

## NOTICES

**QSH Healing Training Courses:** Claridge House 6 - 10 October 2003.  
Lattendales 3 - 7 May 2004.

**QSH Support Group Weekends:** Claridge House 12 - 14 September 2003.

**Summer Gathering:** Loughborough 26 July - 2 August 2003.

**FFH Spring Gathering:** Morley 26 - 28 March 2004.

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# TOWARDS WHOLENESS

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## REFLECTIONS

*N*ature is a painting for us, day after day, pictures of infinite beauty  
if only we have eyes to see them.

*John Ruskin*

*I*f the only prayer you would say in your whole life is "thank you", that  
would suffice.

*Meister Eckhart*

*K*nowledge is received only in those moments in which every  
judgement, every criticism coming from ourselves is silent.

*Rudolf Steiner*

*W*e must discover something better than mere happiness, and this is  
joy. Joy is on a higher level than happiness. Happiness, so one might  
say, 'is of the earth and earthy', but joy is of the soul.

*Henry Thomas Hamblin*

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Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

Letters, articles, news items and other contributions for *Towards Wholeness* should be sent to the editor, Rosalind Smith, 11 Beacon Hill, Dormansland, Surrey RH7 6RQ. Email: RosSmith@btinternet.com **Deadlines: February 1st, June 1st and October 1st.**

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## NEWS

**QSH Healing Training Course** – Mon-Fri 6th - 10th October 2003, at Claridge House, and Mon-Fri 3rd - 7th May 2004 at Lattendales. Led by Leonora Dobson and Rosalind Smith.

**Quaker Spiritual Healers' Support weekend** – 12th - 14th September, 2003, at Claridge House.

**Summer Gathering** – Saturday 26th July - Saturday 2nd August, 2003, at Loughborough.

**FFH Spring Gathering 2004** – 26th - 28th March, at Morley.

**Ruth Martin** has this year been able to send £300 to *Claridge House* from her annual plant sale at the Godalming Spring Fair. Since 1998 she has raised a total of £1324.94 from sales of plants from her garden, and plants she has grown and propagated especially for Claridge House. This is an ongoing project which involves work all through the year, culminating in a very busy two days. She is helped on the day by her husband Eddie, sister Brenda Underwood, and a member of her Meeting without whose valuable help she couldn't manage. She now has some 'regular' customers who always visit the stall. She recommends this as a fun way to raise money for our Houses, which can do with all the financial help they can get.

And **Anne Smith** has also been able to contribute a welcome sum to *Claridge House* resulting from the sale of her booklets *Woven with Words Parts I and II* both of which were reviewed in the Spring issue of *TW*. (These booklets are still available from Anne – at £2.00 each – please write to her at 90 Chipperfield Road, Kings Langley, Herts. WD4 9JD – and all the proceeds go to Claridge House.)



*Ruth Martin and a helper on the stall, Richard Lentle*

## Clerk's Corner

Yearly Meeting, although feeling somewhat smaller in number than previous years, was quietly concentrated and consolidating: we focused on the serious issues but still managed much friendly laughter as the Clerk was both human and also humorous.

On Sunday afternoon, we adults, unlike the under 19s, were given choice about our peace witness. David and I both chose to remain within the body of the Meeting, even though we had not consulted with one another beforehand.

It felt very strange and unsettling when most Friends silently and slowly filed out of the room to begin the peace witness outside. As the doors of the main meeting room remained open I was startled to hear car horns – forgetting that this was a sign of support from passing motorists. It reminded me of my feelings of irritation and ambivalence earlier in the year when trying to counsel clients in a building close to the fire brigade, finding it impossible to hear them over the continual noise of supportive car horns for the striking firemen huddled over their fire on the pavement opposite.

As the Meeting for Worship continued it felt one of the deepest I have ever experienced. The term 'covered' meeting comes to mind as the quietness and total stillness enveloped us.

Someone offered ministry for all of us: – why had we chosen to stay behind? What made us do this? Perhaps it allowed us to begin to experience abandonment and feel deserted and alone, just as many people do, when friends and family leave, or disappear. She thought that for her, it was about witnessing for all those who have no choice except to stay behind. This uncomfortable feeling was mitigated when I also experienced the timelessness of group cohesive prayer – we were one body, made up of many parts, but all of us, together, praying for peace and healing, for a human hour – a few moments in God's eternal time.

*"The place of prayer is a precious habitation: . . . I saw this habitation to be safe, to be inwardly quiet, when there were great stirrings and commotions in the world."* (John Woolman 1770)

Joolz Saunders

A BURSARY FUND for FFH members is now available for those members who would like to attend FFH Gatherings, and courses at Claridge House and Lattendales. 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 (address, etc. on back cover of TW).

## RELEASING EMOTIONS THROUGH MASSAGE

Jan Brumfitt

Massage may be a physical therapy but it works on an energetic level too, and it is vital for a therapist to understand this, if s/he is going to work with clients who are debilitated by illness. These clients are often very sensitive, and if the massage therapist is not aware of what is happening when pain is addressed and/or released, then the client will be distressed and misunderstand the results.

Our bodies can be viewed in two ways, as matter and as moving energy. Everything we do affects the flow of energy. Every one of the billions of atoms in our body contains enormous energy. Just as a relatively small nuclear warhead can cause so much devastation, so can blocked emotions when they explode into awareness. We can therefore understand that massage is going to have a huge effect on the energy body and not least in emotional release.

Whenever we have not fully expressed an emotion, we hold it in our bodies. Look at a tiny baby. In the course of a day s/he will have expressed every emotion under the sun... delight, joy, happiness, sadness, anger and anxiety. But look how the baby expresses the feeling, lets go and switches back to the present moment, never holding onto the emotion at all. The baby exudes Unconditional Love, and see how flexible and relaxed her body is. But soon the baby learns that certain emotions are not acceptable and so she begins to repress her feelings and forgets how to let the energy of emotion pass through her body. So what happens to it? It becomes lodged inside her, and it stays there until some incident triggers it, and on the back of it comes out all the other times she has felt the same way. Sometimes this is extremely frightening and so we feel we should not express our emotions at all, and then the pressure in our bodies increases and a physical symptom may appear. This may be a pain in the neck or stiffness in the bottom of the spine, a hunched back, a bad knee or a pulled muscle. At this point we may seek out a therapist to "cure" the problem. Without understanding the cause, however, we may find the problem simply recurs.

My first step to seeing this link came in the middle of the night, after I had been working with the six healing breaths of Qi Gong, which links breathing to body parts and specific emotions. When I awoke suddenly, I found intense anger coming out of the backs of my legs and my elbows. That was when I first sat up and noticed that specific emotions could be held in particular places in the body and that I needed to find ways to release so much that was inside me.

My next understanding, happened after several sessions with both a masseuse and a kinesiologist, both of whom had an uncanny knack of finding spots on my body that were so painful, it brought sweat to my brow when they were deeply massaged. This always followed a pattern. First came the acute pain, which eventually turned into a chronic pain, not quite so intense as the original. This faded into a sick and nauseous feeling, where there was an awareness of lack of balance. Quite quickly after this stage came a deep sigh

and the pain rapidly diminished and often went altogether. At this point I usually accused the masseuse of not pressing as hard as before, but I was constantly assured that this was not the case!

