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TOWARDS WHOLENESS

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The **Friends Fellowship of Healing** is a Quaker Recognised Body in the Religious Society of Friends. (*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 either at a 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.

ANNUAL FEES

(which include all necessary insurance/materials/newsletters etc.)

UK FFH Member	£15
Overseas FFH Member	£21
QSH - Full Healer	£35 (inc FFH Membership)
QSH- Probationer	£35 (inc FFH Membership)
QSH - Full Healer/Probationer insured elsewhere	£21 (inc FFH Membership)

Cheques, payable to Friends Fellowship of Healing, should be sent to The FFH Membership Secretary, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF4 4QP

Letters, articles, news items and other contributions for Towards Wholeness should be sent to the editor, Gervais Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W.Yorks. WF4 4QP, 01924 264180. gervais153@talktalk.net
Deadlines: February 1st, June 1st and October 1st.

For further information about the FFH please contact the Clerk: Gervais Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W.Yorks. WF4 4QP, 01924 264180. gervais153@talktalk.net

Donations for the work of the Fellowship are most welcome.

Cover picture: Kirkby Lonsdale: Pauline Frykman

FFH/QSH Web-site: www.quaker-healing.org.uk

Clerk: Gervais Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF4 4QP. gervais153@talktalk.net 01924 264180.

FFH/QSH Membership Secretary: Pauline Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W Yorks, WF4 4QP. gervais153@talktalk.net 01924 264180.

Treasurer: Cherry Simpkin, 78 Courtlands Ave., Lee, London, SE12 8JA. cherry.simpkin@btinternet.com 020 8852 6735

Editor of Towards Wholeness: Gervais Frykman, 52 Ridge Road, Middlestown, Wakefield, W Yorks. WF4 4QP. gervais153@talktalk.net 01924 264180.

FFH/QSH Gatherings and Courses Secretary: Kay Horsfield, 90 The Crescent, Abbots Langley, Herts WD5 0DS. horsfield.k@gmail.com 01923 266163

On-line Gatherings and Distant Healing Group Convenor: David Mason, 2 Fir Ave, New Milton, Hants, BH25 6EX. david.mason1948@gmail.com 01425 626112

Urgent Prayer Group: Anne Brennan, 3 Annandale, South Street, Castle Cary, Som. BA7 7EB. anni.b@live.co.uk 07969 689406.

Prayer Group for the Mother and her Unborn Child: Mina Tilt, 185 Robin Hood Lane, Hall Green, B28 0JE. theminatree@btinternet.com 0121 778 6778.
Mobile 07719 625418

Claridge House, Dormans Road, Dormansland, Lingfield, Surrey RH7 6QH.
The Manager. welcome@claridgehousequaker.org.uk 01342 832150.
web site: www.claridgehousequaker.org.uk

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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Talking Friends holds recordings of Towards Wholeness.

Anne Brewer records them and sends to Talking Friends for distribution to Friends with visual impairment. The subscription for one year is £3 for TW publications.

www.talkingfriends.org.uk

Alan Johnson is the convener of Talking Friends.

alan.johnson1@blueyonder.co.uk, 0121 476 0217

Distant Healing From Home

Please see our website www.quaker-healing.org.uk for current intentions.

