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# TOWARDS WHOLENESS



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FRIENDS FELLOWSHIP OF HEALING  
(A QUAKER GROUP)

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

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

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

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

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

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Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

*Cover photo: Rainbow over Fowey by Stanley Dobson*

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*The Fellowship is a registered charity (number 284459)*

#### **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."

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The **FFH Spring Gathering** will take place over the weekend of 6-8th May 2011, at Abbey House, Glastonbury. [www.abbeyhouse.org](http://www.abbeyhouse.org)  
More details in the Autumn issue of **TW**.

Churches Together for Healing will be holding a one-day conference in Birmingham on 9 October 2010.

The theme will be **“Religion – Wounding or Healing”**. Details can be found on their website at: <http://cte.churchinsight.com/Group/Group.aspx?id=45577>

## Meeting God at Jordans

One morning during a stay at ‘Jordans’, the Quaker settlement in Buckinghamshire, I got up at a quarter to seven, walked through the kitchen garden, up through the orchard where the owls were still crying, through a gate into a meadow. But not only into a meadow, into a great silence. It was in the meadow that I met God.

The ground was so drenched with dew that it looked as if it was covered with hoar frost. The sun was peeping up over the horizon, throwing long shadows upon the grass. It was an hour of bewitching loveliness. Magic was in the air and awe in my heart. One had the strange impression that one was seeing the world all new and fresh from God’s hand. There was a solemn hush which seemed to fall over the whole field and everything in it.

(From *A Private House of Prayer* by Leslie Weatherhead.)



## From our new Clerk

At the AGM of the **FFH** on May 29th we thanked Cherry Simpkin for her work during her five years as Clerk, and Anthea Lee for her able assistance as Assistant Clerk. Cherry will now be taking over that position, and will be assisting our new Clerk, Hilary Painter.

### *Hilary writes:*

I went to school in Norwich, and my closest friend there came from a Quaker family so I have known about Quakers for a long time. Being in Norwich we learnt about Elizabeth Fry at school too. I started going to Meeting when I lived in Bridgwater, in Somerset, when my son was very small. There was a wonderful woman called Olga at the Meeting who simply took Sam off my hands – I think she must have sensed how needy I was at that time, and I hope I did not abuse her kindness. One of the things which absolutely charmed me about Quakers, is that in **The Friend** at the time, there was an ongoing discussion as to whether one could be both a Buddhist *and* a Quaker. Hurrah!



Eventually I moved to Cambridge but did not go to Meeting again until my children were grown-up enough for childcare not to be an issue, as at that point I could not face being involved with a children's class; despite the fact that I ran a Woodcraft group for ten years – or perhaps because. I started going to Hartington Grove Meeting in the autumn of 1999 and immediately felt at home, as so many of us do. I remained an attender very happily for six years. Then the Meeting ran a Hearts and Minds course, which brought me to thinking, why not commit myself? So I did, in the summer of 2005. And I expect you know the rest from your own experience – I got pounced upon, and am now convenor of Overseers, Relief Warden, etc, etc.

Funnily enough, I became a member of the **FFH** long before I became officially a Quaker. Our convenor, Pat Revell, mentioned it to me very soon after I first attended, and I have been going to our monthly **FFH** meeting ever since; and recently we have added a second meeting, before MfW once a month. I am not a trained spiritual healer, like so many of you: my trade is massage, and lymphatic drainage, so my healing talents, such as they may be, are applied directly to the body. I am a slow learner, but I am increasingly aware of the way in which we are interconnected, and the depth and breadth of healing.

## OH, DO GO OUT IN THE MORNING EARLY!

Judy Clinton

*The healing power of an early morning walk.*

Oh, do go out really early in the morning! Do go out into the world when night becomes day. If you've never done that, you don't know what you're missing. Come with me this morning and get a flavour of what I mean.

It's five thirty, too late already for me to see the darkness of night recede and the first light begin to infuse the day. But it is still early enough for me to feel the newness and freshness of a brand new day. I've packed a flask of tea, put a banana and sandwich into my bag, grabbed my walking pole, donned my coat and put on my walking shoes. The door clicks behind me, and I am off.

It is so very still at this time in the morning. As I pass the houses, all is quiet. I see the curtains drawn and think of all those bodies sound asleep inside, while I have the world to myself. I see a cat perched on a window-sill plaintively mewling to be let in – it gets no response. A van passes me and I see the milkman get out with a couple of bottles in his hand. I cheerily say, "Good Morning." He grunts: it's clearly not a novelty for him to be up at this time.

It's a cool morning, towards the end of August, there's definitely a whiff of autumn in the air. The sky is misty-grey, with many clouds gently moving across it. Suddenly the air is full of the sound of honking geese. I look upwards and there they are: five of them, flying fast across the sky in formation worthy of any air-tattoo. I marvel at their speed and their synchronised flight. And then they're gone; and the quiet folds around me once more.

I walk up the road, usually so busy with traffic, and see no vehicle at all. The road glistens black and leaden in the early morning light. The street-lights have just gone out. The garage is still closed, the night-lights still shining. The pub doors are firmly shut, the curtains across. I walk on, past the houses to where the turning is signed to the Roman villa.

Now I am in the countryside. I can almost feel the grass breathe, it is so quiet. I pass the farm houses, walk up the bending road, past the recently harvested barley field (I see new green showing already amongst the stubble) and see the water of the reservoir in the distance, shining like a pool of mercury. I turn round to get another view and gasp at the sky. Stunning pink shimmers through billowing grey clouds that change every moment. Gulls wing their way across it, squawking as they go. Looking up, feeling the fresh air on my face, my inner being cries out, "However can I fail to believe in a creator God when I see beauty like this?"

I walk on, immersed now in the world of magic and mystery, utterly present to my surroundings and feeling grateful for every moment of it. A scrawny fox dashes beneath a bush, rabbits display their white fluffy tails as they hop from place to place. I see a woman walking towards me with two sheep dogs – it's now nearly six thirty. I greet her with a smile and she comments that I'm up early. I say what a joy it is to be up at this time of day. She agrees with me. She lives in the farm house up the road and tells me how the days start grey and misty before dawn and then become infused with colour as the day progresses. She knows, her windows look right out across the reservoir and the hills. We part, having shared those special moments of mutual appreciation.

I make my way to the stile at the base of the woods and sit down. How good my hot drink is and how wholesome my basic food tastes in these conditions. I sit and watch as the light strengthens, and as the woman said, see the grey and white world of dawn transform to colour. The sun is breaking through now, quite high in the sky. It's crept up beneath the clouds like a sleepy child from beneath her duvet.

I start my downward journey home, my thoughts already turning towards the activities of the day. The magic hours are almost gone now, those hours when an ethereal light transports me into other realms, other ways of being. Now the day is well on its way.

It's wet underfoot, my feet are soaked now with dew, my trousers splattered with mud. I pick my way along the path at the side of the reservoir and stop once more, transfixed by the beauty of the water. It is now covered in battalions of ducks – wherever did they all come from? Only an hour ago that water surface was completely empty. And there are two swans with a large fawn-coloured and rough-looking cygnet proceeding across the lake, silently. Moorhens call, ducks quack, sea-gulls squeal overhead, the day's begun here all right.