One morning, when I woke up the day following one of these sessions, I felt very off balance and sick and nauseous. I knew I had overtaxed myself and I was about to criticize myself for never learning, when it came to me that what I was experiencing was a magnified version of how I felt in the massage session. In the massage sequence just described, this feeling came immediately prior to the sigh, which let go the emotion and which took away the pain. Suddenly I thought, "Suppose this awful lack of balance means I am about to let go and release?" I breathed deeply into the imbalance as I lay in bed, waiting for the emotion to rise.

Sure enough the sigh came and I released whatever it was I was holding. But you can see at once that, without this understanding, the massage session could easily be blamed for the debilitation the following day and, of course, this is partly true. It is important therefore for the therapist to understand what is happening and to be able to explain to the client at his/her own level, so that whatever ensues can be understood more clearly.

I had held this point of view for some time and had used massage for the purpose of emotional release to good effect, but the one thing I had failed to resolve, was when I actually pulled a muscle or a ligament as a result of a sporting injury. My mind kept telling me, "This is different, this is an injury". Then came the event which changed my understanding and then I knew that there was no difference. All pain is the result of repressed emotion and there are no exceptions.

I was dancing at an end of week party on my Healing Skills Course, when I felt a ping in the back of my calf and I could not put weight on my left leg. My first thought was that my Achilles Tendon had gone again but I could raise the foot, so I knew that it could not be broken. As the course tutor could see on the energetic level, I asked what had happened. He told me it was an injury to the muscle where the tendon inserted and not the tendon itself. I asked him if the injury could be resolved on the energetic level by going into the pain and releasing it, and he said it could. I began to put weight on the leg and massage the affected part. As I hit the pain I just allowed it to come out and observed it. Then I found I could go further and further into the pain and put more and more weight upon my leg. Not only that, I was aware of a number of emotions held there, which were gradually released. The broken tendon had happened as a teenager, when I was going through a very difficult time emotionally, after a series of deaths among family and friends. It was not surprising that there was a lot of anger there, as well as fear and distress.

I arranged for some massage from a masseur who understands the energetic basis of injury. By bringing me over and over again to the threshold of pain and releasing it, the muscle relaxed its tensions, discharged its emotions and returned to normal. Even better,

the Achilles tendon was not as tight as before. In three days I was playing golf again. That was amazing.

The final understanding came after an e-mail from a client, who had received absent healing and felt better, but had then relapsed severely and wondered what on earth was happening. After reading and thinking about what she had told me, this was what I wrote to her.

"When Light or Love is beamed into the body, negativities come to light. They cannot exist because basically they are illusions and they begin to come out of the body. What do they come out as? Original memories. If you have experienced feeling dreadful in the past and that has been suppressed and not fully experienced, out it will come when it is brought into the light through some form of healing. You then have a choice; but if you don't appreciate what is happening you don't know this. The choice is to buy into the old experience, feel fearful and see the memory as a relapse. The other way is to see it as a memory and experience it fully and let it go. It may last for seconds, minutes, hours or days but be quite clear it is a memory and needs to be experienced and observed without fear. There may be dozens of memories, one overlaying the other – all of the same thing, but gradually they will all be experienced faster and faster until the original suppressed emotion comes out and then it won't happen again. Exactly the same thing can happen if you move a lot of energy while overdoing things: it will push the emotions out and you can experience it as a relapse or just a memory."

Massage is a wonderful healing medium, but if it is too vigorous, the memories it releases will be too overwhelming for the recipient to deal with. Then s/he will be so consumed by pain that understanding what has occurred on the energetic level will be impossible. So it is vital for a masseur to be aware of what is happening, particularly when dealing with clients who are sensitive through long term illnesses and adrenal exhaustion. Otherwise they will misunderstand the results.

This happened to me when I was still quite ill with M.E. and I had some Shiatsu on my head and neck. Afterwards I experienced such pain, which took several days to disperse. Now I realise that I was releasing rage, which had collected there. Had I understood and just let it come out, I know now that I would have released it so much more quickly and with less distress.

A client, whom I work with from time to time, told me that a session of Shiatsu, where the practitioner had worked on her for two and a half hours, had put her back into bed for several weeks. The practitioner had told her that there were lots of blocked emotions in the neck area and had proceeded with hands and elbows to massage them out. This was too much for a sensitive client, who was just beginning to recover her energy and who didn't understand at that point how memories could get stuck inside the physical structure.

So there are limitations. The client has to understand what is happening and the

masseur has to be very sensitive towards working with debilitated clients and know how to release the emotional memories in manageable doses. Some clients may need to simply experience relaxation at first, and if this is the case, then the massage must be very gentle. Relaxation is very important because when the body relaxes, it has a better chance of healing itself. When I was very ill I could only manage a very mild aromatherapy massage which was nurturing and kind. Even the slightest pressure hurt me and left bruises. It was a long time before I made the link between emotions and pain and the role massage had to play in release. Readiness is a key factor.

Massage is also only one of the many steps needed for the journey to wellness. Everything the client does will either move and release or, conversely, block energy. Therefore the client has to be aware of diet, movement, breathing, attitude, environment, and especially self love and compassion, if progress is to be made. Massage works best in the context of a wider program of self help in which the therapist and the client fully understand the energetics of what is happening.

*(A copy of this article can be obtained from [www.janbrumfitt.co.uk](http://www.janbrumfitt.co.uk) (go to articles/Massage and Emotions)*

## WHOLENESS

*Is even this illusion*

*That sometimes there is total fusion  
Of all around us: water, earth and sky?  
Does such fleeting wholeness then belie*

*The divided self, so often torn  
From the moment we are born?  
Such vision will not last  
It can be neither stopped nor grasped.*

*The sky is there, so is the tree  
Yet neither now are part of me.  
Instead, vibrations of the street,  
All ugly things the senses meet:*

*Garish colours, litter, noise  
Shattering serenity and poise.  
All is dark and tarnished – out of line  
YET, could this discord be divine  
And also part of me  
As is the tree?*

*Lily Seibold*



## AS SEEN BY MY SPIRITUAL AND PHYSICAL EYES *Chris Edwards*

I had been asked to give healing to a friend's daughter. Calming music was providing the atmosphere and a candle was lit to add to the ambience. Spirit quietly informed myself that the patient had already begun the healing process once she had actually telephoned – she had mentally and subconsciously made the decision.

I began scanning. Sure enough there were several areas that required various degrees of attention, the most prominent area being in and around the heart chakra. This was also the most graphically shown pictorial display in my mind's eye. I saw a heavy brass padlock holding and locking a very chunky brass chain deep within my patient's heart chakra. Both the chain and padlock were bright and shiny, telling me that they had fairly recently been placed there and that all the physical symptoms were being created as a result of an emotional fear within. I reached out and found the key and duly unlocked this padlock and gently removed both it and the chain, which entered the candle and dissipated into the universe, for safe keeping by spirit, the god force or whatever one feels comfortable with in describing the indescribable. I then began filling the void left by these mental bonds with a soft white light, a delicate cloudlike substance, a most ethereal yet tangible balm for the body to absorb and heal with.

