fatigue, depression, fear and other negative emotional strangleholds and how she so wants to be the perfect, happy mother despite spending hours alone crying, hopeless and a failure. She speaks about the stigma and fear that surrounds mental illness and how much it helped her to eventually summon the courage to talk to the people at church. Instead of rejection she found a huge amount of support and understanding. Yet disclosing this condition or indeed any mental health problem isn’t easy even in today’s culture. Prejudice, ignorance and discrimination still exist widely at a time of rapid change and a growing need for help.

Her insights on a whole variety of her experiences make this book compulsive reading for would be mums as well as those who are bringing up young children. No holds barred, she lays bare the myth that portrays motherhood as idyllic and speaks instead about her numbness, guilt and sometimes anger as she tries to put a brave face on her true state of mind. Bewildered fathers might

also find it helps deepen understanding of this invisible and appalling condition that kills the joy of what can be one of the most happy and fulfilling times in life.

Towards the end of the book, chinks of light appear and in the Epilogue Hannah decides that; 'Depression may yet be the making of me' and explains that Ignatian spirituality sees life's lowest moments as wake up calls or signposts. Today we live face to face with mental health issues in our communities. I believe this book offers much insight into post-natal depression in a very palatable and light hearted way.

*Maggie Jeffery*

**I Could Do With Some Of That! – The Power of Autogenics. Subtitled – Short-term Therapy for Long-term Being.** by *Jane Bird*. Legends Publishing 2015. ISBN: 978-1-906706-98-3.

This book has been written by a founder member of The British Autogenic Society (BAS) who has taught Autogenics (AT) and trained therapists for over 30 years. In the 308 pages, it covers every aspect, in a very thorough and comprehensive way, of first finding a therapist and then doing the course, week by week.

Those of us who call ourselves 'Healers,' believe we can be a conduit for that creative power which comes from the Divine. Whilst using contact (touch) healing and distant methods (e.g. 'holding in the Light' or prayer) we also believe that the Holy Spirit works through modern medicine, science and technology. In addition, many of us combine those orthodox methods with complementary therapies. Thus having a holistic, inclusive approach of mind, body, feelings and spirit.

With Autogenics, one does not have to choose *either* conventional, scientific methods *or* self-healing, natural ways. This is because it is a therapy which combines and embraces both. It is also based on sound research and the therapists all, also, have a background as health professionals (doctors, nurses, psychotherapists).

The word – Autogenics means "self- generating" or "generated from within". For me, this connects with what Quakers call "the that of God within" or my Higher Self. So carried out *by* oneself, *for* oneself whilst being a channel of self-healing, or a conduit for others. After learning Autogenics, many people become deeply spiritual, understanding better their spiritual journey, meaning and purpose.

Like meditation, Autogenics uses relaxation linked with a nonchalant passive

awareness, where one is “talking to” different parts of one’s body and mind. Thus, one learns to react differently to all the stresses and strains of life, so one can cope more positively and effectively with them. It can therefore be used for all those physical and mental symptoms, which often have their origin in stress. Or for helping with those illnesses which are exacerbated by stress, even preventing such illnesses.

It only takes 8-10 weeks to learn, under the guidance of an Autogenics therapist, with daily, regular practice. It then becomes a habit of life as a unique process of empowerment. It often works surprisingly fast enabling one to be in a meditative, altered state of consciousness which is very therapeutic. So I, personally, often use it for preparing for Quaker worship (receptively listening and discerning) or becoming ready for a healing session (i.e. intentionally tuning-in).

When one goes deeper into Autogenics, it can become a psychotherapy, giving profound understanding and bringing key insights to the surface. This can lead to self development and a more creative life, as well as physical fitness, increased mental ability and aesthetic appreciation.

As this book brilliantly demonstrates, you will discover how the autogenic process unfolds from within, in order to keep oneself in optimum health for the rest of one’s life.

*Elizabeth Angas*

**Into Extra Time – Living through the final stages of cancer and jottings along the way** by *Michael Paul Gallagher*. Darton-Longman-Todd. 2016. 144pp. ISBN: 978-0-232-53252-4. £9.99.

This is a remarkable book, but first an admission: in 2011 I was diagnosed with cancer, went into hospital and had two major operations, nearly died, but through the grace of God came out the other side – to walk again in sunlight and breathe fresh air once more. So that in admitting this, I guess I am also saying that I have a certain bias in favour of a book that chronicles such sufferings since I have experienced some of them myself. And of course, to chronicle such sufferings is not to wallow in them or exalt them in some way; they are part of the human condition. As Philip Larkin observed in one of his great poems, ‘Ambulances’, they visit all of us at one time or another: “They come to rest at any kerb: / All streets in time are visited.”

