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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."

NEWS

Friends Fellowship of Healing Spring Gathering – Friday 2nd - Sunday 4th May, 2008 at Noddfa, a Christian retreat centre in Penmaenmawr, North Wales. (www.noddfa.org.uk)

In this weekend we shall be looking at ‘The therapeutic value of past lives’, and ‘Why are we here? – the purpose of our present incarnation’, with Cherry Simpkin and Anthea Lee. And, in contrast, we shall be learning from Elizabeth Barnett about **Biodanza**, a dance movement technique which aims to connect the dancer with three levels of being: the inner light, the outer light and the Universe.

Cost £97 per person. Please book by ringing Margaret Western on 01460 74182 – and then sending her a **deposit of £25** – to 2 Orchard Rise, Crewkerne, TA18 8EH. **Cheques to be made out to the Friends Fellowship of Healing.**

If you would like to stay on over till Monday (which might make travelling easier) there is the option to do so. Please tell Margaret this when you ring her to book.

Quaker Spiritual Healers ‘Training’ Course:

Mon-Fri 13th-17th October 2008 at Claridge House. To be led by QSH tutors. (Please book directly with Claridge House.)

Quaker Spiritual Healers’ Support Course: Fri-Sun 12th-14th Sept. 2008 at Claridge House.

(Please see page 19 for further details of both these courses.)

Ruth Martin, your membership secretary, writes:

Just a reminder that you only need to pay a subscription for next year if you have a separate reminder enclosed with this journal. If there is no reminder and you think you should have had one it is probably because you have a standing order or that you have paid for more than one year at a time sometime in the past. If the latter is the case I will remind you when you next need to pay.

If you do not pay by standing order please consider this method and return the completed form to me. This saves me an enormous amount of time and is easy to cancel at any time should you wish to do so. Please make a note to remind yourself that you have done so as I spend a considerable amount of time returning cheques to members who have forgotten they have standing orders.

I am always happy to hear from you if you want clarification of your payment details.

We all travel. We travel from birth to death. We travel in life, through life and within ourselves. Some travel because they seek. Some seek answers to the past and some seek solutions for the future.

Those seeking answers to the past should leave the past. The past is gone. It is dead, it is not real, and it is Not Now. Those who seek solutions to the future presume God's intent. Who knows what the future holds? So who can solve a problem that may not arise? The future has not happened. It is not yet real, the future is Not Now.

The ills and woes of what has gone have gone. They were once real, but are no longer, and as they do not exist anymore they cannot be healed. That which is yet before us does not exist and cannot yet be ill, and therefore has no need of healing. What was ill in the past and what has yet to be ill in future are from the Not Now. As Not Now does not exist, to try and heal it will only bring dis-ease to the present which is Now.

Only Now can be healed.

We perceive life in terms of our journeys of the past and our hopes and fears for the future. But they are based in the Not Now which is why healing is required for Now because we bring dis-ease to it. Live only in Now. Embark on no healing odyssey, do not seek. To seek is to view distant horizons and to desire a journey beyond them. What is beyond them cannot be seen, and we are not there. We may be there only at another time and that is Not Now which does not yet exist and so cannot be healed.

Only Now is real. Only Now can be healed. So reach for Now.

Who is to judge on the need to heal? Whether a mighty oak or a single blade of grass in its shadow, who can say which is worthiest in God's eyes? We cannot judge. We may travel to view a giant oak but whoever took one pace to see a blade of grass? – so who can say what should or should not be healed? And if we are so poorly set to view what are the worthiest of God's creations why should we try to heal the ills of humankind? It may not be us because we do not heal. It is not us.

Whether in the fastest automobile, the longest train, or the highest aeroplane, is not the greatest journey that which is travelled between one's ears, and is not this the place where Now exists?

So Now is that within ourselves. Now is this moment of awareness. Now is the feeling preceding thought, it is the impulse before the move. Now is the naked moment, it is unclothed by principle, policy and preference. Now is unfettered by anticipation. It has no expectation so it can have no regret.

We dwell only in the Now so we should not bring to it the past's pain or the future's fears. These things only bring dis-ease, and dis-ease will corrupt our bodies, confuse our emotions and confound our spirit.

Healing is for the present, so let go the past, forego the future and reach only for Now.



PERFECTION

*The trick about perfection is to perceive it, not in absolute terms,
but in relative ones. This means that everything is already perfect
– perfectly as it is. Is a rose bud less perfect than the full bloom?
Or that flower less perfect than the fruit which follows it?
Or the fruit less perfect than the new growth of the following spring?*

Is the cycle of seasons imperfect?

*Each form of the plant is perfect in its own right and perfectly fulfils
its function. So with the parts between, as each phase of the complete cycle comes
to its fullness and gives way to the next.*

*Is life a flow of imperfections which need to be condemned – or many relative
perfections which lead in perfect order towards its conclusion?*

*What then is imperfect about any form of life or living?
Each form contains within its beginning the completed span
– and to think of one part as imperfect, or less perfect than any other
– would be to deny the whole.*

*This is the way of the fourth dimension, time and the way of life
– a continuous procession of forms, providing new vessels
within which to express myriad variations, and creating
a wonderful pageant to view from far or near, as the spirit wills.*

Lorna Jones

Call it coincidence if you like, but it happened that I was asked to check training materials for funeral service personnel, soon after a dearly loved sister in law had died after a short illness (at the end of September 2006). The carefully prepared workbooks would not have been out of place in a healers' or counsellors' course, since they referred to personal care issues. Even in these sometimes courtesy-rare times, bereavement 'brings out' the deeper sense of personal identity and rapport. That some TV comedies – like 'Nearest and Dearest' (now available on DVD) – gently 'send up' end of life situations merely emphasises the recognition of relationships that are often eclipsed by an everyday competitive, crowded, noisy environment.

In your personal work, you will sometimes invite clients, or friends, within small groups, say, to volunteer lessons that they found through bereavement. In my own recent experience, for example, in entering the now vacant bungalow in which my sister in law lived (alone, as a divorcee) I have felt what might be described as a blend of sorrow and nostalgia. Now, I realise that I have been reliving a similar experience to that of the women who came to the tomb of Jesus, finding the body gone, and not yet realising that he had 'risen'. Many will see the narrative as symbol, not a historic account, but, at the same time, the experience as described rings true. Leaving the bungalow, which is but a short walk from my home, I now see that the New Testament experience of the women is meant to be shared by all of us. We need not hold back our tears, stifle our grief, but there is for all of us, a sense that the beloved has moved on. Rather than argue about the veracity of the New Testament record, we can adopt its lively, insightful emotional role models.

That grief was a healing experience was well understood by church leaders of earlier decades. Rev. Mark Guy Pearse, a popular Methodist who retold stories of his Cornish youth in articles and books, compared bereavement to an encounter with the most wonderful physician, Dr Death. 'He wraps us up in clay and heals us. We go in at the back door of the doctor's house and come out at the front. We go in blind, and come out gazing on golden streets and heavenly mansions. We go in deaf, and we come out with ears unstopped, and hearing softest celestial sounds. We go in mute, and come out with tongues unloosed to join in angelic songs. We go in halt, out of breath, decrepit, and we come out strong to run up with joy the shining way.' (taken from the 1930 biography by his daughter in law, Mrs George Unwin with John Telford BA).