It was then that this particular healing became different to most that I have given. For as I was gently replacing the physical layers around the heart chakra (each layer also receiving a smoothing of the white balm), I became aware of a pure white light approaching and descending towards us. As it drew nearer, there was a figure standing upright within its incandescence. The figure had long hair and a beard; both of which were brown with an auburn tinge to them. His eyes were the clearest pale grey/light blue – both smiling and penetrating at the same time. He was clothed in flowing white raiment of a biblical fashion. Without saying a physical word, I was aware of the strength, the majesty and the absolute calmness of his power and his abilities. I could feel a most beautiful warmth, a tingling without an earthly heat, surround and flow through both myself and the young lady who had requested the healing. The funny thing is that rather than have the image dissipate or recede back into the universe after this visitation, I felt that it (or he) was being absorbed and integrated into my very being.

Now I am the first to admit that I am not a churchgoer and am not particularly religious in the human orthodox manner as our society dictates. I believe within myself in what 'IS' – which requires no church, for how can you contain that which is out there and is a part and also the whole of everything? How can you encase in brick, stone and mortar that which purely and simply is? You cannot restrict it to such and such a building and visit it supposedly once a week, or less. I have no need within myself to be seen as a churchgoer, therefore there are some out there who would see it as even more incredible that I should be so honoured as to have such a wondrous helping hand from the Source, and to be so calmly accepting of that help.



## MEDITATION ON PSALM 121

*I lift up my eyes to the hills –  
Where does my help come from?  
My help comes from the Lord  
The Maker of heaven and earth.*

That's all very well, but if I'm in the dark depths of the cave I can't very well see those hills, can I? At least I feel safe in this cave. I don't feel brave enough to go out and look up to the hills; not yet.

*The Lord watches over you.  
The Lord is your shade at your right hand,  
The sun will not harm you by day,  
Nor the moon by night.*

So does that mean that He is in the shade, in the night, as well as the sunlight? In this cave, with me, even here in the darkness? Would it be safe to come out from the cave, to face that sunlight – that all-seeing, all-penetrating Light? I need to know that it is also all loving, all forgiving.

*The Lord will keep you from all harm,  
He will watch over your life;  
The Lord will watch over your coming in and your going out,  
From this time forth and for evermore.*

I grope to the mouth of the cave, Lord,  
My eyes are shut fast against light –  
Give me the assurance I crave, Lord,  
That it's safe to emerge from the night.

This sunlight is too much to bear, Lord,  
My eyes remain closed to its ray –  
But – its warmth slowly drives away fear, Lord,  
I open my eyes and it's Day.

I lift up my eyes and I see, Lord.  
Your Presence is here, everywhere.  
In darkness, or light, I may be, Lord;  
Oh wonder, in both, You are there.

*Sheila Bovell*

## STILLNESS AND LABELS

*Wanda Nash*

The English language is marvellously metaphoric. When we want to express the state of being spent, used up, fragmented, we say 'I feel shattered'; and when we want to express admiration for someone who is coping, competent, collected, we say 'He's such a togethered person'.

The need for becoming centered, connected, tethered is perhaps greater today than ever before because our distractions are greater than ever before. In his best-selling novel about the life journey of a motor-cycle mechanic Robert Pirsig describes our present situation like this: 'the present bad quality, the chaotic, disconnected spirit of the twentieth century is created by the overwhelming presence of irrational elements crying out for assimilation'; our current modes of rationality are not moving society forward into a better world. For huge masses of people basic physical needs are no longer overwhelming, and so 'the whole structure of reason is no longer adequate. It begins to be seen for what it really is – emotionally hollow, aesthetically meaningless and spiritually empty'. Later on in the journey the author continues,

'I like the idea of 'gumption'. I like it because it describes exactly what happens to someone who connects with Quality. He gets filled with gumption. A person filled with gumption doesn't sit around dissipating and stewing about things. He's at the front of the train of his own awareness, watching to see what's up the track and meeting it when it comes. That's gumption. The gumption-filling process occurs when one is quiet long enough to see and hear and feel the real universe, not just one's own stale opinions about it. But nothing exotic. That's why I like the word.'

All the time our energies are being pulled at from every direction and so our attention is being spread very thinly. We envy someone who can hold all the bits and pieces of their lives – all the hurries and the horrors and the hurrays – gathered into one whole, into one deep conviction that in the end all will be well. Such people carry inside them an assurance and a confidence that we respect. This air of unflappability, of equanimity, is not limited to any one type of person: nuns who are Catholic, monks who are Buddhist, farmers who are agnostic, practising Quakers, regular meditators, or ordinary friends and relations – all and any sort of person may have this particular kind of serenity, this sense of being 'gathered', 'togethered', that the rest of us envy.

Labels seem so inappropriate, but we do cling to them. Stillness at the centre may be experienced by those who practise Buddhist spirituality, Jewish Hitbodedut, Quaker silence, Transcendental techniques of emptying, Zen, Yoga, personal hypnotherapy, or Christian meditation. Each practice claims very specific routes and doctrines, but there is a degree of common ground between them. The use of silence as a means of getting in

touch with the 'deeps' in our lives has been recognised from the very beginning of history: there are tablets of hieroglyphics describing the use of silence which belong to the early Persian empire, centuries before the birth of Christ. Whether we refer to this practice today as one of stilling, or centring, or mindfulness, or meditating, or contemplating, the end goal is to reach for a state of collectedness from which life takes on more meaning and greater abundance. The means of reaching that centre vary in detail, and it can be puzzling to find the way among so many convinced and convincing teachers.

As humans we are all limited. We try to make ourselves feel 'safe' and in the 'right' by making borders around ourselves. Although in general we need these frameworks of definitions for our daily living, there are moments when we feel we are touching something that is totally Infinite, which is unaffected by our puny efforts to tame it, our attempts to put it inside a frame so that it is easier to carry around and feel confident about. Sometimes it feels as though it is a terrible impertinence even to try to put a name to it – any name makes boundaries and is limiting. But the name that has lasted in the mind of mankind for the longest period of all comes from one of the earliest revelations of God: it is simply

... 'I AM' ...

It is a direct statement of *is-ness*; that that infinite Creator simply, unequivocally, *is*.

In today's world, where many common terms which try to describe things about God have become overworked, and meanings are loaded with misunderstandings and hang-ups from the past, it is said that 'Christianity is almost impossible for people to imagine'. God is too great to be contained within church buildings, and his working spreads over and beyond the churches, so that more often than not it goes unnamed. In a recent survey, ordinary people were asked about things they had experienced that they recognised as 'religious'; no less than 81 per cent of those who answered said they had had a significant religious experience which changed their lives. They also claimed that much of this experience couldn't be fitted into words. Indeed, some of the most valuable experiences we have are the very ones we find hardest to put into words. Such things may be described as moments of great joy, a feeling of being part of a mysterious whole, and of being in touch with a meaning and purpose to life, but there is a common exasperation in finding appropriate terms to use to try to contain such powerful experiences. So in fact, in our culture, they usually get left untold.

Some have simply called these deeps 'the place of no words'.