I trudge over the muddy field and greet the horses as they come to say hello. I'm rather glad they're behind the electric fence, they're big animals; but aren't they lovely? Their big brown eyes regard me with interest, then they whinny, turn and go about their business.

I walk back towards home, coming nearer to habitation and see that life is workaday now. The road is busy with hurrying cars and vans, people stand at bus-stops, cyclists go past quickly – the garage is open and the pub is showing signs of life. I walk more quickly now, ready to get in and have a sit-down and consider my day's activities. The sun is out, it's going to be a lovely day.

But, oh, do go out in the morning early!

## FOR A MID-SUMMER FIRE

*The wind carried a birch-tree seed  
Over our wall one autumn day.  
Buried in leaves, beside a lawn,  
It was missed by the gardener's mower.*

*In spring, the tiny seed sprouted:  
Tender hair-roots gripped the leaf-mould,  
Pressing its moisture into sap.  
The first pale leaves turned light and air  
Into nourishment. Year by year,  
It grew and thrived, noticed by few,  
First a plant, then a bush, then a tree.*

*Birds stopped a few moments on it  
And finding a shady refuge,  
Grew to love it and built nests there.  
Insects, too, made homes in its bark;  
Squirrels and bats hid in its shade.*

*Each spring, new leaves tasted the sun;  
Each autumn whirled them away,  
Golden with age and fulfilment,  
A rich bed for new precious seeds.  
In winter, the tree slept above ground  
Yet its roots stirred with eager life,  
Gathering force for one more year.*

*At last the tree died. Cut from its roots,  
It was carried away to the fire,  
A last trembling in broken leaves.  
Its life has been given to earth,  
It has fed and sheltered many.  
Now its body will burn and dissolve  
Into ash and air, while its beauty  
Is remembered perhaps by a child,  
Who once saw the sun's golden light  
Turn its leaves into dancing waves.*

**Ian Parker**

While enjoying a pre-Lenten pancake, I wondered why the day ordained for its consumption should be called 'Shrove Tuesday'. On consulting the dictionary, I discovered that, unlike the French 'Mardi Gras', the name has nothing to do with using up culinary delights before fasting but refers to the tradition of being shaven on that day.

To the medieval mind, to be shaven, or absolved from sin, was essential to salvation. The Black Death was devastating not only for its physical effects but because many died without receiving absolution, as the priests could not reach them in time, and their families feared they had gone to hell. This was in marked contrast to the teaching of Julian of Norwich, who lived at that time and believed that we are embraced by God's love unconditionally.

For me, Julian's approach seems more compatible with a God of absolute love. I believe that divine forgiveness already exists even before that which needs to be forgiven. It is 'fore-given'. It is not conditional upon God receiving recompense, which is why I reject certain substitution theories about Christ's crucifixion. Nor does it require any particular religious faith but, rather, it depends on a willingness to turn towards the Light by embracing the ways of love.

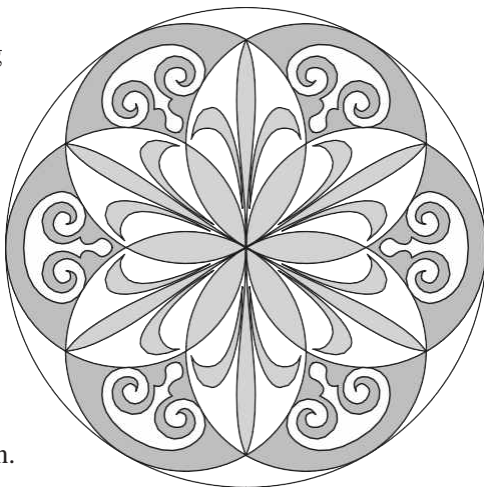
I do not believe in a Judgement Day in the sense of facing some divine adjudicator. I believe we judge ourselves. That is all part of the healing process. When we turn towards the Light we start to appreciate the effect of our behaviour on others. That can bring great sorrow and remorse but it is also when the healing begins. Through the power of the Spirit we are helped to make amends and to overcome that within us which hinders reconciliation.

There is great healing in knowing that we are forgiven by those we feel we have wronged. We need to feel our attempts to make amends are accepted. We may also need to find healing in forgiving ourselves. Mentally beating ourselves up for past mistakes can stop us moving on to further spiritual growth.

Forgiveness also brings healing to the one who has been hurt. Refusing to forgive can seriously damage our spiritual, mental and physical health. Harboring resentment hinders our spiritual growth and psychological well-being. It can affect our immune systems and make us vulnerable to disease. Because he understood the nature of healing, Jesus taught us to ask God to "forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those who trespass against us."<sup>1</sup> If we are full of hatred and resentment for those who have hurt us, we set up barriers to the power of the Spirit to heal us and help us to grow.



Being convinced of an After-life, I believe that opportunities for healing hurts continue beyond death for both perpetrator and victim. A Spiritualist friend told me of a concentration camp victim who communicated from ‘the other side’ in one of the circles she attended. He wanted to thank the members of the circle because the light of their prayers had helped him to come out of the darkness of his hatred for the Nazis. Now, he explained, he could move on.



Divine forgiveness is God’s healing love in action, helping to overcome whatever it is within us that prevents reconciliation and spiritual growth. It comes through the Light of the Holy Spirit and so, by holding people and situations in the Light, we can be the instruments of divine forgiveness in our healing ministry. We do not need to know the details. That is a matter for the Spirit and the people involved.

The Spirit’s healing power is always available but it is ultimately for each person to accept or reject it. I believe that is why Jesus said that the only sin that cannot be forgiven is that against the Holy Spirit<sup>2</sup>. Those who refuse to turn to Its Light and choose to remain in their own darkness inhibit the healing process.

However, that should not discourage us in our healing work. The Light can penetrate the darkest mind and no one is ever beyond redemption. We need only to trust that healing will work even though it may take time – even years – and that even those who turn away from the Light and chose to live in spiritual darkness will, so to speak, eventually feel Its warmth on their backs and turn to face It.

<sup>1</sup> Matthew 6.12

<sup>2</sup> Matthew 12.31-32

*Forgiveness happens naturally when you see that a grievance has no purpose other than to strengthen a false sense of self, to keep the ego in place.*

***Eckhart Tolle***

There was a moving story some years ago, in *Quaker Monthly*. It was a dream about a carver who wanted to make a bird.<sup>1</sup> The wood resisted. In the end the carver gave way and allowed the wood to become what it wanted to be, a frog. In coming to accept what the wood wanted, he also came to accept his Down's Syndrome son, who sensed the change in his father, cuddled up on his lap, and slept.

Here is a dream of my own.

We read that the first day, God made light and separated it from the dark. The second day (s)he made Heaven. The third day (s)he provided dry land, and plants that grew on it. On the fourth day the sun, moon and stars appeared. The fifth day was when the sea creatures and birds arrived. The sixth day was the turn of man, woman and the other land animals. The seventh day was time for God to have a good rest from such hard work.

Well, God did not want a lot of clones, and so on the eighth day he invented sex, as a clever way to make each generation different from the previous one. The offspring had characteristics from both mother and father, and this made them unique. Animals would have plenty of variety, and some models of animal would fare better than others, when times were hard, or in particular environments.