Would anyone borrow such language today? At a recent meeting, a friend – who I much value, a fine guide – suggested that Christians generally no longer believed in heaven and hell. He is possibly right, though before the meeting

closed, I felt impelled to stand and recall some views of Paul the Apostle (I later regretted speaking). Paul's views on the spiritual body, the inner life renewed whilst the outer life decays, is not so different from the ideas found outside the church, i.e. on the ethereal body, but far more important I think is his sighing confession – in the often recited chapter, 1 Corinthians 13 – that he would, only in the fuller life beyond this, understand the issues that perplexed him in the earthly life. But, he added, he was nevertheless *understood*. As I have found in my own recent loss, another story is being told, and I cannot yet hear it clearly.

W. T. Stead, the campaigning editor of 'Review of Reviews', will be remembered by some Friends for (among much else) his campaign for the increase in the age of consent. Indeed, his article, 'Maiden Tribute of Modern Babylon' (1885) which uncovered child prostitution in London, brought a trumped up charge that sent him to Holloway Prison for three months. Stead, son of a Congregationalist minister, but in many ways close to the Friends, thought that one had to 'be a Christ' rather than merely 'talk about Christ'. A year or so before his death in the 'Titanic' sinking, Stead wrote an article in which he looked back over the half century of his life, and at the close noted that the churches no longer preached on life beyond the grave. There was now greater emphasis on the social expression of Christianity (with which, of course, he agreed) and if people wanted answers to the deeper issues, they had to look elsewhere, perhaps, he added, to men of science ('T.P.s Magazine', 1911 volume).

Already, churches were rediscovering their call to express a healing ministry, the Anglican Church setting up a commission in 1906, a time, it can be noted, of spiritual renewal in Wales and elsewhere. Soon, and especially in the wake of the first world war, other initiatives were to develop, among them the psychological clinic founded by Methodist Rev. Dr Leslie Weatherhead, in Leeds. New forms of fellowship, arising from the war, including Toc H (Talbot House, the fellowship of the trenches started at Poperinghe, Belgium) had a healing, reflective aspect. The lighting of the lamp of fellowship, at the opening of Toc H branch meetings, could have been borrowed by Friends in other contexts, the light in the darkness, while those present reached into a dimension within and yet beyond themselves.

Stead was right, and even today, one might sit through many sermons without hearing anything on the nature of eternal life, the heavenly prospect. We need to remember that this issue is linked to the sense of personal futility – of insignificance – that afflicts so many today, and which we attempt to bury with consumer durables. Preachers of the pre-1914 world often addressed the issue. One of my favourite comments comes from a much loved Methodist, Rev.

Peter Mackenzie, a former miner, and a Scot to boot, and who on return from the glistening portals of the Crystal Palace exhibition in London, assured his working class congregation that if they were attempting to serve their families and their neighbours, they would one day inherit a heavenly home which would make the Crystal Palace look like a 'back pantry', i.e. the small cupboard usually in some dark corner of the cottage.

Carers and healers will know well that bereavement counselling is not merely about the recent event – the trauma of a death in one's family – but is a sort of grieving for one's own past. We seem to be haunted by a sense that so much might have been different. A year ago, my younger brother, Roger, died, from disease caused by the alcohol he had used to 'get him through the day'. Much valued by his employers in the care sector, he had started drinking when active in the catering world, yet undertook work overseas, and though he never married, was on the point of setting up a new home when he died. From the statistics, one can see that this story is relived in many places, and the 'if only's build up. For those left behind, we offer reassurance that 'all things work together' in the end, and that we cannot judge the inner quality of a man or woman by the ways in which they attempt to cope with their inner demons.

For the ancient Greeks – whose influence on the Jews and Christians is often overlooked – the destiny of the soul became clear through the spiritual experience they described as ecstasy. This is so close to the Friends understanding of the Light, that we might incorporate it more into our discourse. Ours is an age in which spiritual experience is becoming a sort of unexplained epidemic, and though all manner of superstitions may abound partly because of this, there is a sense of that 'small voice, far away', as I once described bereavement at a Friends Meeting.

I attempt to hold to the New Testament sense of these issues: one needs some clear framework. The wisdom from the clients' group, or personal expression may surprise us, and we are not often called to attempt analysis. Nevertheless, my intervention at Meeting, as described above, was not appropriate, since it was too close to a mini-sermon. Oddly enough, as I waited for a lift home, I glanced at the rows of paperback novels and ageing DIY books in the bookcase, offered for sale for 30p a time. A small and insignificant title beckoned. It proved to be a faded paperback by Dr Leslie Weatherhead on the questions he was asked about life after death. You might say it was an unusual confirmation for a fellow who, alas, has always had rather too much to say.

(David died during the summer, but Anne Lazell has kindly given permission for this article to be published.)

JUDGEMENT

*Whenever they come in the room
They bring in the sun to light and drive away the gloom.
When they come in the room
No judgement do they make,
Or opinions do they offer;
Friends indeed with no agenda hidden.
They pass no comment on the state of things,
Preconceptions or pre-judgements held.
They seem impassive,
And you can tell them what you dream,
If things were only different.
They make no distinction between me and others;
And at night stare at the moon,
And, secretly, I wonder if they can summon up a cure
To make everything alright
As they look out the window at the stillness of the dark.
You want to make them happy as they have done for you,
Without preconditioned judgement do they make no demands
And no situations predict the degree of the love they give.
And if I cannot stand no opinion they offer,
No feelings of disappointment do they offer.
Over time we've owned a few
And seen them go.
Now time remains untouched
Without ticking or deadlines given.
Out of sight and dozing by the fire
They keep one eye open in case I fall and on them lie:
My hefty weight would do them harm.
And for all they've done for me,
Intentional or not,
It doesn't really matter.
They look after me for little in return
Just out of reach and all that –
I'm talking of my humble cats.*

David M. Watson (who has MS)



JUST LISTEN TO YOU!

Dorothy Moir

No one can give you better advice than yourself. – Cicero

Nowadays, we have so much advice given to us! Everywhere we look we can read about what we ought to be doing. Just switch on the TV or radio and there will be another expert explaining why we should do what they say. Of course, some of this advice may well be useful to someone, somewhere, at some time in their lives but that does not make it right for all of us at this moment. Even if the advice-giver has been in an identical situation to us, and so speaks from personal experience, they are still unqualified to choose what is best for us. That important choice is ours alone.

Advice-giving is particularly prevalent in the realm of healthy eating and fitness, with many contradictory suggestions coming our way. Recently, I have been enjoying Martina Navratilova's quietly inspirational new book, *Shape Yourself*. Martina writes from personal experience and talks about the process of learning to listen to her body which eventually led her to the peak of fitness that she enjoys today as a mature athlete. Her choices are made by listening to her inner wisdom.

Some years ago I met a woman who had just been diagnosed with cancer. She had come up with an unusual plan to cope with this challenge. A life-long reader of ought to books (the ones that tell you that their path is the only one to follow!), she made the decision to throw them all away. At this crucial point of her life, when she was fighting for survival, she realised that it was time to listen to her own wisdom at last. She knew that she would find the very best guidance within herself, tailor-made for this particular moment.