*(Reprinted with the author's permission from Stillness and Labels by Wanda Nash, Darton, Longman and Todd. 1992. ISBN 0-232-51971-4. £5.95)*

## AHOY! – All you EXPECTANT MUMS!

Did you know there is a special GROUP to pray for the baby in your womb?

*Why pray?* – you may ask. *What difference could it make, I never go to church anyway?*

To quote a deeply spiritual lady, Sylvia Button, who started the **Group for the Expectant Mother and her Unborn Child** –

“In the light of experience and the findings of modern psychology, it is known that a soul becomes attached to the fertilized ovum at conception! So nine months of heartfelt prayers, and the foetus/baby is wonderfully protected. The resultant babies have been proved to be healthy, happy and contented – also, abnormalities have been righted.”

OK. So perhaps you are convinced that prayer could help. Worth a try?

So, what to do –

1. Either yourself, your mother or a friend, etc. writes to me (yes, I'm afraid it is 'snail mail'. The Group has used it happily since the beginning).
2. It helps if you can supply your age, whether it is a first pregnancy, any difficulties, whether supported by husband/partner/family – or not – and, of course, the expected date of birth.
3. I choose three 'Prayer Warriors' (as Sylvia called them) to support the mother-to-be and the infant in the womb, in loving prayer for the full nine months. This has proved to be effective protection for all sorts of conditions.
4. You need to finally inform me of the birth, which is a source of joy all round. Obviously if there is a miscarriage, we still support the Mum.

One of my 'Prayer Warriors' has attended a counselling course and is qualified to help with post-miscarriage, abortion, or adoption.

This is a wonderful Group. After all, it has been proved scientifically that the growing foetus responds to all exterior life, noises, speech, song, music, arguments, and love.

I look forward to hearing from you.

*Joy Readman*

*(Joy is a retired S.R.N. and can often give advice and help. Her address is on the back cover of TW.)*

## I'M VERY WELL, THANK YOU

There is nothing the matter with me,  
I'm as healthy as I can be.  
I have arthritis in both my knees,  
And when I talk – I talk with a wheeze.  
My pulse is weak and my blood is thin  
But – I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in!

Arch supports I have for my feet,  
Or I couldn't go out on the street.  
Sleep is denied me night after night,  
But every morning I find I'm alright.  
My memory is failing, my head's in a spin  
But – I'm awfully well for the shape I'm in!

The moral is this – as my tale I unfold  
That for you and me who are getting old,  
It's better to say "I'm fine" with a grin  
Than to let folks know the shape we are in.  
How do I know that my youth is all spent?  
Well – my get up and go has got up and went.

But I really don't mind when I think, with a grin,  
Of all the grand places my get up has bin.  
Old age is golden, I've heard it said,  
But sometimes I wonder as I get into bed  
With my ears in a drawer, my teeth in a cup,  
My specs on a table until I get up.

Ere sleep overtakes me I say to myself,  
"Is there anything else I could lay on the shelf?"  
When I was young my slippers were red,  
I could kick my heels right over my head.  
When I was older my slippers were blue,  
But I still could dance the whole night through.

Now I am old my slippers are black,  
I walk to the shops and puff my way back.  
I get up each morning and dust off my wits  
And pick up the paper to read the 'obits'.  
If my name is missing I know I'm not dead,  
And so I have breakfast and – go back to bed.

Anon

## CLARIDGE HOUSE SUMMER/AUTUMN PROGRAMME 2003

<i>Weekend Courses</i>	<i>Single £125</i>	<i>Shared £115</i>
<i>Midweek Courses</i>	<i>Single £200</i>	<i>Shared £175</i>

(unless otherwise stated)

### July UNWIND FROM HEAD TO TOE

25/27 Come and be pampered and pamper others! Learn elements of Indian head massage and a foot relaxation sequence. Experience deep relaxation from your head to your toes.

*Nic Lance, Indian head masseur. Member of the Federation of Holistic Therapists and adult education tutor. Laraine Cooper, reflexologist (IIHHT) and learning centre manager.*

### July 28/ MIDSUMMER SPECIAL BREAK

Aug 10 *Cost: £520 per person (£40 per day) – full board*

### Aug EMOTIONAL FREEDOM TECHNIQUE (EFT)

15/17 EFT is a Meridian Therapy, developed around 12 years ago, which can be used as part of existing therapy practice or as a means of personal development. It is a simple to learn, simple to use technique for resolving emotional, physical and spiritual problems and is especially effective for trauma and phobias.

*Brian Ackroyd, Quaker, Buddhist and healer. Experienced and professional therapist and counsellor*

### Aug SELF-HEALING: MIND, BODY, EMOTIONS AND SPIRIT

22/24 Lack of balance and harmony between these aspects of ourselves may cause us to be less than who we truly are, and diminish our spiritual well-being. We will explore our imbalances and the changes we may need to make to uncover more of who we are and deepen our spiritual connection.

*Tony Steel-Cox, healer and transpersonal counsellor*

### Aug CREATIVE WRITING – 'CONSOLATIONS'

29/31 We tend to console ourselves for our shortcomings and frustrations in different ways, often negatively. In this workshop – partially based on Alan de Botton's TV series on philosophy, we shall explore and write about more positive and meaningful consolations.

*Lily Seibold, qualified and experienced adult education tutor and trained counsellor.*

**Sept 5/7 THE HEALING POWER OF SOUND – PART 3**  
 A follow-on weekend for anyone who has attended Parts 1 and 2. Learn Shamanic Sound Healing – to facilitate soul retrieval with power animals and sound: how to use sound with crystals and flower essences; how to use instruments and tuning forks in sound healing sessions, as well as healing mantras and songs from many different spiritual traditions.  
*Simon Heather, M.Soc.Sc., M.B.Ac.C., MCOH. Internationally known workshop leader and founder of the UK Sound Healers Association.*

**Sept 12/14 QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' SUPPORT GROUP**  
 A weekend gathering for those who are members of the Quaker Spiritual Healers, either full or probationary. An opportunity to continue to develop one's understanding of spiritual healing with others on the same path.  
*Rosalind Smith and Geoffrey Martin, both healers, counsellors and experienced facilitators.*

**Sept 19/26 LATE SUMMER SPECIAL BREAK**  
*Cost: £280 per person (£40 per night) – full board.*

**Sept 26/28 'MEDITATION' – TO QUIETEN THE MIND**  
 Meditation is an effective way of counteracting stress and increasing the sense of personal well-being. The weekend is designed for those who have not meditated before, or who have only limited experience. Techniques and concepts come mainly from the Buddhist tradition but no attempt is made to promote any particular faith. Meditation is of universal relevance.  
*John Preston, previously an ordained Buddhist monk, experienced teacher, counsellor and social worker.*

**Oct 3/5 CREATIVE WRITING – 'POETRY NOT PROZAC'**  
 Recent research suggests that writing verse can help people recover from depression. We shall, therefore explore and write about inner peace (using poetry and prose), which Jung said led to outer peace. We shall also look at literature which is opposed to wars.  
*Lily Seibold, qualified and experienced tutor and trained counsellor.*