The ninth day was when language was invented, followed next day by writing. On the eleventh day, God sat down to yet another enormous task. (S)he wrote a manual for all living things, so that they could have exactly what they needed to survive and thrive. The trouble was that, every time a plant emerged from the ground, the small bird broke out of the shell, or the mammal was born, God had to write another manual, as each was an individual, with its own needs. (S) he is still up there writing manuals, as each individual comes to life.

I wake up from this wonderful dream, realising that it is not true. There are no manuals. We are all different, and we do not know our individual needs. Governments and public health officials come up with advice, but it is more related to commercial pressures, fashions and politics than to human needs. Senator McGovern pushed a low fat diet, against the advice of the scientists, with the effect that people turned to sugar to make their food palatable, and now we have a diabetes epidemic.<sup>2</sup> Many avoided eating fat, so that their skin became dry and itchy, and if the external skin is in that state, what hope is there for the internal membranes? People were then told to avoid sugar and turned to using a combination of methyl alcohol and parts of protein called

phenylalanine and aspartic acid. This combination is called aspartame. Methyl alcohol is of course what used to make the meths drinkers go blind.

No one would put Diet Coke in their car, would they? They follow the designer's recommendations. Why didn't our designer write a manual for us?

Women were told to take a drug for morning sickness, which produced babies with flaps instead of limbs. Children and adults have their teeth filled with the potent neurotoxin, mercury, and senility escalates. People are told to take statin drugs, although they increase the death rate. They are told to take drugs for their bones, but the drugs are found to be the same as what used to kill the Bryant and May match makers with Phossy Jaw. They are told to take Cox 2 painkillers, which turn out to cause thousands of heart attacks.

I work as a nutritional therapist and researcher. My work is to find out what would be in God's manual for human beings, if only there were one. Moreover, it is my job to find out what should be in the manual for each individual I see. We have thousands of genes, some of which enable us to make perfectly functioning proteins. Some genes cause the production of useless enzymes, and these can result in death in childhood. Many of us have some genes that work up to a point, but they are so inefficient that we are not awfully well. It's my job to evaluate my clients, and write their own individual manuals. It is also my job to persuade them to follow these manuals. This is the hardest part of my job.

"Why is wholemeal bread bad for my rheumatoid arthritis?" "Because the lectins in the bran layer of the seed attach themselves to a sugar called NAG in your antibodies, and that causes inflammation." "But I thought wholemeal bread was good." "Well it may be good for others, but not for you."

"If you want to avoid another heart attack, you need to stop drinking milk." "But I thought milk was full of goodness." "Maybe, but the sugar in it attaches to cholesterol, leading to narrowed arteries." "What about my bones?" "Well you can eat hard cheese for calcium. That way you will avoid the sugar in milk." "Why do you want me to stop eating this cholesterol lowering spread?" "Because it contains a compound from milk that clots your blood."

"Why don't you want me to eat puddings?" "You're recovering from cancer, and sugar feeds cancers." "But I like puddings." "You have a choice. You can eat what you like, or you can give your body what it needs." "But my sister eats lots of puddings, and she is fine." "Maybe, but your body is not the same as hers."

The carver struggled, because he had a vision of a beautiful bird. That's what he wanted to make. It was only when he decided to work in harmony with the

piece of wood, that the wood was fulfilled, and so was he. It was only when he came to accept his child, that the child came to trust him. Healing is about accepting the body we have been given, and learning to work along with it. Our spirits live in tandem with our bodies. If we fight the only body we have, we'll have to live with the consequences.

### Endnotes

- 1 Louie Horne. July 1991. Reconciliation. *Quaker Monthly*: 70 (7): 131-2
- 2 Gary Taubes. March 2001. The Soft Science of Dietary Fat. *Science*; 291(5513): 2536-45.



*A delightful picture of Alison Le Brun, a QSH member living in Jersey, as she signs the marriage certificate with Ric Taylor, the Secretary of the Universal Association of Healers, on January 2nd 2010 at Jersey Quaker Meeting.*

*People don't notice whether it's winter or summer when they're happy.*

***Anton Chekhov***

## YESTERDAY, TODAY AND TOMORROW

There are two days in every week about which we should not worry, two days which should be kept free of apprehension and fear.

One of those days is yesterday with its cares and mistakes, its faults and blunders, its pains and heartaches; yesterday has passed forever beyond our control. All the money in the world cannot bring back yesterday – we cannot undo a single act we performed; we cannot erase a single word we said. Yesterday is gone.

The other day we should not worry about is tomorrow, with its large promise and its poor performance, its possible adversities and its burdens. Tomorrow is beyond our control. Tomorrow's sun will rise, either in splendour or behind a nest of clouds, but it will rise. Until it does we have no stake in tomorrow, for it is yet unborn.

This leaves only one day, Today. Anyone can fight a battle for just one day, it is only when you and I add the burdens of those two frightful eternities, Yesterday and Tomorrow, that we break down and falter. It is not the experiences of today which drive men mad, it is the bitterness of remorse for something which happened yesterday and the dreaded thought of what tomorrow may bring.

Let us therefore live for one day at a time!

Found in the personal effects of *Madge Olive Feltham*

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## SPIRIT OF HOPE

Special is the energy here that has a loving grace,

Persuading angst and stress to leave a furrowed face.

Inside it and without there is a healing love and calm,

Restoring peace and balance with its special spiritual balm.

Inside these walls there is a welcome that nought will ever douse,

Thank you, for the healing, that comes through Claridge House.

*Stephen Feltham*



I am convinced that the expressions of our Quaker heritage that we love to use carry a certain power because they are inspired words; I believe they were first uttered as they emanated from that place of stillness within; I believe they are true ministry. One of these is the expression we use when we pray for someone who is in need of support. We speak of holding this person in the Light, and whilst we know what we mean by this it is not easy to articulate the meaning. Just as a painting that is a true work of art can never be interpreted satisfactorily in words, for the power is in the image, so this expression, like good poetry, conveys far more than we can glean by analysing each word.

What feels clear to me when I use this expression is that I am praying for the healing of this person or for the healing of their situation. That is, I am praying that the person or the situation is made whole. And whilst in our Fellowship of Healing meetings we bring forward the names of others we know of who are in need of spiritual support, I feel that at a deeper level – or in a more general way – healing is something that we are all in need of. And whilst those we pray for are often suffering physical illnesses I feel it is not the body that is the true object of healing, but the mind, (some may say the soul) and it is the body which is the ultimate place where sickness or healing manifests.

Whatever words we use it seems to me that if I am not living in a state of inner peace and do not feel joyful, that is fully alive, then there is something within me that needs healing; and it is at times of distress that this need, which is not constantly obvious to me, becomes most apparent. So that much of the time when nothing in particular is troubling me I can forget that I am not yet whole, but the moment this fragile equanimity is shattered by the intrusion into my life of the threat of loss – whether it be the loss of health, or ease, or livelihood, or the wellbeing of a loved one – then I feel the deep distress that tells me I am in need of healing, that I am not yet whole. I see then that I have lost my way, have wandered from the Light.

Here is a quotation from a book called **The Timeless Way of Building** by Christopher Alexander which I think gives a good description of what it means to be whole. “A thing is whole according to how free it is of inner contradictions. When it is at war with itself and gives rise to forces which act to tear it down, it is unwhole. The more free it is of its own inner contradictions, the more whole and healthy and wholehearted it becomes.”