Every time we offer someone advice without it being requested, we imply that they are not resourceful enough to find their own solutions. Worse still, they may actually accept our interference as a sign that they are not capable of rising to their own challenges. My most important skill as a life coach and healer is to help people to get in touch with their own wisdom, so that they can make their own wise choices. This skill is not exclusive to professionals – we can all do it! We can offer our friends, loved ones and colleagues the precious gift of really listening to what they say, and reflecting it back to them, without trying to fix them. We can be confident that, through this empowering process, they will find their own perfect solutions. Best of all, we can offer this attentive listening to ourselves and hear what our inner wisdom has to say. This abundant well of guidance within us beats any outside expert!

Learn the richness of solitude and quiet. That "still small voice" is yearning to be heard.

Susan Jeffers

The only thing to do with good advice is pass it on. It is never any use to oneself.
Oscar Wilde

Too bad that all the people who really know how to run the country are busy driving taxi cabs and cutting hair.
George Burns

IT'S YOUR TURN!

When are you tempted to offer unsolicited advice?

To whom are you most likely to offer it?

What might they prefer you to do?

Tip: Ask them and find out! One of my clients has had spectacular results from asking her grown-up daughter what she really wants from her.

When has taking advice worked for you?

When has it been less successful?

What can you learn from these occasions?

What does it take for you to listen to your inner wisdom?

What might you need in order to access this rich source of knowledge more frequently?

More time alone? Someone to talk it over with? More practice at it? More confidence?

Tip: If you find connecting to your inner wisdom is difficult, try writing it a letter! Include your question, or concerns. When you have written the letter, put it away. After a week, take your letter somewhere quiet, read it again and see what happens.

What difficulty or concern do you have at the moment that you could let your inner wisdom solve?

Had I been present at the creation, I would have given some useful hints for the better ordering of the universe.

*Attributed to **Alfonso the Wise** (13th century)*

*Dorothy is a healing and life coach and this article is reproduced, with permission, from **Mini-Wisdom** available by email from dorothymoir@yourinnerwisdom.com – or telephone 01253 726420.*

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# REPORTS

## **DIVINE ADJUSTMENT – the experience of Spiritual Healing. A meeting with Jim Pym**

*Alison Wylie*

*At Keswick Meeting House – 10th March 2007 – Cumberland General Meeting  
Extension Committee*

Since childhood, the call of the Spirit has led me down some interesting byways, but none quite seemed ‘the answer’. Then two particular pathways began to shine more brightly – Quakerism/Christianity and Buddhism – and I wondered if it was possible to usefully be both. Jim Pym has indeed found the secret to blending them, with profound humanity, and the resulting grace-full person brought his joy along with his wisdom in what was, paradoxically, an effortless and an intense workshop.

Such is Simplicity, as I am constantly finding out...

The format of our workshop was decided by Jim after we had joined him in a short period of silence; gentle discussion, open questions and simple meditations then allowed the depth of his knowledge and experience to quietly root itself. A man of humility, he says questions and a state of confusion have stayed with him ever since he began exploring healing; what a blessing for us, though, as the privilege he still feels at having been witness to healing shows in his wonder, and in his receptive approach.

“Acceptance” was a key feature of the day; the general atmosphere was one of ease and good humour, but our preconceptions and assumptions were challenged, and for some, it wasn’t always easy to accept what was heard. For others, it was more a case of ‘awakening’, to really knowing that there is ‘that of God’ within every cell of our bodies. That we can accept – and there’s that difficult word again – that every atom has the potential to change through the innate presence of God. Or how can healing occur?

For me, healing also occurs in the space between our cells, the space where spirit resides in the ‘void’ – that space can hold an infinite amount of Holy Spirit, and so an infinite amount of change may take place. This “space” is clearly important to many of us – the space we require within our meetings for worship; the space we allow God, and each other, within the silence; and in healing, space for God to work.

In seeking healing, we seek the Will of God, rather than trying to insert our will; perhaps the healer’s greatest challenge is “to be willing not to know”. Jim quoted a friend who said that “every flower is perfect – as long as you don’t



compare it to another one”; comparison is indeed a problem, because how can we truly make comparisons when we don’t even know ourselves completely? Does anyone really believe they know their full, complete potential, their ‘fullness’? How much harder, then, to guess at the ‘fullness’ of another.

And how hard it can be to accept that we will never have the depth of knowledge that Spirit does, and therefore that we don’t know ‘what’s best’. How difficult to release the desire to select only what suits us, rather than letting go and trusting God to dissolve *all* the barriers to healing.

Sometimes I know my fear of what ‘God’s Will’ might be shuts me off from Spirit. I start to see ‘God made in my image’, and so fear that, ‘being only human’, there may be a withholding of healing due to some slight or hurt that I have inadvertently created. I forget, and need someone like Jim to remind me, that “God is not loving, God is pure love; God is not good, God is pure goodness,” that God does not entertain thoughts of separation from me, however far I stumble into painful disconnection and woeful neglect. I forget that this is a God without limits.

At such times, I also forget that there is ‘that of God’ within me, that I can have access to this unlimited love and healing at any time I choose. Timely recollection came when Jim invited us to step into the silence and ask ourselves “Where is ‘that of God’ within me?” Returning to this theme throughout the day, he gradually encouraged us to expand this awareness to the whole of our bodies, and then to extend this love beyond ourselves. A very powerful series of exercises for me, I found great peace combined with a great heat, and by the third and final meditation had a sense of losing the boundaries of my ‘self’, the edges blurred – losing limitations.

I have a dear friend who has concerns over ‘spiritual healing’; she fears “something unknown” entering her body, something she doesn’t have neatly defined, something she can’t control. She fears ‘losing her sense of her self’, losing her boundaries; I understand this, but I also know that what I felt was wonderful, peaceful and totally natural. Jim’s belief that “healing that is spiritual is perfectly natural” – and that ‘natural’ is perfectly spiritual – seems to echo this beautifully, and I wish my friend could have been present to witness the effortless joy with which the Spirit was experienced that day.

Everything seemed so easy, so simple. Perhaps this reflects Jim’s understanding of healing, of God, that we focus on co-operating with this power which seeks to serve us, rather than attempting analysis. Instead of confusing the issue with ‘more learning’, why not try to deepen the experience we have already received? Why do we associate ‘doing better’ with ‘doing more’? Instead of striving for the fruits of the Spirit, whether the easing of pain

or the giving of inspiration, could we not seek instead to deepen our awareness of the essential simplicity of the spirit behind these gifts?

Jim likened such simplicity to a gathered meeting, where we are ‘gathered in’ to the point of stillness where thought becomes, if not stopped, at least slowed. He also believes Quakers have a part to play in combining the role of healer and the role of contemplative in the world, that we have a unique opportunity to bridge the gap between secular and sacred.

“Simply being together enables us to focus on this inward sense of presence and so it is with healing.” In such a situation, we are “listening to the Light”, to the Divine within ourselves, and so listening to and caring for ourselves with greater awareness. And seeing this Light within ourselves, we then become aware of it in others; for Jim, recognising this fact of existence, becoming aware of the Light in all, is what triggers the healing. We are therefore encouraged to become watchers, witnesses of a reality that is there all the time. “There is nothing else going on but God,” and recognition of this is spiritual healing.