**Oct 6/10 QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS 'TRAINING COURSE'**  
 This is another mid-week course in practical healing that gives those who are interested in becoming members of the Quaker Spiritual Healers the opportunity to explore their own potential in the field of healing, in a safe, supportive atmosphere. No experience necessary, only a desire to help.  
*Leonora Dobson and Rosalind Smith, both experienced facilitators, members of FFH, NFSH, and co-tutors of QSH.*

**Oct 17/19 THE HEALING POWER OF SOUND**  
 Learn how to use your voice to heal yourself and others. Learn toning and overtuning; how to balance chakras and heal emotions with sound. Spend a weekend having fun with your voice and sacred sound.  
*Simon Heather; internationally known workshop leader, author, healer and founder of the UK Sound Healers Association.*

**Oct 24/26 'HEAVEN – WHAT? WHERE? WHY?'**  
 Can we say anything meaningful about the heavenly world, or worlds; something that will challenge modern scepticism to think again? Our speakers will be dealing with these questions from various angles, and it will be interesting to see if we discover points of convergence.  
*Dr. Richard Lines (guest speaker from the Swedenborg Society), and members of the Quaker Fellowship for After-Life Studies.*

**Oct 31/ Nov 2 PAINTING ON SILK**  
 An opportunity to learn the techniques of silk painting and to produce finished take-home pieces. Everyone's work will be equally valued, so suitable for absolute beginners (no previous art experience necessary) as well as those with some knowledge.  
*Pat Pique, member of the Guild of Silk Painters and a previous chairman of the Quaker Fellowship of the Arts.*

**Nov 14/16 'THE POETRY OF DREAM'**  
 "We are such stuff as dreams are made on". This weekend will take a look at the huge overlap between the worlds of Dream and Poetry – in the company of Shakespeare, Coleridge, Herrick and others (not forgetting ourselves). Bring a dream poem or a dream-like poem – or just a dream.  
*Gerard Benson, Quaker poet, editor and experienced workshop leader.*



*For booking details – and other tariff, including daily rates and special breaks – please contact the Wardens, Debbie Wright and Keith Marsden,  
 Claridge House,  
 Dormans Road,  
 Lingfield,  
 Surrey RH7 6QH  
 Tel: 01342 832150  
 E-mail: welcome@ClaridgeHouse.freeserve.co.uk*

## NEWS FROM LATTENDALES

In many ways it does not feel like nearly six months since we arrived at Lattendales. We both feel that this is becoming our home and that we are learning more and more from the house itself.

We have met really wonderful people who in fact have made us feel very much at home and the good wishes coming from many quarters has been quite overwhelming. Many of our guests have been coming to Lattendales for years and they have been keeping us on the right track. It is lovely to listen to some of the recollections they have to tell. In many cases when they contact us to come and stay they request a specific room because they have fond memories or they enjoy the view and many of them class Lattendales as their second home.

It is so nice to walk outside in the morning and listen to the dawn chorus (this includes the African Parrots from one of our neighbours !) and to realise that this is a restful and spiritual place.

Like all jobs not everything is perfect. We are at present having surveys carried out on the house and it can be a bit chaotic, however our guests are highly tolerant and make the workmen feel quite at home.

Overall it is a wonderful place to be and with God's help, lots of prayer and the kindness shown by everyone we hope to grow and learn over our time here.

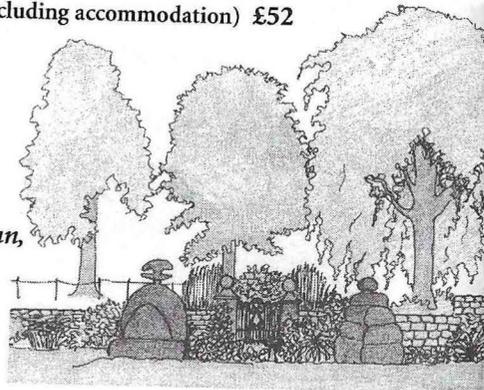
*John & Vivien Cran*

**MOUNTAIN GOAT TOURS** ..... 2nd - 9th Sept.  
The three tours in the week are Thursday (half-day), Saturday (full-day), and Monday (half-day). The wardens reserve the right to change or cancel arrangements if there are not enough bookings to make the tours viable – a minimum of 12 passengers being required by the tour operator. A packed lunch and drinks will be provided for the full-day tour. The drivers/guides are experts and will use their local knowledge to ensure you have an interesting tour.

**Cost of tours** (not including accommodation) £52

**SPECIAL WEEK** – reduced prices  
(no set programme of activities)  
13th - 17th October ..... £129

*For information on booking, and other tariff,  
please contact The Wardens, John & Vivien Cran,  
Lattendales, Berrier Road, Greystoke,  
Penrith CA11 0UE.  
Tel: 017684 83229  
Email: 113101.2672@compuserve.com*



## Report of talk given by Joolz Saunders to Shrewsbury Friends on April 12th, 2003.

Joolz started by giving a brief outline of the history of Quaker healing and told us how it used to be a natural part of their ministry and widely practised. We then heard about the FFH, distant healing groups and one-to-one healing. Following this we had some input, giving words that came to mind when we thought of healing – mending, wholeness, acceptance and many more were offered. Then came, for me, the best bit! We found a partner and after a guided relaxation worked in our pairs to try some healing. My partner sat while I stood behind her. We were asked to connect to God, the power or energy – whatever we felt comfortable with and be a channel for that power, then gently place our hands on our partner's shoulders. With a very light touch and then with my hands further away I 'played' feeling the energy or aura. I found this experience, one which I have never had before, incredibly relaxing, although I did have to keep refocusing as my mind tended to wander, as it does when you least want it to! I found that just holding my hands near to my partner was better – more sensitive. And what did I feel? Well I'm not sure really. I felt more heat radiating from the crown of her head than from anywhere else (what did that mean?) and tingling fingers (was that lack of blood or something more mystical?). I didn't know what I was meant to be doing other than staying focused on God, but I do know that it was a lovely feeling both being the 'healer' and later the 'healed'. I had been pretty discouraged lately by all things spiritual (a dry spell I think it's called) and this short experience gave me a real boost. I felt refreshed, revitalised and excited about finding out more. Could I possibly use this to help others and help myself too? Could I be a channel for God's healing? Wow, that's an amazing thought!

*Angie Dunhill*



### 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."

**Report of the FFH Spring Gathering at Whirlow Grange, 28/30 March 2003  
'Uncomfortable Emotions' – a workshop led by Diana and John Lampen.**

It was good to be with healing friends again and explore together this big topic. We were very fortunate to have Diana and John to help unravel some of these feelings.

After getting to know each other we filled the board with twenty uncomfortable emotions and individually marked one we would like to pursue in depth. From a display of cards depicting emotions we each chose one, giving reasons for our choice.

On Saturday, we looked at anger and resentment. What do you get out of holding on to it? Do we want control, or to feel more powerful? Do we feel threatened, or lose balance? Does it erupt like a volcano and we lose control? We looked at the 'why' of anger, and the question of blame, and how to deal with tension through action – walking, swimming, gardening, blowing into a balloon. A good exercise is to stand tall – be aware of the still centre – clench fists – let go – return to the still centre.