The same of course applies to people. There are contradictions within us, forces

that war against each other – conflicts that have not been resolved – and this inner friction disrupts our body's natural equilibrium and eventually wears down the physical form. The greatest contradiction that we live with is surely the one between our natural impulse to stay alive and the knowledge that death is inevitable.

If I accept that it is only the physical form with its attendant personality that dies whilst the life of that body by definition cannot die, this leaves me to ponder the concept of life without a physical body, that is, a form of existence without the body, thoughts and personality to which I am so attached, and with which I identify almost exclusively. But this is the shift we need to make to become whole. We need to shift our orientation from the physical manifestation of the Life Force to the Life Force itself, which manifests so beautifully and perfectly in natural forms all around us. Then, rather than experiencing a tree as a form outside and separate from me, I become the life force that causes the sap to rise and the leaves to form and the fruit to swell and the birds to sing and the rivers to flow and the tides to turn and the planets to move in their orbits.

Then I will know myself as the force of life, which is light. And holding others in the Light is to affirm that they are also one with All Life, and not confined to a finite physical body where pain is felt and the suffering of conflict is inevitable. For if I am the life of that tree then so are we all the life in each other, and I am calling you to that knowing when I hold you in the Light.

Perhaps it is, then, that when in our quiet gatherings for healing we bring forward the name of someone in need of healing we form an energy-connection – a life force connection – with that person, and in our collective silent mind, as we seek to dwell in Being (not in thought) we call the soul of that person into wholeness, into oneness with life, with All of Life. And in so doing we affirm our own state of Infinite Being. So that the healing of one is the making whole of us all; and turning towards the Light we remember that our true nature is Life, not form.

*(This article was first published in the Winter 2009 edition of Wholeness, the Newsletter of the Australian Friends Fellowship of Healing, and is reproduced with permission.)*

*Cultivate gentleness (towards yourself and others) even in times of difficulty.*

**Michael Lewin**

## ROSE GARDEN MEDITATION

*(Possibly for use by Distant Healing Groups. To be read out loud slowly.)*

Relax – make sure you are feeling warm and comfortable.

As you become quiet within yourself you will see a path leading to a garden gate.

You are invited to walk along the path and then, when you're ready, to push open the gate and you will find yourself in a beautiful rose garden.

As you walk along you will see, on either side, rose beds of all colours.

Some are beds of one colour only – red , pink, yellow – others are beds full of mixed coloured roses.

You may notice the beautiful perfume – and the quietness and peace

You find you have come to a seat, which is by a bed of white roses.

Rest on this seat, and look at the white roses.

As you gaze you will see that the whole of the white rose bed is glowing – with a bright white Light.

And this Light gradually surrounds you – bringing you a deep peace. Absorb this healing and peace for yourselves.

Now, bring into this Light the thoughts of anyone you know who needs healing at this time.

See them surrounded by Light – and peace – and healing.

Let the Light spread further to envelop all those who need healing, but who you don't know.

Just let the Light spread and spread... in the knowledge that healing is being received where it is needed...

*(Allow some time to go by – )*

And now, become aware again of the white roses. And become aware of yourself, sitting on the seat.

When you are ready, get up from the seat, walk back along the path, through the gate – and back to where you are sitting. Have a little stretch – flex your hands and feet – open your eyes...

***Rosalind Smith***

## CLARIDGE HOUSE PROGRAMME



*Bursary assistance available, depending on individual personal circumstances. Please enquire when booking. For booking details – and other tariff, including daily rates and special breaks – please contact Alison Green or David Huxley, Claridge House, Dormans Rd, Lingfield, Surrey, RH7 6QH. Email: [welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk](mailto:welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk) Website: [www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk](http://www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk) Tel: 01342 832150.*

### **July 16-18 WORLD CIRCLE DANCE** (£175)

Dances from many cultures, a rich diversity of flavour, mood and beautiful evocative music to kindle our innate expansiveness, lift our spirits and open our hearts. Some experience of circle dancing would be useful. (If in doubt, please ask to discuss with tutor.) ***Eve Corrin**, an experienced teacher of circle dance with a gentle, straightforward and relaxed style of teaching.*

### **July 19-23 DIMENSIONS OF YOUR WRITING SELF** – a writing retreat (£295)

Supportive space for writing, silence and sharing. Time to focus, explore and experience yourself through the words you place on the page. One-to-one sessions offered. For all levels: those who intend to write; those who can't find time to write; those who want more time to be with their writing.

***Monica Suswin**, a published writer in the field of creative therapeutic writing.*

### **July 23-25 REIKI II** (£175)

Being attuned to Reiki II increases your Reiki, enabling you 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.*

### **July 30-August 1 FREEING THE BREATH:** **An introduction to Buteyko** (£175)

Buteyko is a simple method of self-healing, through getting to know our own breath, and using breath to enhance our well-being. We will learn some simple exercises and begin to make small conscious changes which improve health. Especially effective for asthma, anxiety and other breathing disorders. (Wear loose comfortable clothing.)

***Linda Shampian**, an experienced therapist, counsellor and qualified Buteyko teacher, who first learned Buteyko to treat her own long-term asthma.*

**August 2-6 EYE HEALING RETREAT** (£295)

This workshop will give us tools to rediscover ourselves and to move us along a healing journey towards improving the health of our eyes. We will use sound, movement, stillness, relaxation and meditation, as well as specific Bates exercises to make our eyes stronger and to increase our inner power of self-healing.

*Paula Luis, an experienced sound therapist, Reiki Master, circle dance facilitator, and shamanic and awareness healer.*

**August 6-8 SOUND HEALING** (£175)

Join us on a healing journey into our deeper selves led by the sound and vibrations of the drum, the singing bowls and the gong. Open up to deeper self-knowledge with chakra work and bring more joy, love and fulfilment into your life and the lives of those around you.

*Paula Luis – see above.*

**August 9-13 BEAT AGEING WITH YOGA** (£295)

Yoga can slow down ageing by improving the quality of your health in the long term. Included will be a tailor-made yoga practice to keep you feeling young, discussions on spiritual practice, diet, managing stress, looking after the spine and joints, and keeping your brain sharp with meditation and mantra.

*Fiona Agombar, a yoga teacher who has studied yoga and ageing at the VYASA ashram and AVP ayurvedic hospital in South India.*

**August 13-15 YOGA TO BEAT FATIGUE** (£175)

A gentle yoga course suitable for all abilities. We will include fatigue-busting methods such as special breathing techniques, meditation and health-boosting yoga postures. Also suitable for those with moderate ME/CFS.

*Fiona Agombar, a yoga teacher who has studied yoga and ageing at the VYASA ashram and AVP ayurvedic hospital in South India.*

**August 20-22 SUMMER SONG** (£175)

Share the pleasures of a summer garden with words and memories, from the lyrical to the laughable in poetry or prose, and relax.

*Ted Walter, a poet and creative writing tutor for over 25 years.*

**August 23-27 QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS' TRAINING WEEK**

*Please see page 19.*

**August 27-Sept 3 LATE SUMMER BREAK** (Mon-Fri £210)

Special 24 hour rate – £57



**Sept 6-10 DRAWING: a course in how to see** (£295)

Those who feel they have no talent, or who lack previous experience, can learn to draw with skill and confidence. This structured, but straightforward, course shows you how to see and to draw as an artist does, by engaging the creative right side of the brain. Drawing becomes a relaxing discovery of the beauty and complexity of the world.