Jim was asked how does he get around praying for someone he doesn’t know. His response was “what I’m trying to do is to tune into the Light that is them. If you can become aware of ‘that of God’ within yourself ... well, there aren’t two ‘that of God’s, there’s a oneness, so ... it’s the same ‘that of God’ within you and within the other person.”

To limit Jim Pym as either Buddhist or Quaker or some combination of those is to ignore his message – that with God there are no limits. His recognition of the release that comes from working in this way, the continued wonder and joy that he clearly feels in his work, all moved me deeply – how inspiring it is to see someone who, after many years, still feels awe, still delights, in witnessing first-hand the fruits of the Spirit.

As Jim said, “accept the mystery ... that acceptance is the answer.”

*Alison Wylie*

### **Luton & Leighton Monthly Meeting residential weekend at High Leigh, Hoddesdon, Herts 13th-15th July 2007**

The theme was ‘Loving the planet, Sharing the planet and Healing the planet’. The FFH was invited to send healers and Kay Horsfield and Geoffrey Martin, members of the FFH committee and of the L&L MM spent the majority of the Saturday at High Leigh. There were thirteen people at the morning session which started with talks about healing and about healing within Quakers. This was followed by a lively questions and answers session and finished with a taster of healing in pairs.

There was a good interest in the FFH literature.

During the afternoon Kay and Geoffrey gave healing to a total of eight Friends. Geoffrey and Kay really enjoyed their time at High Leigh, a beautiful venue for a meeting, and were pleased to have been invited.

*Geoffrey Martin*

### SOLITUDE IN AUTUMN

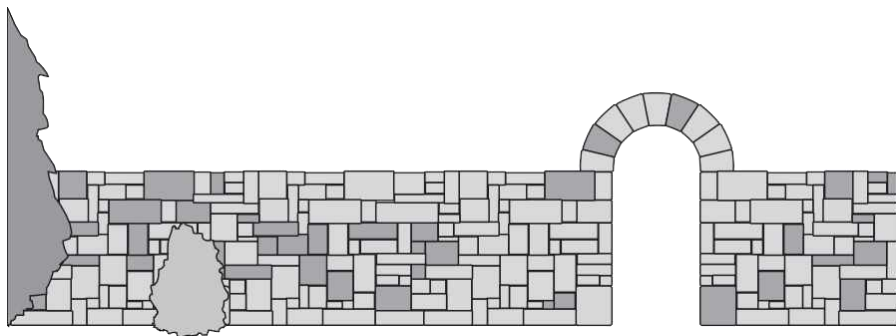
*Is solitude a secret garden  
or a cemetery of memories?*

*Do they grow and flower  
in the light of speeding time?*

*My garden has high walls  
hidden door open  
for all who journey on...  
who die to the reality of time.*

*It may be dark and cold  
in the garden until – smiling –  
I remember those who love me  
Keeping my heart afloat to sing  
In the solitude of time.*

*Anne Smith*



How is it possible to describe such an experience? Mine was not a severe stroke, so I can but try. Why should I – I wonder – have I anything useful to say?

If you can avoid the catastrophe, of course you should. I fail to see its positive aspects – that is if there are any. One certainty I have learnt is that I am **MORE** than this useless old body – I can leave it on the floor floundering away and somehow remember that I am still myself; and, when I leave it behind, I shall be **FREE** to float amongst the stars.

There are three necessities for stroke victims – one is a good sense of humour, and two, if possible, a caring family. Whatever happens, it is caring that matters, and patience. Thirdly, rehabilitation, which depends on the quality of the caring, and the National Health Service *is* good, whatever is said to the contrary. Their physiotherapists are wonderful – if only there were more of them. I have spent four months in a rehabilitation hospital, and thanks to them I am now able to ‘zimmer’ away happily. Given more time and walking, life will improve. Never give up hope. Never take the action of walking for granted. It is more complicated than you imagine.

The percentage of carers in our rehabilitation centres is only two per cent British, so we are surrounded by caring folk from many different countries. It is a pity that our young people are not involved more. My local Quaker Meeting has been superb at keeping me comforted by visitors, for whom I can be truly thankful.

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Use your eyes as if tomorrow you would be stricken blind...

hear the music of voices, the song of the bird,

the mighty strains of the orchestra,

as if you would be stricken deaf tomorrow.

Touch each object as if tomorrow your tactile sense would fail.

Smell the perfume of the flowers, taste with relish each morsel,

as if tomorrow you could never smell or taste again.

Make the most of your senses:

glory in all the facets of pleasure and beauty,

which the world reveals to you.

Sarah Ban Breathnach

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## CLARIDGE HOUSE PROGRAMME

*Weekend Courses: £160 per person (unless otherwise stated)*

*Midweek Courses: £275 per person (unless otherwise stated)*

*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: **Alison Green** or **Keith Marsden**, Claridge House, Dormans Road, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH. Telephone: 01342 832150. Email: [welcome@ClaridgeHouse.quaker.eu.org](mailto:welcome@ClaridgeHouse.quaker.eu.org) Website: [www.claridgehouse.quaker.eu.org](http://www.claridgehouse.quaker.eu.org)*

### **Nov 19th-23rd REIKI SHARING** (Short midweek break £185)

A special short mid-week break, offered to those at any level of Reiki, is a wonderful opportunity to share the experiences of giving, receiving and sending Reiki in beautiful and peaceful surroundings.

*Anna Moore* Reiki master and teacher for over 10 years.

### **Nov 23rd-25th CIRCLE DANCING**

We will dance a rich mix of delightful dances from many cultures. The glorious ethnic music; serene; yearning; playful; uplifting; will kindle our innate expansiveness and open our hearts. We will intersperse the dancing with meditation, and Chi Kung, to help us relax into the dance. Some circle dancing experience would be useful.

*Eve Corrin* an experienced teacher of Circle Dance, Alexander Technique and languages with extensive involvement in meditation and Chi Kung.

### **Nov 30th-Dec 2nd THE PARABLE OF THE LOST CHILD** – an introduction to the Course in Miracles

Poignant stories like the Lost Sheep and the Prodigal Son echo our own fear of having lost our way. The Course teaches us to hear in our daily lives our inner Self calling out for rescue and return, and leads us on a personal journey home.

*Anna Powell* an experienced & lively hypnotherapist, writer and facilitator, student and teacher of A Course in Miracles.©

### **Dec 3rd-7th YOGA TO BEAT FATIGUE** (short midweek course £215)

### **Dec 7th-9th** (weekend course £160)

Gentle yoga courses suitable for all abilities and which will include fatigue-busting methods such as special breathing techniques, meditation and health boosting yoga postures. Also suitable for those with moderate ME/CFS. Participants will require a non-slip yoga mat. *Fiona Agombar*, qualified instructor.

### **Dec 14th-16th REIKI II**

Being attuned to Reiki II increases your Reiki, enabling you, by using Reiki symbols and mantras, to treat yourself and others at a deeper level, to deal directly

with mental / emotional aspects and to send out distant healing.

*Anna Moore a Reiki Master and teacher for over 10 years.*

### **Dec 21st-23rd WINTER SOLSTICE**

As we witness the sun returning from the darkest, still point of the year, you are invited to engage in the healing power of imagination and metaphor, through painting, stories, movement, meditation and ritual – to explore how this turning point of Light may illuminate you and your path towards Spring.