Later, Diana led a deep meditation, 'Healing your Inner Child'. We also did work in pairs; one of these was to look back into childhood and find a time of anger, and work out why. We considered self-esteem, and strengthened it by being aware of our natural qualities of helping others and showing appreciation and praise. We know that there is always a Source we can tap into to find strength – to stay centred in God's Love.

If anger and resentment is held underground it smoulders and ill-will continues. We are encouraged to find clarity – to speak up and clear up the hurt – to go back to our own goodness and say 'Some of this does not belong to me'. Also to think why we invite criticism and rejection – to look at our own attitudes and replace negative thoughts with positive ones. To be in touch with our real selves and learn from experience, knowing that true forgiveness leads to true freedom.

On Sunday we considered reconciliation, where it is necessary to agree together what happened, to take responsibility and attempt to put it right. Being willing to be partially responsible and endeavouring to heal emotional words with loving understanding. We then had a Distant Healing session, and some powerful healing of each other, and this was followed by Meeting for Worship.

It was not all study time. We were free on Saturday afternoon to enjoy the sunshine, the pretty garden and go for walks. Later, in the evening, we watched a film.

A weekend to treasure and think about. We thank Fran Woolgrove for once again organising a special weekend with such inspiring speakers.

*Ruth Robson*

**Report given on the Immediate Prayer Group, at the AGM of the FFH at Friends House on 3rd May 2003.**

In April 1986 at Charney Manor, **The Immediate Prayer Group** was first thought of in answer to the need of those who, in a sudden emergency, wished to ask for prayerful support, for healing, and for a sympathetic listener – a type of phone-in for want of a better name for immediate needs. The Prayer Group was entered on the back of *TW* and, because we were not sure what the response would be, we only had four intercessors – my sister, my cousin, my daughter and myself (three non-Quakers and one Attender) – all easy to reach by phone in an emergency. Because of the increase in the number of requests over the years we now have twelve intercessors divided into three groups – all of whom, I should add, are Quakers, as the original group are no longer with us for a variety of reasons.

We do not meet as a group because we all live in different parts of the country, but we do try to pray in the same way, bringing the person concerned into the Light before God with love, asking that the healing be given to them and their families that is appropriate to their needs.

It is not necessary to know the reason for the request, whether it is an illness or something else. It is not necessary to know a person's surname, although it does help the enquirer, I hope, to have someone to listen to them should they need to talk. It is a service we can give even if we ourselves are house-bound or physically incapacitated in any way, as several of the members of our group are. For older, less active, people can act as a power-house of prayer because they can concentrate more on being a channel for healing through prayer.

The numbers of requests have increased so much that we now have three lists of names which are kept on each list for three months, unless we are asked to do otherwise. If anyone on the list dies we immediately pray for their family for three months. The lists are updated at the end of each month by post. Requests which come at other times are relayed to each intercessor by phone, either by Joy Simpson (who joined in 1994) or myself. We have requests from all over the world and although it is not absolutely necessary, we do look forward to the letters and phone calls we receive thanking us for our support through our prayers, in acknowledgement of the power of healing for which we are channels. Most of our contact with those requesting our help is by phone because of the immediacy of the request, but in special circumstances Joy or I write to people who we hope will find comfort and support through a more tangible source of help.

Somehow I feel that it is important that the person we pray for knows about and gives their permission for our prayerful support.

How do I pray for a specific person I don't know? I hold them in my mind's

eye as a figure, male or female, or small if it is a child, and see them walking towards the Light and Love of God, where they are held and surrounded by the warmth and compassion of His Presence for as long as it seems necessary – at the same time saying their name and asking that the healing be given to them which will meet their needs. We do not know all the needs of any one person so we cannot specify a particular area for healing – we can only at this stage pray for a person to be made whole in mind, body and spirit, bringing them back into a balanced state, knowing that they are loved and supported by many prayers.

I would not attempt to explain how it all works. I am assured it does. I do not need to know. I only know that there is a power in prayer and thought, an energy which somehow is used to support and heal others. Like all healing it is reciprocal, helping all concerned to feel loved, supported and of great value as a human being. When I have received distant healing it has felt as if I was surrounded by a lovely spiritual duvet with the electric blanket switched on.

*Rosemary Bartlett*

### **A Day Focusing on the Healing Ministry. Methodist Central Hall, London 10th May 2003**

This day was lead by Mike Endicott, a priest and healer from the charismatic wing of the Anglican Church and based at the Well Centre in Pontnewydd, South Wales.

It is always an interesting and educational experience to see different ways of healing. Mike Endicott's way is very much based on supplication to Jesus and would be alien to most Friends. However there are always things to be learnt and I brought away these thoughts on some of the key words given to us.

#### **Expectancy**

The expectancy level of most people is low. The bible tells us that we should expect to be healed. A high expectancy level acts as a lightning conductor to the healing aspect of the divine and this can only be a good thing.

#### **Persistence**

We are assured in the bible that we can be healed. If we are not healed at our first healing, we should continue to seek healing until we are better and value each small step on the way to wholeness and wellness.

#### **Authority**

The bible gives us authority to heal. We are all healers and we should value that and act on it

Around two hundred people attended and a team of healers was at hand towards the end of the day to give healing to the many who went forward. The day was much valued.

*Geoffrey Martin*

## **DO IT ANYWAY –**

### **Eight helpful points from negative to positive**

*People are often unreasonable, illogical, and self-centred.  
Forgive them anyway.*

*If you are kind, people may accuse you of selfish, ulterior motives.  
Be kind anyway.*

*If you are successful, you will win some false friends and some true enemies.  
Succeed anyway.*

*If you are honest and frank, people may cheat you.  
Be honest and frank anyway.*

*What you spend years building, someone may destroy overnight.  
Build anyway.*

*If you find serenity and happiness, people may be jealous.  
Be happy anyway.*

*The good you do today, people will often forget tomorrow.  
Do good anyway.*

*Give the world the best you have, and it may never be enough.  
Give the world the best you've got anyway.*



*'You see, in the final analysis, it is all between you and God; it was never between you and them anyway.'*



*Mother Teresa of Calcutta*

## Glasgow Quaker Healing Group. Lattendales Gathering – May 2003.

For our annual gathering this year we came from as far afield as Glasgow and London: sixteen souls very much attached to minds and bodies in search of giving and receiving healing. We were not disappointed.

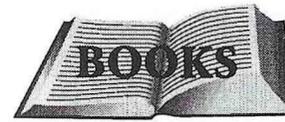
The weekend began with our usual review on Friday evening. What did each of us need and what could we give? The assortment of requests and prayers were matched to the gifts each brought and a programme rich with talent emerged. Our needs for R&R (rest and recreation), because some of us were TATT (Tired all the Time) were met with an abundance of offerings. Starting with a meeting for distant healing we remembered absent F/friends and held them in the light. The following morning saw (some of us) up before breakfast doing Do-In (a form of gentle self massage) and Skulling (rowing a huge imaginary oar) on the deep green and dewy lawn to the sound of 'Chinese' sheep in the fields beyond. Synchronised for breakfast we went onto a full choice of activities including metamorphic technique, massage, Indian head massage, reiki, relaxation, ecstatic dance and much more with life-enhancing conversations well enabled by angels in between. Spiritual healing was on offer throughout in the Quiet Room. Saturday afternoon was free time for retail therapy in Penrith or ambling down to the fine Norman St Andrew's Church in Greystoke village. There we enjoyed the community arts fair and later a tour of Pevsner's Greystoke. In the evening the ceilidh saw some excellent renditions of poetry and readings notably by Joyce Grenfell, and two wonderful Welsh voices who treated us to extracts from Dylan Thomas's 'Under Milk Wood'. We Sang. Our souls sang and when it was time to go we were indeed rested and recreated.