*Dennis Massey, an experienced tutor who has been teaching people to 'see' for more than 15 years.*

**Sept 10-12 Angels** (£175)

Angels are beautiful, caring beings of light, just waiting to be asked to bring love and light into our lives. Meditate with them and learn of their healing and helping qualities.

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

**Sept 13-17 A HEALING RETREAT** (£295)

An informal healing retreat using talks, dialogue, meditation and quiet contemplation to explore our healing needs, and also to discover healing in ourselves and others. One-to-one personal healing available. Free time for contemplation and interaction with others. It is suggested that you read Jim's booklet *What kind of God, what kind of healing?* as a preparation.

*Jim Pym, a spiritual healer and meditation teacher with more than 40 years' experience and author of **Listening to the Light**.*

**Oct 4-8 TRANSITION TO RECOVERY** (£295)

For those moving from recovery from chronic illness towards full health. Slightly stronger yoga includes postures to increase confidence and energy. Discussions explore picking up the threads of life and finding the way back to work, alongside positive changes and spiritual lessons learnt. Themes are recovery, health and managing change.

*Fiona Agombar – see above*

**Oct 15-17 QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS  
SUPPORT WEEKEND**

*Please see page 19.*

**Oct 18-22 VOLUNTEER  
MAINTENANCE  
WEEK**

Enjoy the fellowship of working, relaxing and worshipping together, whilst helping the house. *Please phone for details.*



### **Oct 22-24 WORLD CIRCLE DANCE** (£175)

Dances from many cultures, a rich diversity of flavour, mood and beautiful evocative music to kindle our innate expansiveness, lift our spirits and open our hearts. Some experience of circle dance would be useful. (If in doubt, please ask to discuss with tutor.)

*Eve Corrin, an experienced teacher of circle dance with a gentle straightforward and relaxed style of teaching.*

### **Oct 29-31 THE ‘CLEAN GOLD LIGHT’ OF AUTUMN** (£175)

A positive look at the season to find how poetry can help us. A time for writing poetry or prose, prompted by exciting words. A time to relax and enjoy creative opportunities.

*Ted Walter, a poet and creative writing tutor for over 25 years.*

### **Nov 5-7 SOUL’S JOURNEY** (£175)

What is meant by spirituality? How is it different from religion? How does it affect you? This course seeks to answer these questions through understanding both your own personal experience and the teachings of traditional faiths – western, eastern and tribal. The learning methods we use on the course will include talks and discussions, and individual and group exercises.

*Chrissy Holmes, healer for 30 years and a Regional Training Officer for the Healing Trust (formerly the NFSH).*

### **Nov 12-14 SOCRATIC DIALOGUE on ‘When should I forgive?’** (£175)

Socratic Dialogue fosters critical thinking, developing listening and reasoning skills. With questions drawn from everyday life, no prior experience is needed. Participants share examples from their experience. The group identifies reasons for judgements, and seeks consensus. Course participants are asked to attend all sessions to foster co-operative work and continuity. The question this time is ‘When should I forgive?’

*Rene Saran, an experienced Socratic facilitator.*

### **Nov 15-19 THE CREATIVE RELATIONSHIP** (£295)

Explore relationships in your life, identifying one to focus on, as well as looking at your relationship with yourself. Be creative with the resolution of difficulties, finding positive ways to move forward. Through creative writing, talking exercises, claywork, visualisations and colourwork with pastels, we find a more creative way of relating, – one which is empowering and hopeful.

*Kate Ackerley, artist, therapist, experienced course facilitator, FFH member and MNFSH.*

## QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS EVENTS

### **QSH 'Training courses': (Monday - Friday)**

**August 23-27 2010**                      **at Claridge House**                      £255

Please book directly with Claridge House Tel: 01342 832150

**April 4-8 2011**                      **at Woodbrooke**                      £290

(No bookings taken yet)

**September 5-9 2011**                      **at Glenthorne**                      £tba

(No bookings taken yet)

These training courses provide a safe and friendly opportunity for those who feel themselves drawn towards the field of spiritual healing, to experience their own potential. If appropriate they can then go on to become fully insured probationer healers, and eventually full healer members of QSH.

All courses are facilitated by tutors from the QSH team of tutors.

*(Please ring Ros Smith on 01359 252248 for details of course content.)*

### **QSH Support Gathering at Claridge House**

**October 15-17 2010** (Friday - Sunday)                      £150

Facilitated by Shella Parry.

*Please book directly with Claridge House 01342 832150*

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## Our Hands

How is it that our hands  
are so wonderfully designed?

to serve us so well –

to hold a baby's head,

or to knead a loaf of bread;

then to paint, to draw –

to make a garden grow;

to hold a lover's hand;

to make great music soar,

led by a conductor's hand –

so cleverly designed

by a Maker undetected.

*Anne Smith*

My wife and I are well into our seventies: mere beginners in what we hope will be a long process. I've nothing to say here about the physical aspects – save that I wish twenty-first century technology could provide simple and cheaply available correction to our hearing (and in particular a solution to the 'cocktail party problem') comparable to all that it offers to correct most eyesight deficiencies. Hearing loss is the great isolator. And I won't say much about dealings with other people – a huge topic. What I find most interesting about ageing relates to our thought processes and our emotional reactions: our heads and our hearts.

For several years I have observed my brain starting to pack up. The usual things: forgetting names of people, places, and sometimes other categories; forgetting things needing to be done; saying the wrong word. More seriously perhaps, failing to put two and two together: I learn some new fact, and fail to spot its implications – with results that are often unfortunate and sometimes embarrassing. But if such absent-mindedness (as it is generally called) progresses, that still shouldn't be too bad. My father suffered from Alzheimer's in his final years; but it seems that there is not a strong hereditary element to this, and that the inherited variant usually emerges at an early age, so that prospect doesn't much worry me. My wife is faring better at present in all these things than I am. Great believers in jotting things down, we have numerous notepads and pencils lying to hand (not pens – pencils never dry up) and I am constantly using them.

We watch TV, often twice a day. With our lunch on a tray on our knees we see a recording of a one-hour programme, and over supper a thirty-minute one; or we play a tape of BBC Radio 4. (Scrumptious food: ever-varied fresh fruit and vegetable salads, home-made hand-kneaded bread. Our saucepans gather dust.) By relying on recordings, we never miss anything when answering the phone or the door. When we engage in idle chat, as opposed to discussing practicalities, it is not infrequently about one of these programmes, be it on history, art or science.

I read few books. I think that TV and radio, with the stimulus of conversation afterwards, place more demands on my brain – and demands on the brain, of course, are vital: without food for thought it will starve! *Use it or lose it*. The solitary activity of reading can be very passive, with the brain doing only what it finds comfortable. But my various Quaker commitments keep my brain on its toes: they entail exacting discussions with other Friends on issues of faith, caring and administration; when writing reports and other items I have again to meet demands made by others, not just satisfy my own whims – more tough mental exercise here. Sudokus supposedly help stave off mental decline, and I enjoy their

challenge. Likewise it is believed that cryptic crosswords may be an antidote: I really must get back to them. My wife spends many hours each day at her desk doing voluntary work for a self-help organisation. She finds this rewarding, stimulating and often exacting. She will sometimes design, or tinker with, a spreadsheet for the accounts, and is seldom happier than when engaged in this.