*Deborah Kelly is an Arts Psychotherapist and Shiatsu practitioner.*

### **Jan 4th-6th 2008 REIKI I**

Reiki has become known around the world for its ability to channel healing energy, both to those who practise it and those who are recipients, an introductory weekend course to a popular form of healing.

*Anna Moore has been a Reiki master and teacher for more than 10 years.*

### **Jan 11th-13th INTO THE SILENT LAND – a contemplative retreat**

We will use this time to deepen our personal experience of retreat into our own interior silence, using guidance from well-known spiritual writers such as Martin Laird and Evelyn Underhill. *Rosalind Smith is a FFH healer with QSH and NFSH, counsellor and experienced facilitator.*

### **Jan 18th-20th THE ALEXANDER TECHNIQUE – an introduction**

The Alexander Technique is a skill for life which improves health, balance and co-ordination by progressively reducing habitual tension. Using simple guided activities, gentle hands-on contact & discussion we explore the principles involved. Includes some lying down. *Jill Payne teaches AT full time in Beckenham.*

### **Jan 25th-27th ENJOYING ANGELS**

Angels are beautiful, caring beings of light, just waiting to bring love and light into our lives. Come and make friends with the Angels, spend time with them and maybe meet your guardian Angel. Meditate with them, have fun with them, learn their healing and helping qualities, whether you've met Angels before or not. *Anna Moore is a Reiki Master who loves working with Angels.*

### **Feb 1st-3rd THE ART OF SELF LOVE**

Being happy with yourself is about accepting and loving yourself for who you are right now - warts and all. With a little effort & realignment in your thinking you can love yourself right here, right now, enabling you to put your energy into reaffirming, balancing and harmonising your life. ([www.angelaelliott.com](http://www.angelaelliott.com))

*Angela Elliott is an expert in the use of creative visualisation to help groups and individuals to achieve their full potential. She is a trained Clinical Hypnotherapist and writer.*

### **Feb 8th-10th CIRCLE DANCING**

We will dance a rich mix of delightful dances from many cultures. The glorious ethnic music; serene; yearning; playful; uplifting; will kindle our innate expansiveness and open our hearts. We will intersperse the dancing with meditation, and Chi Kung, to help us relax into the dance. Some circle dancing experience would be useful. *Eve Corrin is an experienced teacher of Circle Dance, Alexander Technique and languages with extensive involvement in meditation and Chi Kung.*

### **Feb 15th-17th MANACLES OR WINGS**

Words may hold us down or help us to fly. We shall, this weekend, explore the weight and buoyancy of words at our leisure. *Ted Walter is a poet and creative writing tutor with over 25 years experience.*

### **Feb 18th-22nd CELEBRATING OUR BLESSINGS** (Short Midweek £245)

We are all given many more blessings than we know. Together we shall (re) discover our many hidden blessings, talents and creativity. As we manifest and celebrate our blessings, we empower ourselves to live more creatively, confidently and deeply enrich our lives. Come prepared to be creative and have fun.

*Nomi Sharron is a writer who has been leading spiritual, creative retreats for many years here and abroad. (Short midweek course with 2 days tuition in a 4 night stay.)*

### **Feb 22nd-24th YOGA TO BOOST HEALTH AND STAMINA**

During the weekend Tim will be encouraging alignment, balance & concentration through gentle yoga postures, meditation and mantra (sound), also a little philosophy. The focus will be on physical and emotional balance to boost energy and stamina. Suitable for all ages & abilities especially for those with ME or other health problems. *Tim Frances trained and subsequently taught at Ickwell Bury, currently teaching at Bedford and Cambridge hospital, Tim has been teaching yoga for 15 years.*

### **Feb 29th-Mar 2nd INNER CHILD**

Young children have great sensitivity, storing memories as feelings, that later turn into ways of thinking that cause our cultural, religious and sectarian patterns which shape our lives and can be the cause of enlightenment or aberration. This will be explored using various techniques including visualisations, sharing and discussions. *Geoff Freed is a psychotherapist, lecturer and healer.*

### **Mar 3rd-7th CIRCLES INTO SPIRIT**

(Short Midweek £245)

The circle is an ancient symbol of wholeness connecting us to the Source and each other. Working with Chakras, Mandalas and Circle Dance we will paint, colour and dance the circles of life. Celebrate your creativity and spontaneity and open up the spirit. A special relaxation ends each day. (Mandalas and all artistic materials provided.) *Nomi Sharron has been leading spiritual retreats for many years. She is a passionate and experienced Circle Dance teacher. (Short midweek course 2 days tuition in a 4 night stay.)*

### **Mar 7th-9th TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY**

In this experiential retreat we will draw on poetry and on the wisdom of early Friends and other faith traditions, to explore what George Fox called “that of God” in ourselves. From that place of stillness and peace we may come to obey Fox’s charge to “walk cheerfully over the world, answering that of God in everyone.”

*Frances Crampton is a Quaker, an InterFaith Minister and a bereavement counsellor. She is a member of Quaker Spiritual Healers and the Quaker Retreat Group.*

### **Mar 7th-9th REFLEXOLOGY & INDIAN HEAD MASSAGE an introduction**

Reflexology involves the application of pressure to points on the feet; Indian head massage involves treatment of the head and upper body. Both may help promote healing. Please come prepared to give and receive treatments so that you can learn to offer them to family and friends.

*John Sheldon is a holistic therapist and a trustee of the Friends Fellowship of Healing.*

### **Mar 10th-14th HEALING INTO WHOLENESS** (Full Midweek £275)

Is Healing something we do when we have a sickness, or is it the secret of a life lived towards its deepest meaning? In this midweek course we will explore the idea of Healing in a wider context, as a journey from alienation towards inclusion, from confusion towards clarity, from fragmentation towards oneness, and from suffering towards wholeness.

*Harry Underhill is a Quaker with a Christian background. Estella Lovett is a Quaker with a Buddhist background. Both have given courses at Woodbrooke.*

### **Mar 14th-16th MEDITATION & KABBALAH**

The Kabbalah is an ancient mystical system of understanding the universe. Also known as the Tree of Life, it fosters a deep understanding of how Divine energies manifest in the world. Some powerful kabbalistic meditation practices have recently come to light – we shall be introducing the key concepts and exploring these experientially in meditations using breath, visualisation and mantra.

*Philip Clouts has been immersed in the Kabbalah for many years and offers kabbalistic experiences through teachings, meditations and musical events. ([www.kabbalahmusicmeditation.com](http://www.kabbalahmusicmeditation.com))*

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*The rose which heaven and earth is now perceived by me,
Has blossomed thus in God in all eternity.*



Angelus Silesius



QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS EVENTS – 2008
both at Claridge House

Oct 13th-17th QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' 'TRAINING' COURSE £220

A training week in practical healing that gives those who are interested in becoming members of Quaker Spiritual Healers the opportunity to explore their own potential in a safe and supportive atmosphere. No experience necessary, only a desire to help. Applicants should be sympathetic to Quaker values and have been attending a Quaker meeting for at least a year. This course does not necessarily lead to full membership of the QSH.

Led by QSH tutors.

Sept 12th-14th QSH SUPPORT WEEKEND £120

A weekend gathering for full or probationary members of **Quaker Spiritual Healers**, offering an opportunity to develop further one's understanding of spiritual healing with others on the same path.