The theme of the final meditation ably summed up the joy and sorrow inevitably entwined at the end of such meetings. It reminded me of William Penn who, in writing about other endings, said, '*Death is but crossing the world, as Friends do the seas, they live in one another still. For they must needs be present, that love and live in that which is omnipresent. In this divine glass, they see face to face; and their converse is free as well as pure.*'

Our thanks go to the sturdy Lattendales staff who withstood our spiritual and corporeal appetites with vigour and patience as usual. This was our first gathering with the new wardens John and Vivien, and we would like to thank them and the ever faithful staff for their ongoing warmth and welcome, which continues to reach parts others simply can't.



Nicola James Maharg



Titles marked with an \* can be borrowed from the Postal Library. Apply to Tony Steel-Cox (address on back page). (The Postal Library is now quite extensive – a catalogue can be sent on receipt of an s.a.e.)

Three of the FFH booklets have been either reprinted or revised. They are *Science, Spirituality and Healing* by David Hodges; *Grief Experienced* by Valerie Cherry; and *What Kind of God? What Kind of Healing?* by Jim Pym.

Although first published in 1994, *Science, Spirituality and Healing* by David Hodges is as fresh and relevant today as it was then – possibly even more so because, as time passes, the gap of misunderstanding between the world of empiricism and that of the numinous is slowly and surely becoming less. More and more scientists and doctors are accepting the fact that spiritual healing can be effective, and that some complementary therapies 'are only really explainable on the basis of supra-normal or spiritual mechanisms'.

David offers us some scholarly yet sympathetic historical evidence for healing from very early times and stresses the experimental approach to the spiritual life, and, for Quakers, the primacy of the Inward Light rather than the primacy of faith, or the scriptures. He quotes the well-known phrase by George Fox, after he heard the inward voice, "And this I knew experimentally" – today we might just say "experientially".

The second reprint, *Grief Experienced* by Valerie Cherry has proved to be greatly helpful for those who have been recently bereaved. At a time when most people in this position would find it hard to concentrate on too much reading matter, this short booklet is a guide through the darkness. Valerie recounts her feelings after the sudden death of her son in an accident, and maps out the pathway from desolation through to acceptance, not sparing herself, or us, the stages in between, of numbness, anger, denial and sheer pain. But, it is a *positive* piece of writing, and one always feels that there is light at the end of the tunnel; that life *does* go on without the loved one, albeit in a different form; and that to reach this plateau of acceptance one does really have to experience the full grieving process.

The third booklet, *What Kind of God? What Kind of Healing?* by Jim Pym, is a greatly revised issue of the first. In the light of Jim's further experiences, and understanding, this work is deeper, more profound, and, if it is possible, even more helpful to those of us who offer ourselves as healers. In a relatively few pages, (compared with many other books on the subject) he clearly shows us that the way to healing is to become completely aware of the Divine Presence, letting It do the work through us. And that's it – that's the one thing necessary. For one who is treading the healing path, this booklet is the only primer that is needed. What more can I say?

Rosalind Smith



**\*Learning to Fall. The Rewards of an Imperfect Life** by Philip Simmons. Hodder Mobius 2000/2002. 159 pp. ISBN 0-340-82261-9. £7.99

This book could be a story of bereavement, of coming to terms with what we all have to face in life and in death. The author was thirty-five when he was diagnosed as having motor neurone disease with only two to five years to live. He was at the start of an academic career, with a wife and two young children. He has had to learn acceptance, to travel through loss – as he says ‘to reach a wholeness, richness and depth never before envisioned’. In his foreword he claims that he does not offer solutions or spiritual directives. He suggests a fall into the mystery of life. We cannot fix the world – we should only show compassion for it.

He calls his twelve chapters ‘essays’, but they could be lectures, as he delves into religions, philosophy and poetry through the ages. He does speak and lead workshops for churches, schools and civic groups, and is exceedingly well qualified to do so with a B.A. in English, his M.F.A. in creative writing from the Washington University in St. Louis, and his Ph.D in English from the University of Michigan.

He has tried all possible healing therapies and treatments with no remission from his ongoing paralysis. When this book was first published in 2000 he was still alive, seven years after the diagnosis, confounding his doctors. He who used to climb mountains now has difficulty putting on his socks – without resentment. He remembers Job’s words, ‘Shall we receive good at the hand of God, and not receive the bad?’

It is good that in his falling he does not lose his sense of humour. His description of the mud, their mud room and mosquitoes in Sandwich, New Jersey, would not encourage tourists – but he says that the imperfect could be our paradise. He describes the Buddhist practice of mindfulness, as given by Thich Nhat Hanh and others – dwelling in the moment, in our breathing – once again falling into the mystery at the heart of ordinary things. To quote, ‘...When our fantasies of a better life consume us, when our memories of past hurts bind us, and fears of pending calamity drive us, we are robbed of the only gift, the greatest gift, we can be sure of possessing – the present moment. We cannot summon the future, we cannot remake the past. The present moment is the unfinished house in which we dwell’. As the blurb says ‘Sometimes there is no difference between a book and a blessing’.

Anne Smith

**\*Fully Alive – the Process of Loving** by David Forrester. Darton, Longman and Todd. 2001. 116 pp. ISBN 0-232-52407-6. £7.99.

I have found a number of Catholic writers, particularly Henri Nouwen, helpful. The author of **Fully Alive** is another Catholic, formerly chaplain at

Oxford University and now chaplain at Eton college, who offers much valuable material.



The title is marvellously illustrated on the cover by a picture of a snow leopard in the total exhilaration of a flying leap. The book is based on the view of St. Iraneous (c.130-200 AD), the first great Catholic theologian, that ‘The glory of God is a human being fully alive’.

The cover sheet also attracted me with the statement, ‘That loving relationships, prayer and spirituality – rather than doctrines, commandments or church structures – are the centre of this exploration in gospel living’. Fundamental aspects of Christian life are examined such as prayer, forgiveness, conversion, community and compassion in the context of love.