With the years going by and the mental machinery starting to wear out, one still continues, if all goes well, to accumulate experience and to put some of it to good use. As former teachers, which means communicators, my wife and I are fascinated by the things that make for successful communication (or for misunderstandings – often instructive too): in the interplay of thought and feeling; in the learning process; and in the crucial role of habit. Being interested too in the theory and skills of safe driving and in what makes for faults in driving, we discuss issues that arise for us now of perception, the interpretation of information, and drawing false conclusions. And so on, and so on. (We have been advised, ‘Don’t think about your mental decline: you will only speed it up.’ Stop thinking about these fascinating topics that have always been close to the heart of our professional life? No way! For others maybe, but not for us.)

Now then. Our daily conversations continue to be fed by new experiences, new examples and new ideas, and so for each of us our body of knowledge and understanding continues to grow and to develop. The neurons die off at an ever-increasing rate, but plenty of new growth is still sprouting away. Our enjoyment of what we see (in particular) is constantly being developed and refined: the low morning sun, the cloudscapes and trees as we look out over the breakfast table; opposite our front windows the hills, and the sunsets; the moon and the stars; effects of sunlight, shadow and reflection in the kitchen, varying with the position and the quality of the light as the seasons roll on; effects of light and pattern when we are out and about; bare winter trees; photographs and other pictures, new and old. We value and cultivate and share the touches of pleasure and excitement that these things go on bringing. And something else: I’ve never been good on social and interpersonal skills, so I still need to think carefully, and keep on learning if I can, about just how to deal with other people. I may react in such and such a way in a Quaker business meeting, and think later, ‘I handled that little exchange better than I would have done a year or so ago’: dropping a pointless argument perhaps, or being a little more imaginative and gentle. I enjoy reminding myself: you’re in mellow old age now, you can stop being pernickety. The passing years are giving me ever more to learn from and enjoy, and each new day is full of things to achieve – so I am infinitely grateful for the package that has been given to me. The package contains various kinds of deterioration that I must undergo, but I can accept that. I just hope now that the shutters will not close down all that soon over the machinery or the sources of light.



# REPORTS

## A WEEKEND OF HEALING

The Nightingale Centre at Great Hucklow was the setting for this year's **FFH Spring Gathering**, May 7-9th. Lying among the rolling hills and windswept moors of Derbyshire, it was the perfect place to find the peace and serenity we all sought. As a total newcomer to FFH I found the welcome very friendly and supportive both from the management of the Centre and the members of the group.

Periods of deep silence were interspersed with creative drawing and writing. Angel cards were exchanged and psychometry practised. A welcome break on Saturday afternoon gave everyone the opportunity to explore the countryside, read their books or go to sleep or all three. The cow and its tiny calf gave endless delight. And who will forget the headless cotton chicken or the dancing flea?

Well-fed, we left on Sunday feeling that we had, indeed, met together and known one another in that which is eternal. Many thanks to all those who helped to organise the Gathering and to the group as a whole for making me feel so welcome.

*Diane Exley*



*FFH members enjoying themselves at the Spring Gathering, Nightingale Centre, Great Hucklow.*

“Resilience is better than happiness,” I heard said, recently, on a radio programme. It was a talk about bringing up children or good parenting. This seems to be a favourite topic at present in what some people are calling a ‘nanny state’ mentality. Perhaps we all need to be kind nannies to each other?

The programme suggested that one should teach a child to be aware of his or her emotions so that they are able to monitor and handle their own feelings effectively. This concept is sometimes now called ‘having emotional intelligence’. In particular, the ability to bounce back after a disappointment, to recover from a shock, to withstand a little suffering – these are very important for good mental health. It will mean that people do not immediately resort to a pharmacological solution – anti-depressants or tranquilizers.

When I thought about this in relationship to my own life, I realised that it has been resilience which has kept me going. No matter what difficulties, hardships or illnesses I have had, I have been able to find an ability, deep within myself, which knows how to ‘overcome’. Believing that that ability, that resilience, is there to draw upon, also means I am happy. I have a confidence that I will be able to cope – to not go under. It gives me hope and optimism; it makes me feel responsible for myself – autonomous.

Some people call this faith. Faith that God will give us the strength to cope – to come to our rescue. However, as I have an experiential faith (not one from dogma or creed) I do not feel I am dependent on a ‘God-out-there’. Rather I believe that the experiences of *this* lifetime, and perhaps previous ones, have given me a resource for my soul to draw upon. By tuning into my higher-self, using my intuition, I will be able to make wise choices and decisions. I will be able to discern what I am meant to do. This, after all, is what we do in our healing work. We ‘know’ that we will be guided by our inner light. Some people may prefer to call that the Holy Spirit, or being guided to do God’s will. Whatever language we use, and whether we believe it is a metaphor, or an actuality, having resilience is definitely a fact. I personally believe that my ‘that-of-God’ within gives me the ability to bounce back. I draw on my inner divinity.

So, apart from its spiritual dimension, where does resilience come from? Is it a genetic trait? An innate gift following through from a past life? Did I learn mine from copying my very resilient parents? Was it absorbed through my family’s values and attitudes – the ever-hopeful environment of my home? Or did parent, teachers and ‘significant others’ set out to teach me resilience? Was I fortunate in being taught, either intentionally or unconsciously, how to cope

with the knocks of life? I realise that perhaps in dysfunctional families this cannot happen. Or sometimes, in spite of the division and conflict, a person still bounces back. However, an individual can also come out of a stable family without any coping skills because resilience is not valued.

A memory I have of falling over as a little child of about four perhaps illustrates this. It was a nasty fall on a gravel path. One knee was grazed, beginning to bleed, and I was bruised and shocked. I lay on the ground expressing my fear and anger by yelling loudly at the path for tripping me up. My father was following a few yards behind. He approached calmly and crouched down beside me – “What have we here?” he asked with interest, “What bits hurt?” By responding to this systematic inspection, my tears subsided as I realised it was only my knee. “Shall we go and wash it to make it better?” asked my father, taking my hand to help me stand up. He taught me how to bathe it in hot soapy water to remove all the grit (only helping a little!). Then he showed me how to fold a big clean handkerchief in order to make a bandage. I felt very important with this in place. “There”, said my father, “What else do you need?” – holding out his arms – and I realised a hug would be good. We then discussed the danger of running on an uneven gravel surface and so instead one should walk mindfully – thinking about what one does. An important lesson!

Compare my father’s approach with that of a child who is immediately picked up, cuddled and comforted. From this she does not learn to become ‘aware’ – to analyze the hurt, or work out a solution for herself. Instead she learns to be helpless and vulnerable to obtain attention.

I was also fortunate in having parents who discussed quarrels and emotional upsets calmly when we were adolescents. This helped us to work out why they had happened, to find solutions and prevention for ourselves. Witnessing how my brothers were assisted to deal with difficulties, intellectual or emotional; taught to become aware of, and to ‘name’ their feelings, was an important part of our family’s education. We used our ‘emotional intelligence’.

I had to find resilience of a different kind for my pre-cognition experiences. These I found frightening and very disturbing. I learnt to keep them secret as people did not believe me, which added to the burden I carried. However, eventually they led me into healing and my true *raison d’être*.