*For both events please book directly with Claridge House 01342 832150
email: welcome@ClaridgeHouse.quaker.eu.org*

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**THE LATTENDALES TRUST**

Following the sale of Lattendales, Greystoke, last February, trustees have concerned themselves with the proper distribution of trust property which was not covered by the sale or the general auction. For instance, the books on healing were retained as a collection and given to Claridge House.

Trustees have not felt pressured to make early decisions about the future of the charity, though they are keen, if possible, to maintain some form of healing ministry in the north of the country.

The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust has been helpful in providing advice: the £600,000 realised on the sale of the property is now ethically invested; and trustees are being helped by a professional facilitator to discern the future direction of the charity.

Trustees are grateful for the positive suggestions which they have received, and continue to ask for your prayers as they move forward.

*John Sheldon  
Clerk to the trustees*

## DISTANT HEALING – FACT, NOT FICTION

Rosemary Bartlett

In spite of the risk that the following may sound like testimonials for a newly marketed product, I would like to share some of the words of thanks we have received through phone calls and letters about those we have prayed for within the **Immediate Prayer Group**. This is also a way of giving thanks to the members of the group, and praise and thanks to God for blessing our endeavours to heal and for using us as channels for His healing power.

The first letter ends with *“I know I have been healed by the Lord God Almighty after much prayer by many Christians on a matter where they all agreed in faith, just as Jesus promised us”*.

A friend in Canada wrote about the improved health of his two elderly relatives – *“it proves, or at least suggests, that prayer does work doesn’t it. Thank you.”*

And – *“the very knowledge of healing prayers is an encouragement”*

*“I’m confident it is prayer that is doing the work of healing as this case was only explored and then given chemotherapy”*

*“God was in it all, and through it all, as the pervading energy that made the difference.”*

*“We don’t make many friends, but it has been wonderful to know that when all those other people were praying for me my whole attitude was transformed and I am now looking forward with confidence.”*

*“When you are carried into an ambulance you do need to feel that you are loved by God.”*

Also, *“...I am not the world’s best sleeper, to put it mildly! However, during the stressful period I was particularly suffering from sleep deprivation and feeling very unwell. ...I cannot thank you enough for the good it has done me. The results were like a miracle – within days I was sleeping for five or six hours without waking, and it has improved week by week, and now I can sleep most nights for about seven hours”*.

*“I really cannot tell you how much I have appreciated your healing. I am so glad that I accepted your offer of help and that I took it seriously, setting aside time to receive the healing.”*

When Torrin was born he had great difficulty in breathing and was not expected to live. His mother, Tanya, said that before, she had no belief in anything spiritual or to do with prayer, but now she believes that prayer works – though doesn’t know how, but that all the love that was sent to Torrin from different parts of the world through distant prayer has helped in his recovery and his becoming a very loving and energetic little boy. She said she was aware of all the healing being received and when asked what it felt like said *“Sometimes I felt as if I would just fall over but I couldn’t because it was holding me up”*. Tanya

also said she was very very grateful for all our prayers. And Tanya sent in the following piece:

### **TORRIN**

*Torrin came like a lightning bolt,  
from the safe place that was my belly  
To the bright inhospitable theatre room.  
Doctors told us “he is close to death’s door,  
We must take him away, somewhere  
with more machines, more technology”.  
Over the days, after the shock had passed,  
Wave after wave of feelings came,  
Anger, sadness, guilt...*

*Then messages started to arrive from people,  
Friends everywhere praying for us,  
Sending healing energy to our precious one and us.  
To know we were not alone in our journey meant much,  
and helped me to change my feelings;  
Sitting by Torrin full of sadness, I transformed it to love.  
I felt that loving energy that was coming from all directions  
and poured it into Torrin.  
And I kept on doing it – and I keep on doing it.*

*Torrin is a beautiful, energetic one and a half-year old now.  
I thank all those who kept us in their thoughts -  
it transformed our life.  
I understand now that through love so much is possible.*

***Tanya Pinney***

**It is a tough task to stand by while those we love experiment and experience their way through suffering, contradiction, passion, jealousy, betrayal, crassness, excitement, joy, yearning, work – towards wholeness.**

***Damaris Parker-Rhodes***

“We’ve just got the results of your X-rays and would like you to come back so that we can take more and also do ultra-sound tests, this time with a doctor present. Can you come first thing on Monday morning? You can? Good! I’ll book you in for 9 am.”

She put the telephone receiver back in its cradle. It had been a routine, a bi-annual call to a mammography. The processing had been quick. The phone call had taken her off guard. Thoughts and questions came in rapid succession. X-rays taken on Thursday, phone call at 8.30 am on Friday, new appointment made for Monday at 9 am... there must cause for concern. The receptionist had said that the X-rays on both breasts needed taking again, not just one or the other, and that an ultra-sound was necessary. With a doctor present? Did that mean they’d found something and a doctor needed to explain all the consequences carefully?

She couldn’t concentrate on work. Her husband was understanding, and his immediate “Of course I’ll come with you darling” so supportive. But no matter how hard she tried to keep them at bay, all manner of thoughts and fears persisted on welling and swelling into worst scenarios. She started to look at her breasts differently. They seemed so small and vulnerable. She couldn’t feel any lumps, though, and they didn’t look swollen or anything. Perhaps it was all a terrible mistake. Wouldn’t she know, deep down, if there was anything wrong with her own body?

Would her husband still love and cherish her if she had to have her breasts removed? How would she react to such news, and how would she face the operation and its consequences? What if she had to have chemotherapy? And what kind of face would she show to people? What if she died?

Friday stretched into Saturday like a piece of elastic being pulled away from her. It was as if tears were gathering; damming up and waiting to spill over. She felt as though a strange melancholy was pulling and shaping itself over her form and preventing her from falling apart. That night, in sleep, a black panic took hold of her insides and squeezed. This must be the hand of death, she thought, and started to feel cheated of the biblical promise of threescore years and ten.

On Saturday she rehearsed how she would behave on hearing bad news. She would be calm, smiling, accepting. “It must be harder for the doctor to tell you this than for you to hear it,” whispered a voice inside her head. She would be a serene fifty-two year old, she decided. And the minutes turned to hours and Sunday dawned.

She emailed three close women friends, asking for their prayerful support on the morrow. One, who had already experienced cancer and had a breast removed, replied to offer love and understanding and said that if they wanted to see her so quickly it either meant that there was nothing wrong and they just wanted to be sure, or that there was a chance of treatment before any real damage was done. In any case she was in caring hands. Such quick action equalled a fantastic service. The second knew other people who had gone through the operation, and survived. She knew those people too, but had no idea of their suffering. They hadn't talked about it. The third promised to meditate and hold her close in her thoughts and in the light.

On Monday morning she was nervous. Very nervous. Before she knew where she was she was sitting in the hospital waiting room, waiting her turn. After following the nurse to the X-ray room she went through the motions of undressing and responding to instructions. This time she hardly noticed as the X-ray machine pressed her breasts as flat as pancakes. "Wait here please. The doctor will see you in a moment", said the operator when the photo-session was over. Waiting, she flicked mindlessly through a magazine specially placed for people in her situation. The doctor ushered her into the ultra-sound room. "The X-rays on both breasts are clear, but we'll do an ultra-sound just to be sure", he said. As he spread the gel over her chest, she only felt relief.