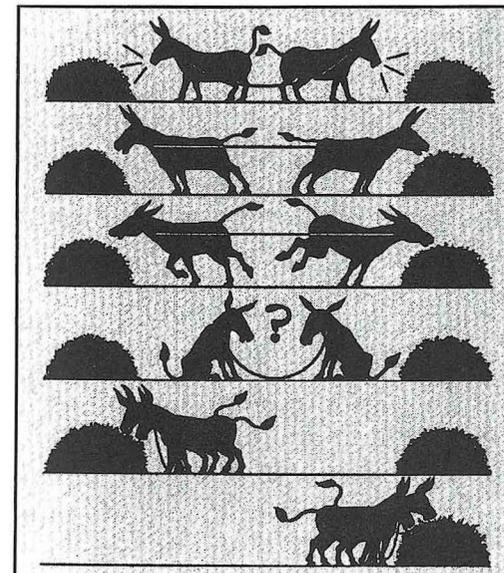
It would be a pity not to read this book because of some of the traditional language or the area which many Friends find difficult in accepting of a trinitarian concept. Some fascinating accounts are shared as to how prayer has been brought into daily living, for instance in relation to aggressive beggars, the homeless, alcoholics and people with HIV infection.

I give two quotes with which to tempt readers:

‘Prayer is not something remote from earthly concerns, something precious or hygienic, but with a God who is passionately interested in everything that occurs in our lives. Prayer is as vital as eating, sleeping and indeed breathing.’

The author himself uses a quote from Karl Adams: ‘Prayer is the meeting of human personality with the divine in a great silence where all else is hushed, for God is speaking’.

Alan Pearce



## ‘THE TWO MULES’

A fable for the Nations

**CO-OPERATION  
IS BETTER THAN CONFLICT**

**\*Light to Live by: an Exploration into Quaker Spirituality** by Rex Ambler. Quaker Books. 2002. 60pp. ISBN 0-85245-336-1. £5.

**Light to Live by** is a companion volume to **Truth of the Heart: an Anthology of George Fox**, and Friends who read it will find the answer to a question that puzzled Rex Ambler for more than twenty years – how is the light of Christ within a person able to deal with the basic human problem of ego?

Rex Ambler sets out to try to discover what early Quakers meant by phrases like ‘the light’ within them that showed them the way, ‘the truth’ that set them free, ‘the life’ which sprang up within them and between them, ‘the power’ which enabled them to do the impossible. He had intended to be quite objective in his study and blanket out his own feelings and opinions but instead found himself describing a personal practice of meditation which he discovered in early Friends and which he was able to apply experientially in his own life.

Initially he was haunted by the possibility that Quakerism might not afford him the resources to enable him to resolve his problems himself, but he does manage to use the meditative practice advised by Fox very successfully, and is able to gain further insight from Eugene Gendlin, a psychologist at the University of Chicago, who had arrived at the therapeutic process described by early Friends in the course of his studies as an academic psychologist and not, as Ambler had, in pursuit of spiritual enlightenment.

I have found great benefit from reading this book and I recommend it unreservedly to all Friends. I’m grateful to Rex Ambler for his painstaking scholarship, his honesty, and for the way he has demonstrated the relevance and wide-ranging applicability of George Fox’s deep insights. The appendix gives clear meditation guides for workshops and Light groups, and I feel inclined either to join one or to initiate one.

Anthea Lee

**\*The Alphabet of Paradise: An A-Z of Spirituality for Everyday Life** by Howard Cooper. Darton, Longman and Todd. 2002. 211 pp. ISBN 0-232-52465-3. £8.95.

When I was asked to review this book I could hardly put it down as I found it such a fascinating read. Howard Cooper has a great gift for engaging the reader and the ideas he has are thought provoking at the least, and potentially life changing. This is not a book for those who think that spirituality is a cosy affair which allows you to feel better about yourself and your perceptions of God; it is deeply challenging and not for the faint-hearted.

Howard Cooper is a psychotherapist and rabbi and has written a number of books and articles on psychology and spirituality. Lionel Blue was an early influence on him and those who know Blue will recognise a similar liberal, light-hearted approach which is nevertheless quite clear in its demands.

The book starts with the premise that “Paradise... is a dimension of everyday life... here and now” and asks how we can learn to appreciate this. The word ‘paradise’ is linked with ‘pardes’, both of which can be traced back to

Greek and Hebrew texts meaning ‘park’ or ‘enclosure’ – the place where kings and the nobility relaxed and played. In the Jewish mystical tradition the word ‘pardes’ (PaRDeS) took on another, symbolic, meaning which grew out of the ways in which the Hebrew Bible was read and taught. Over many generations four different approaches to this teaching evolved:

*P’shat* – the ‘plain’ or literal meaning of the story or text

*Remez* – hint or allusion, and we might think of it as a ‘reminder’ of what ideas the story or text conjures up in our minds.

*D’rash* – to explore imaginatively or to seek out a ‘deepening’ understanding of the story.

*Sod* – the ‘secret’ or mystical meanings of the Bible’s words; reading between the lines.

And so in this book the author chooses a word for each letter of the alphabet, and provides an opening text to which he then applies, more or less, the PaRDeS principles.

The book can be read sequentially – there is a plan behind the apparently random collection of topics – but it can also be dipped into, as each chapter is really suitable for a meditation in its own right.

His first word is ‘awe’; the text is from William Blake, and, amongst other things, he reflects on the Hebrew phrase from Proverbs, *yirat Adonai* (awe at the eternal). How sad it is that the Hebrew word for God, which blended the past, present and future tenses of the verb ‘to be’ has become a noun, God as a thing rather than a process: “To be in awe of what is and could be is a very different state of mind from living ‘in fear of the Lord’ (which is how the phrase is normally translated).”

With J for ‘justice’ and a text from Deuteronomy, Howard Cooper is deeply challenging. He talks about the sort of spirituality which can be selfish, giving ourselves good feelings about our sensitivity, or “giving ourselves a tingle of self-congratulation about being deeper or wiser or more balanced than others.” But spirituality as he understands it “involves intercourse with the world. How we act with each other – with family, friends, strangers, and particularly with those whom we experience as *different from us* – is the prism through which the integrity of our spiritual life can be judged.” And again: “Justice is not about our kindness, but about our recognition that others have a claim on us by virtue of a shared humanity.”

That the author is not afraid to grapple with a variety of diverse issues can be seen by a glance down a list of some of his words. Here are some of them: bodies, emotions, food, god, humour, illness, money, pleasure, quiet, relationships, sport, vanity, and xenophobia.

I found this book both challenging and life-affirming, and, knowing that the review copy goes to the FFH postal library, decided that I must buy my own copy. I can hardly give it a higher recommendation!

John Sheldon



## THE WAY TO PEACE

*Pray for peace daily; forgive people freely;  
Make amends quickly.  
So overcome rancour, and let not the sun ever  
Set on your anger.*

*If you are angered by another one's error,  
Hold them in your prayer.  
And in your heart and your mind do not cease  
Till YOU are at peace.*

*When your own weakness brings you to distress,  
Ask God for forgiveness.  
He'll hold you in peace and truly will render  
You stronger and purer.*

*When war is a threat, do not fight the aggressor,  
But aid the afflicted  
To break chain of hatred, turn sword into ploughshare.  
O'erturn fear and dread.*

*When ambition is thwarted, your negative feeling  
Can undermine health  
Banish dark thoughts by on God's love dwelling,  
And seek spiritual wealth.*

*It is given to each to practise, and teach  
All children these rules.  
For making wars cease and creating peace  
Use them as your tools.*

**Ruth Legg**

*(Ruth Legg is the Co-ordinator of the Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing)*



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