As a healer, when counselling hurt or upset people, I am constantly amazed at how many adults have never learned how to be resilient, or to develop coping skills for adversity. I specialise in teaching stress management ([www.autogenic-therapy.org.uk](http://www.autogenic-therapy.org.uk)). This seems to be something which many

people nowadays need to learn from a professional rather than learning it as a child. This is because, when confronted with a problem, they need help to work out what they are feeling, and what that means for them. They need assistance to work out a solution or how to cope. And this seems to be because they have never learnt resilience or how to be autonomous in their own decision making.

I am sure there could often be an earlier stage before people have to seek professional help, or become completely overwhelmed. Could it be solved by just good neighbourliness? By being a 'listening ear'? By being a model for resilience and coping strategies, and talking about these – sharing our ability so that others can imitate us? Living simply as a Quaker, sharing our testimonies as life-skills and ways to cope? Speaking openly about our own emotions and how we deal with them? Perhaps some blogs are beginning to do this?

As healers, we are in a unique position. Healing helps an individual to open up, to become aware of their body, mind, feelings and spirit, and thus to find holistic solutions. Even without counselling skills, it is possible to encourage a person to work out for themselves what they are going to do. It is like being a good parent or friend, helping them to draw on their own inner wisdom, to tune into their own intuition and find those innate abilities of resilience and 'bouncing back'.

You may believe, as I do, that our soul chooses what life we need to have, choosing our parents before we arrive. We also choose what hardships and joys will help us to evolve. It can then be seen that resilience and learning to cope is of the utmost importance for our spiritual journey. So we all have a responsibility to teach the next generation, and to share with adults in this present decade any resilience we have already acquired or been given.

**From Church bulletins:**

At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be 'What Is Hell?'  
Come early and listen to our choir practice.

Eight new choir robes are currently needed due to the addition of several new members and to the deterioration of some older ones.

The Fasting and Prayer Conference includes meals.

The sermon this morning: 'Jesus Walks on the Water.'

The sermon tonight: 'Searching for Jesus.'



## LETTERS

*From Les McIver, Yealand Conyers*

I found the article ‘More than skin deep’ by Emmaline O’Dowd in the Spring 2010 issue of *TW* of great interest – it certainly spoke to my condition. I was beginning to think I had been picked out for special treatment after being told by the medicos that the only help I could hope for would be of relief with no possibility of finding cause or cure. The rash or, more correctly, itchy skin has become more troublesome with age and that information was greeted with a wise nod of the head.

Over time I have picked up some of the things Emmaline mentioned and some have given me food for thought which I intend to experiment with. It is a pity that both eggs and pears are amongst my favourite foods, but dairy products were dropped some time ago, although I could be more strict there. Thank you, Emmaline.

*From Peter Copestake, Skipton*

Thank you for printing the poem by Chris Roe which very much accords with my own feelings. Indeed I once wrote a similar piece which ended with the words – “How much it means to us” or something to the same effect, the point being, to me, that our ability to appreciate ‘Creation’ links us with the ‘Creator’. (I put the words in inverted commas as I do not want to enter the argument about how the world actually began although the words “And God looked upon the world and saw that it was good” added to the fact that we are often able to look upon the world and see that it is good, reinforces what I understand by ‘That of God in everyone’.)



## Setting Up The Poole and Wimborne Healing Group (Dorset)

In May 2008, it was announced in the notices after Sunday Meeting that there would be an inaugural **Meeting for Worship for Healing** on Tuesday evening June 3rd. Thus began the realisation of a strong leading which had independently affected two Friends at this Meeting. This was a prompting of the Spirit which wouldn’t go away. We were influenced in a number of ways including guidelines from the *Friends Fellowship of Healing*, courses that we had attended, and other experiences received at Claridge House.

Although we had both practised distance and contact healing in different ways, we recognized that the power (spiritual energy) of the group far exceeded the sum of the individuals. Thus the bringing together of like-minded friends with



one specific focus, to be conduits of healing within the framework of a Meeting for Worship, formed the nucleus of our meetings once a month. At all times we would acknowledge God (the Source) as the one true Healer, and we would adopt an attitude of gratitude, giving thanks for these gifts of the Spirit.

Our proposals were put before our Elders and Overseers and accepted. It was important for us to stress that any healing that took place was not within the power or remit of the group, and would not necessarily produce the results we might wish to see. We were aware that healing may occur on any or all levels – physical, mental and spiritual – and may or may not be in line with what the person and the group had been hoping for. We were aiming to be a group channel for God’s healing energy, and help create the connection between the person in need of healing energy and the Source of that energy. A Meeting for Worship was the sanctuary where we would meet with God for this purpose.

Bearing in mind that God does not work to a human time frame, we nevertheless decided as a group that we would need around 30 minutes for our actual Meeting for Worship for Healing. We devised a three-step procedure for this – **Attunement** (getting in touch with the ground of Being/Spirit/healing energy/God), **Intention** (placing our thoughts on individuals or situations and **Release** (letting go/letting God) – and invited other members of the group to use this if it felt right for them.

It has felt important for us to sit in a circle and our meetings have always included a time before the worship to remind ourselves what we are doing, to set the scene, and to invite names to be put into our healing energy pool. It soon became satisfyingly obvious that we were meeting a real need as numbers for our healing group were constantly in the order of 12 to 18. For a Quaker Meeting of 18 to 25 on a Sunday, this was very encouraging, even more so now that we have begun to attract members and attenders from 3 other Meetings. We have experimented with various other methods (for example, visualization, spoken prayer, and brief meditations) but have gradually returned to the quiet and simplicity of a Quaker Meeting for Worship.

The group itself has decided the form that our meetings should take, and the general pattern which has now emerged, after 18 months, is as follows: We meet at 7.00 for 7.30pm at our Meeting House. The two of us act as joint convenors and the pre-worship session includes a 10 minute presentation given by one of the group on some aspect of healing, e.g. ‘The importance of forgiveness’, with no discussion or comment, and followed by a centring down period of calm stillness.

We then remind the group of the need for ‘attunement’ i.e. to wait in this divine silence, and be open to the Source of all energy and love; then to say,

think, visualize the person who is to receive the healing; and (with ‘intention’) to direct/send the healing energy from the Source to the intended receiver, asking that it be used in a way that best meets their highest needs. Finally, the ‘release’, to ‘let go and let God’ recognizing that, at best, we are only conduits of Divine healing. We then ask the group to give thanks for this Energy and its transmission, remembering that it is not from us, but always from the Source.

The meeting for worship for healing then lasts for 30 minutes, during which names are put into the healing pool, either verbally or silently – we feel that both methods are appropriate, and that all requests, silent or spoken, are answered. Although we acknowledge that God does not require these names to be spoken, we do add that when names are heard it helps us to focus our intention more clearly. At the end of the 30 minute Meeting, we give thanks and quietly close down our healing time together. Then follows a time for feedback on people previously held in the Light, for comments on the earlier talk, for any issues affecting the format of the Meeting to be raised and for future Meetings to be arranged. We end our 90 or so minutes together with our thanks once again to our Creator.

The group works within strict confidentiality. We keep no records of any sort on people named in our Healing Group Meetings, and decided early on not to use a healing request form. We try to ensure that people who are named are aware that this is happening, and have given their agreement, but there are in practice a few exceptions to this. Any information we learn about people while in the Group is not transmitted outside the group.