Riding home on the bus she felt strangely distanced from her body. She couldn't help but look at other people and wonder whether they were nursing good or bad news; whether they were sad or happy. She not only felt close to them, but to everyone and everything on the planet and beyond.

In the days that followed she felt subdued, unable to fully enter into Christmas preparations. She was grateful, of course, but hardly jubilant. It was as though she was slowly finding her way back to a body that had somehow changed. The snow fell and she stopped to inspect the gathering flakes. She listened to the crunching-cornflake sound underneath her boots. She watched the sky change from grey to blue. What did it all mean, she wondered?

*When an inner situation is not made conscious,  
it appears outside as fate.*

*Carl Jung*



## HANDS

Our hands are extensions of our heart; through their movements people know what we are, who we are and how we feel.

Take hold of someone's hand; you can feel the beating of their heart, the very substance of life.

The hand has as many expressions as the face, and if you don't see any reactions from the face watch their hands... covering their face in desperation; reaching out for warmth; tension in holding something; their motion in creating; their movements in happiness; stillness in idleness or loneliness.

The shape of the hands follows the structure of the body: heavy; thin; muscular; fragile; strong; smooth; rough.

Our mind is the energy: our hands the projection of that energy.

Take someone's hand and you will have, in that moment, begun the awareness of yourself. That moment has the seed of the creation of love, every time it is done.

Use your hands in the pursuit of beauty, adding and building of life.

The hands are so very sensitive to the elements of life, of nature. Feel the bark of a tree. Put your hands in the snow, or a cold stream. Run your fingers across the sand, or the wind; all different feelings. Touch the coat of a dog or the skin of a snake.

As the years pass, your hands gain knowledge as does your mind, and grow older as does your body.

Your hands carry episodes of your life: scarred; stained; calloused; scratched.

Let your hands become the joining together of you and another human being, the extension of your heart, the merging of two rivers, the grafting of two branches, the birth of new life.

Your hands are you...

*(Found in the papers of a deceased cystic fibrosis patient and probably written by an alternative therapist giving him treatment.)*

The quality of mercy is not strained;  
It droppeth as the gentle rain from heaven  
Upon the place beneath: it is twice blest, –  
It blesseth him that gives and him that takes...



*Shakespeare*

## THE HEALING POWER OF TREES (6) The Apple

Leonora Dobson

This is the last in this series and I have chosen a tree we are all familiar with, and have all eaten its delicious fruit.

All our English eating apples were developed from the native crab, and therefore contain the same properties. There are many ornamental varieties of crab apple from which jellies can be made, and these can also be made from the native fruit, which is very bitter and hard, if taken straight from the tree. True natives are rather hard to find, as many of the pink and white blossomed trees we see in our hedgerows are the result of apple cores being thrown out of the windows of cars, which have germinated and formed a tree.



Apples are filled with strong therapeutic agents: sugars, amino acids, vitamins, tartaric acid, malic acids, pectin and mineral salts.

Eating apples regularly can relieve internal infections, constipation, irritable bowel syndrome, mental and physical stress, fatigue, hypertension, rheumatism, gout, anaemia, bronchial diseases, urine retention, liver insufficiency, gastric and kidney conditions, coughs, hoarseness and excessive cholesterol. No wonder it is said that an apple a day keeps the doctor away!

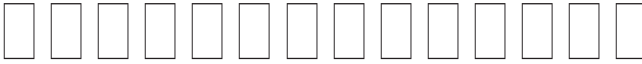
Apples are best eaten first thing in the morning and last thing at night as they encourage sleep. Grated apple helps prevent morning sickness in pregnant women, and raw apple can be used as a poultice for inflamed eyes, badly healing wounds and aches and pains. Two halves of an apple, it is said, when rubbed on a wart and then buried, causes the wart to disappear!

Bach flower remedies use apple to cure self-dislike, despondency, over-anxiety, fussiness and as an internal cleanser.

And now you are all going to rush out and buy pounds of apples to make sure you have one a day! I hope you have enjoyed this series, and have learned from it. Just don't try any of the remedies without expert advice.

*Workshops, talks, day or weekend courses on healing are available from members of the Friends Fellowship of Healing Committee by arrangement. These would be free to MMs and PMs, but, where necessary accommodation with someone in the meeting would be appreciated, as also costs involved with travel.*

*If your meeting is interested in having one of these please contact the Clerk, Cherry Simkin – please see details on inside back cover.*



***From Elizabeth Angas, Blackheath Meeting***

Further to the article by Leonora Dobson ***Does Distant Healing really work?*** (TW Summer 2007, No. 118), my niece Rosemary (aged 50) discovered a melanoma on her back. The prognosis was that it was ‘very aggressive’ which means it would spread rapidly in the lymph system, affect other organs, and be a very poor outlook. She is a rector’s wife, and their whole parish started praying, plus their extended family. I asked Blackheath Meeting to hold her in the Light, and did so myself. Rosemary only needed to have the melanoma and one lymph node cut out. No radiation or chemotherapy was necessary as it had not spread further.

She is now considered to be cured less than a year later. Usually oncologists only talk about ‘remission’ not ‘cure’. So they must feel confident that it won’t come back.

***From Pat Hancock, Guernsey Meeting***

**The Power Shower**

I was sitting in Meeting one Sunday morning and saw that the Friend opposite me was sad, very sad, having just lost his wife. I wanted to hold him in the Light, to let him know he was not alone. I remembered one of the instructors at Tai Chi telling me, you cannot send your own energy, you will exhaust yourself. Think of yourself as sitting under a shower, with God’s light pouring down and through you – this energy you can then send out, across the room (or the ether) to uphold the person you are thinking about. So I did.

One of our other members, worried at having to attend hospital for tests, said how uplifted she felt when a neighbour said that he would pray for her when he attended a meeting in our little Monnaie Chapel (known as the Chapel of Healing).

So... this morning as I was walking the quiet lanes, I felt led to say ‘God be with you’ as I passed each little house on my walk. Some people I knew within those walls were old, ill, lonely or tired. It felt like a moving meditation. Gwen Gardner said to me once – ‘You may never know the effect you have on people in what you do – but do it anyway.’ So I did.





**Ground and Spring – Foundations of Quaker discipleship** by **Beth Allen**  
– Swarthmore lecture 2007. Quaker Books 2007. 128pp. ISBN 0-901689-67-X.  
£9.00

How good it is to have the life experiences and wisdom of Beth Allen shared in her Swarthmore lecture and more fully in the written version. Beth's life has been steeped in the central work of the Society and yet entwined in an ecumenical setting through her marriage to Peter, an Anglican priest, and a lay reader herself.

The lecture is comprehensive in covering many aspects of Quakerism. It is perhaps unusual to have a Friend today using God language so extensively. Beth uses the word 'God' as 'a shorthand for all the poetic, philosophical and imaginative things that have been said and written about a divinity at once elusive but knowable, with us and beyond us, communicable but also beyond words'.

We are challenged about our own beliefs and encouraged to think about the language we use to express them and to communicate them with others.

The breadth and depth of examination covered is remarkable. Philosophical and theological issues are explored as well as practical pointers for daily living. Sections on being co-creators with God and on individual and collective discernment particularly appealed to me.

Prayer and healing in its widest sense feature in the lecture so I do have one minor quibble in that the Friends Fellowship of Healing is not included in the glossary of some Quaker organisations.