Indeed, for Michael Paul Gallagher it was his third cancer visitation which proved fatal. He had had cancer before, starting back in 2002, but it was the

return of it early in 2015 when he was travelling from Rome to Ireland to give a course that led to his death, at the age of 76. What the book does is multi-faceted: it provides a mini-autobiography of his life as a distinguished Jesuit priest, teacher and author; a deep insight into his beliefs and concerns, especially those appertaining to unbelief in the modern world; fragments of ideas about openings, darkness, revelation, imagination, transformation and transcendence; a cancer diary, detailing actual experiences and emotions as they occur; and finally a few stabs of his at poetry, which by his own admission, were “never my talent”, but which in certain lines do achieve a serene beauty.

Interspersed though all of the above there is also a wonderful and telling aphoristic quality where he either nails some issue definitively, or he cites just the right authority to do so on his behalf. So here are three wonderful lines from his book:

“Now I began to see that faith is blocked much more by lifestyle than by ideas or philosophies”

“Trusting in medical technology will end in disappointment”

“It’s very simple: how you live shrinks or expands what you can see”

It should be obvious from the above and the contexts in which these quotations occur that Gallagher is a profound thinker, which is hardly surprising given that he was a professor of fundamental theology at Gregorian University. But alongside the depth of thought also goes a deep humanity. Citing Dr Johnson he observes that “death concentrates the mind wonderfully” and so during the course of the book the issues of his life begin to unravel: we sense his doubts, his hesitations, even his very real reservation that he should die at all, knowing indeed, as we all do, that he will and he must.

Particularly poignant is our growing awareness of what an active and able man he was: always planning, scheduling, being useful and productive, yet now finally having to live when he can no longer be any of these things. Even we learn, and explore, whether he had made the right choices in his career? Yes, he rationalises, but should he have specialised more and been less of a generalist? Is he – we feel – really convinced by his own answer? And most telling of all: Monique, the young girl he met at 19 and the road not taken. Where is she now? What happened to her? He prays for her happiness and there is a poem for her. It is in fact that poem that ends the book: Monique at Caen. Think about it – this Catholic priest, this Jesuit since he was 22 years old – his last word, a poem to Monique? Is this a cipher for the Virgin Mary? I think not; here he achieves in the final sentence a quite sublime beauty:

“... Or can you visit,  
As I do, wonder echoes  
Of hands held and eyes knit,  
Symbols of a love bigger than  
We were able for at twenty one,  
But changing me at least forever.”

The syntax of the final two lines is as tortured and complex as the emotion behind it; and for all of us as human beings we resonate as we reflect on our roads not taken, as death concentrates our minds wonderfully too.

There is much more in this book than space permits, but it should be obvious that, despite my bias in its favour, it is an eloquent, absorbing and fascinating work that I strongly recommend to all readers of *Towards Wholeness*: most impressively of all, Michael Paul Gallagher keeps his faith in God intact despite all the sickness and suffering that his cancer throws at him. Do buy and read this book; it is uplifting.

*James Sale*

### SILENT WORSHIP (*Acrostic*)

Silently I centre down  
Into That Place; quite soon the frown  
Leaves my face, the blessed calm  
Eases tension out; such balm  
Nurtures growth of spirit pure  
Towards that harmony so sure.

We are gathered in this House today  
Our Meeting, cause divine to seek the Way.  
Resistance to the meditative state, don't judge,  
Shadow side, acceptance, truth to nudge,  
Healing manifest through open heart,  
In the light, support of prayer the part,  
Peace in waiting, love, and gratitude.

*Peter Horsfield*

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All are welcome to join. If you would like to help in this way, please write to one of the Postal Co-ordinators (*Robin Goodman & Muriel Robertson – contact details on the inside back cover*) with a few details about yourself. Your letter will be passed on to one of the group secretaries who will then contact you directly and give you the names of two or three people to uphold in prayer regularly.

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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:

"I give and bequeath (*state what...*) to the Friends Fellowship of Healing (being a Charity registered under the Charities Act, No. 284459), to the registered address of the Charity as recorded with the Charity Commission at the time that this bequest comes into effect, AND I DECLARE that the receipt of this legacy by the then proper officer for the Fellowship, shall be a complete discharge to my Trustee(s) for that legacy."