It has been fascinating to observe the benefits that this healing group has had on the group itself. Often we have arrived feeling tired and perhaps under the weather ourselves, and yet the Meeting has had such a dramatic energizing and healing effect on those present, even though our focus was on other people outside the group. It’s as if we had been part of a central heating system, and though the ‘heat’ was passing through us and directed towards others, we nevertheless benefited from that warmth (and healing) ourselves.

The group has wanted to focus on distant healing so far – but there may be a change in the wind, as we are about to offer an additional opportunity (separate from this Meeting) for some direct contact healing for those who want to experience this. We have felt very privileged to have been a part of this process in setting up a Meeting for Worship for Healing, and are greatly encouraged to know that another Meeting close to us is now engaged in the matter of setting up their own Healing Group. We thank God for the spiritual gifts through Grace, that have been given to us. We have been richly blessed.

*Peter Wilson / Jeremy Deane* (Poole and Wimborne Meeting)

I had a mini stroke just before Christmas in Dec. 2009. I felt it as a near-death and a spiritual, experience. I tell this story so as to hopefully encourage others who may have times of physical breakdown, that there may be good outcome.

I was relaxing in an armchair one Saturday afternoon, alone in my sitting room after busily typing, and was watching an old film ironically called ***I know where I'm going!*** The heroine thought she knew where she was going but she didn't, as I didn't either! Just before the end I started to get weird symptoms of huge dizziness, copious sweating yet feeling cold and needing to be sick. I staggered to the bathroom to be sick, then collapsed back into the chair with a bowl. As I sat there I noticed that I had no fear. I felt I was observing myself being sucked into a vortex like a whirlpool which I considered as death, but that it would have been alright to allow myself to go with this, as there was still no fear. I then thought "But if I die how will my family react? Is this the right moment for me to die? I have work to do still and life to enjoy! Perhaps I should try and get myself rescued?" I then staggered to a phone and rang my daughter who fortunately was at home and who dashed round straight away, having called an ambulance.

By then I had some tingling on my left side and then it soon passed and the crew gave me tests and eventually took me off to hospital. After a few days of resting and being monitored I had the diagnosis and new medicines to take. I'm diabetic so was used to a regime of taking daily medication and having regular blood tests. My heart was fibrillating and my pulse was irregular and this had caused a blood clot at the back of my head which had caused the mini stroke. I was blessed that it was no worse.

My daughter had packed an overnight bag for me and forgotten the toothbrush but remembered to put in my photo of Sri Ramana Maharshi! I felt under his protection throughout. I reflected on my experience and recalled that I had had a part of me that was detached from the symptoms but observing them and unaffected. I guessed, after reading an issue of ***The Mountain Path*** (the magazine that is sent out from Ramana's ashram) that I had been given a glimpse of the undying Self that Ramana speaks of!

Thank-you Ramana for your undying care of me.



*If you want to know if your work in life is over and you're still alive, it isn't.*

Sufi Master



**Unwrapping the Sacred – seeing God in the everyday** by **Rosemary Lain-Priestley** SPCK. 2009. 117 pp. ISBN 978-0-281-060610 £9.99

*The Revd Rosemary Lain-Priestley is Dean of Women's Ministry for the Two Cities Area in the diocese of London. She broadcasts regularly on Radio 4's **Thought for the Day**.*

This book takes the reader on a year's journey of reflection. There are twelve chapters, one per month, each starting with a personal reflection by the author about an event, a person or a thing that has come to her attention. She goes on to explore these things in a global way, considering such matters as politics, the church, spirituality and how people relate to one another.

The author writes in a readily accessible way, in a very personal way, revealing her strengths and weaknesses, her certainties and her doubts, which makes it a very encouraging book to read. She also has a keen sense of humour which makes it easier to accept some of her serious points. It is not a book written by an academically knowledgeable person who is telling us how things should be. Here we have a very human writer who has thought and felt deeply about the nitty-gritty of life, whilst bringing to it her very wide and deep knowledge of so much. In her introduction she urges us to do the same.

“Most of us don't have the luxury of huge chunks of quiet time in a solitary place to achieve [this] sifting and reflecting. We may need to build some of that into our lives. Or perhaps we should let go of the assumption that it has got to be done that way and simply get on with doing it differently. Whatever our approach, we need to pay honest attention to what's around and within us, whether it's exciting, mundane or deeply painful, what we've encountered before or something different. This is a way of praying, and we need to trust ourselves and our instincts about what God might be saying to us in all of it.”

Certainly I found that reading this book made me look at things afresh and question my assumptions. There is much that could be used from it to stimulate discussion in groups, as well as for individual thought.

*Judy Clinton*

**The Superstress Solution** by **Roberta Lee, M.D.** Bantam Press 2010. ISBN 978-0-593061-886.

As I work in stress-management by teaching people how to do Autogenics, I am always on the look-out for fresh ideas. I do not wish to become 'stale' as

a therapist – dishing up the same menu week after week. However, because Autogenics is so successful I have never found anything which I would wish to use in its place. In addition, Autogenics provides a westernised form of meditation, which is quick and easy to learn, and then to practise, regardless of whether or not one is stressed. (See [www.autogenic-therapy.org.uk](http://www.autogenic-therapy.org.uk))

This book, however, gave me a programme which could accompany the course of therapy I offer, making it even more holistic. The aim always is to treat body, mind, feelings and spirit by helping the client to become autonomous in doing it themselves. This can only happen if the person understands the exact nature of their own stress, and what their specific needs are. They can then make an informed choice based on their individual problems.

Roberta Lee, an American medical doctor, has created four very useful self-diagnostic questionnaires: 1. Your superstress type, 2. The physical toll which stress takes, 3. Your personal resilience to superstress, and 4. Recent stressful events. She then explains – in detail – The Tools for Change. I would give these to my clients to read and to do for themselves as homework, in addition to the practice of Autogenics. They would then understand the part played by a healthy nutrition, exercise, the mind, emotions and their spiritual life in overcoming stress. This would result in a much more in-depth course than I have time to do. It would also develop the clients' resilience against future stress, in addition to the way Autogenics does this.

Like all self-improvement books, there are suggestions for affirmations, for journaling, menus, recipes, supplements and exercise regimes. However, Roberta Lee's are the most original and interesting I have ever tried out. They also give plenty of choice, avoiding being too prescriptive, so the person's independence is always maintained.

I believe that stress-management is best taught within the framework of healing (as the FFH/QSH understands it). The stressed person needs to learn how to heal themselves, and not merely follow a mechanical format. For a Quaker, this means understanding how to tune into, and channel, the healing and creative power of the Holy Spirit.

*Elizabeth Angus*

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May the God of gentleness be with you,  
caressing you with sunlight and rain and wind.  
May his tenderness shine through you to warm  
all those who are hurt and lonely.  
May the blessing of gentleness be upon you.

*Celtic Blessing*

## FFH PUBLICATIONS

Available from Alan Pearce, 15 East Street, Bluntisham, Huntingdon, Cambs. PE28 3LS. Tel: 01487 741400. Please add postage. Cheques to be made out to the 'Friends Fellowship of Healing'.

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**le 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 (*Maureen Anderson* 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.