This is not a lecture to just read once. There is a tremendous amount of material to reflect upon and to study. To help in this process Beth has included a valuable series of questions suitable for individual and group use.

*Alan Pearce*

**Detox Your Heart** by **Valerie Mason-John**. Windhorse Publications. 2006.  
184pp. ISBN 1-899579-65-6 £9.99

Most of us will be familiar with the principle of detox – the process of cleansing the body so that its natural healing energies can circulate and restore harmony. However, it is just as important to cleanse the mind and spirit, and this book is a guide to doing just that.

I suspect that most of us have experienced anger, thoughts of revenge, hatred or fear at some time in our lives. It is now generally accepted that such strong emotions have a definite physical effect on the body, as well as being dis-ease of the spirit. Our natural tendency is to retreat from such emotions, hoping that they will go away. Sometimes they do, but sometimes we are more deeply affected than we realise. It is then that some types of meditation can help us to recognise these symptoms, and to correct them in a systematic and healing way.

The author is an ordained member of the Western Buddhist Order, and her experience and teachings are found in the short and helpful exercises that flow through this book. She also works as an anger management trainer, and all the skills she has developed are reflected in the personal and other stories which illustrate the teachings.

The author invites us to “Liberate our heart” through creativity, kindness and compassion, pointing out that these qualities are the building blocks of the spiritual life. With her gentle and caring help, we are able to face the toxins of these negative emotions, and find release and healing.

This is a most worthwhile book, and one that will repay several readings, as well as practical working with the techniques she advocates.

*Jim Pym*

**Consider the Blackbird: Reflections on Spirituality and Language** by **Harvey Gillman**. Quaker Books. 2007. 131 pp. ISBN-9-780901-68958-0 £12.00



Although Harvey Gillman's book has a strongly autobiographical flavour, nevertheless its main theme is to ask questions – questions which many of us who, like him, are on a spiritual quest or journey, often find ourselves considering. Recalling his Jewish background he says: “I struggle to know; to use the divine gift of

reason to know as Jacob knew the name of things...It is when the struggle to understand has ended and you see the limitations of continuing, that you can enter the negative path with integrity”. And he stresses the inadequacy of words to describe or encapsulate the Divine.

He looks at the different aspects of spirituality, language, myth and story, reminding us of the value of myth which, through the ages, has pointed us some way towards understanding even while remaining but a tool, or resource.

The blackbird sings – “that the bird sings is its gift”, and, while writing this in my garden, I appreciate even more the chaffinch with its intermittent, repetitive phrase which always seems to end with a flourish, as another example of the “blessed world of diversity”.

This is a book of words which conveys the inadequacy and futility of words themselves to express the Divine. All they can do is to point to something Other – something beyond. On a personal level he often refers to his own otherness as a “gay, Jewish Quaker from a working-class background”, and appreciates the strides in acceptance and understanding of the modern world in comparison to the world of the Old Testament with its circumscribed and fundamental views.

There are many lovely metaphorical passages: for example, he refers to those of us with more eclectic views as “sailing in open seas”.

We have gained a lot if contemplation of a single blackbird prompted the author to write this book.

*Rosalind Smith*

**As “I” See It – the scientifically spiritual perspective** by **John Hargreaves**, Mulberry Press. First ed. 1995, second ed. 2006. 265 pp. ISBN 0-9645632-2-3. No price to hand, but about £10.00.

I have seldom read a more immensely powerful book. It is not an easy read, for it aims to completely change our view of the world. At present, we see the world as if we were all separate beings, existing apart from God and each other. To resolve this sense of separation, we need to change our view of ourselves. We need to discover what is the “I” that sees the world and all of creation in this way.

To start our exploration, John Hargreaves presents three themes; firstly, that our thoughts actually constitute our experience; secondly, that what we accept as our thought actually colours all our perceptions, and finally, that the organ of perception, the “eye that sees” is actually the “I” or self of the beholder. Viewed this way, it is consciousness itself that is the true nature of our being, and thus of everything, and this consciousness is nothing more than the Divine Mind or God.

If the world can be seen from this perspective, then things change. The Divine Power of Healing is released as it was in the time of Jesus. Even more important – from the point of view of the world in which we live – a bridge is created between the scientific (often characterised as the religion of the 21st century) and the spiritual. There is a mid-point between the religious and the



secular, which is the Reality that underpins both, and it is this that we need to discover.

John Hargreaves was a gifted healer who worked for many years as a Christian Science practitioner, and this influence runs through the book. But, as his ministry unfolded, he moved to a more universal view, and found that the words needed to express this “scientific spirituality” came not only from this tradition, but from his own heart and the spiritually evolved souls of other traditions. Like many other mystics (for, although the word is hardly mentioned, it is clear that this is what he was) he observed both the outer world, and his own thoughts and insights, and discovered that everything started with the idea of Self, which was in fact nothing but the Divine seeking to manifest Itself in its fullness.

As I said earlier, this is not an easy read. But, if you want to be challenged, changed and brought into harmony with all that is, then this is a book you should read. Having just finished reading it, I know that there is more to be gleaned from it, so I intend to read it again and possibly again.

*Jim Pym*

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

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

It is quite clear ... that there are a great many people who do feel that they get help ... in answer to prayer ... how best to deal with some difficulty or to achieve some worthwhile purpose. It seems as if such appeals can draw help from some power which appears to be beyond the self. ... Our future science of theology will, I believe, give us much more evidence regarding this, and religion will become animated by a more vital and dynamic faith than one which rests mainly upon the acceptance of some dogma from the past. It will become in fact a truly *experimental faith*.

*Alister Hardy*  
*Religious Experience Research Unit*

## AUTHENTIC DOCTORS' NOTES ON HOSPITAL CHARTS

1. Patient has chest pain if she lies on her left side for over a year.
2. On the second day the knee was better, and on the third day it disappeared.
3. The patient is tearful and crying constantly.  
She also appears to be depressed.
4. Patient has two teenage children, but no other abnormalities.
5. The patient has been depressed since she began seeing me in 1993.
6. Discharge status: Alive but without my permission.
7. Healthy appearing decrepit 69 year old male, mentally alert but forgetful.
8. The patient refused autopsy.
9. Patient's medical history has been remarkably insignificant with only a 40 pound weight gain in the past three days.
10. Patient has left white blood cells at another hospital.

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*Keep us O Lord from pettiness;
let us be large in thought, word and deed,
let us be done with fault-finding and leave off self-seeking.
May we put away all pretence and meet
each other face to face, without self-pity and without prejudice.
May we never be hasty in judgement
and always be generous.
Let us take time for all things;
make us grow calm, serene and gentle.
Teach us to put into action our better impulses,
straightforward and unafraid.
Grant that we may realise
that it is the little things that create differences;
that in the big things of life we are one.
And may we strive to touch and know
the great human heart common to us all,
and, O Lord God, let us not forget to be kind.*

Mary Stewart
Women's Institute 1904

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## FFH PUBLICATIONS

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**The Postal and Phone Link Groups** give prayer support to people seeking reassurance and healing. Some members have joined these groups because they are physically isolated by handicap, age or geography. Others may already belong to a local healing group and are able to give additional commitment by also belonging to one of the postal or phone link groups, or are simply committed to the power of prayer.

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