HEALING AND UPHOLDING GROUPS – 19 October 2024

BEDFORD	Judith Slaymaker, Red Lion House, 2 High St, Thurleigh, Beds Email: Judith.slaymaker@gmail.com	MK44 2DB
BEWDLEY	Tony Sargent, 12 Sandstone Road, Bewdley Email: tigrish@btinternet.com Tel 01299 405943	DY12 1BW
BLACKHEATH	Cherry Simpkin Email: cherry.simpkin@btinternet.com Tel: 0208 8526735	
BOURNEMOUTH	Stephen Feltham, 6 Ferris Place, Bournemouth	BH8 0AU
BRIGHTON	Magda Cross, 41 Preston Grange, Orange Close, Brighton	BN1 6BH
CAMBRIDGE	Hilary Painter Email: paintermarden@ntlworld.com Tel: 01223 243452	
CARDIFF	Ken Timmins, FMH, 43 Charles Street, Cardiff	CF10 2GB
CHESTER	Karen Dickson Email: karen.dickson@btinternet.com	
CHORLEY	Joan Williamson, 34 Runshaw Lane, Euxton, Chorley,	PR7 6AU
CLARIDGE HOUSE	Peter Horsfield, Claridge House, Dormansland, Surrey Email: peterhorsfield333@googlemail.com Tel: 01372 374596	RH7 6QH
CLITHEROE	Beverley Rayner Email: bevrayerhealing@yahoo.co.uk Tel: 07928 107306	
CROYDON	Croydon PM c/o David Parlett, FMH, 60 Park Lane, Croydon Stephen Betts Email: smjbetts@gmail.com Tel: 07511 380272	CRO 1JE
DISLEY	Anne Sumner, 5 Parkhill Close, New Mills, High Peak, Derbys Email: sumner961@btinternet.com Tel: 01663 745 439	SK22 4EU
DORKING	Anne Brewer, 53 Chart Downs, Dorking, Surrey Email: anne.brewer43@gmail.com Tel: 01306 500187	RH5 4DF
FOREST OF DEAN	For venue and times please contact Dorothy Cardus Email: dorocardus@hotmail.co.uk Tel:01584 369953	
GREAT AYTON	Carole Avison, 4 The Avenue, Stokesley, Middlesborough	TS9 5ET
HALL GREEN	Joy Aldworth & Trevor Barker, 5 Velsheda Road, Shirley, Solihull B90 2JL	
HARROW	Ann Taylor, 79 Hawthorne Ave, Ruislip	HA4 8SR
HARWICH	Joy Ling, Email: joymearl@gmail.com Tel: 01255 553965 and Rosalie Eaton, Email: rosalieeaton@gmail.com Tel: 01255 880500	
HENLEY on THAMES	John Cater, 6 Southview Close, Twyford, Berks	RG10 9AY
HEREFORD	Pam Newman, 82 Bridle Road, Hereford	HR4 OPW
HUNTINGDON	Mavis Parker, 16 Woodlands, Warboys, Huntingdon, Cambs Tel: 01487 823075	PE28 2UR
LEISTON	Lee Britten-Jones, E-mail: talk2leebritjion@aol.com Tel: 01379 588365	
LONG SUTTON	Annette Price, 29 Middle Leigh, Street, Somerset	BA16 0LD
MARLBOROUGH	Rachel Rosedale, Thormsend, Kingsbury Street, Marlborough Email: rachelrosed1@gmail.com	SN8 1HZ
NEW EARSWICK	Ruth McCarthy, Email: ruth.mccarthy60@virginmedia.com	

Tel: 01904 330977

NORTH SCOTLAND Oriole Hall Email: oriolehall@hotmail.com Tel: 07908 205623

NORTHUMBERLAND Ena Dimelow Email: enaannd@btinternet.com Tel: 01670 760502

NOTTINGHAM Mary Brimelow, 182 New Rise, Nottingham NG11 8BH
Email: marybrimelow@hotmail.com

OAKHAM Anna Findlay, 44 Well Street, Langham, Rutland LE15 7JS

OSWESTRY Sue Miller, 10 Upper Church St, Oswestry SY11 2AE
Email: susaneleanormiller@gmail.com Tel: 01691 658330

POLEGATE Elisabeth Wilson, Cottage 2b, Bernard Baron Cottage Homes
Eastbourne Road, Polegate, East Sussex BN26 5HB
Email: liswil2b@gmail.com Tel: 01273 730085

POOLE Peter & Pamela Wilson, The Old Stable, Levets Lane, Poole BH15 1LW
Email: peterpam65@ntlworld.com

SIDCOT Jo Hewitt, 2 Oatlands, Wrington Hill, Bristol BS40 5PL
Email: jo@2oatlands.net

SOUTH AUSTRALIA REGIONAL MEETING

Enid L. Robertson, 9 Sherbourne Road, Blackwood, S. Australia 5051

STOCKPORT Joan Armstrong, 14 Tintern Ave, West Didsbury, Manchester M20 2LE
Email: jhb.armstrong@outlook.com Tel: 01614 345278

STREATHAM & BRIXTON Isobella Stewart, 15 Lexton Gardens, London SW12 0AY
Email: isobelstewart15@gmail.com

TELFORD David Rolfe and Sara Venn, 66 Dawley Rd, Wellington, Telford TF1 2JF

THAXTED Anthea Lee, 24 Lea Close, Bishops Stortford CM23 5EA
Email: antheagleee70@gmail.com Tel: 01279 656707

TORQUAY Bill Becher, 203 Babbacombe Road, Torquay TQ1 3SX
Email: webecher@yahoo.co.uk

TOTTENHAM Nigel Norrie, 65 Friern Barnet Lane, London N11 3LL

WALTHAM CROSS Michael Seymour, 122 Northfield Road, Waltham Cross EN8 7RE
Email: littleadora@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 01992 283993

WANSTEAD Mary Mallinson, 26 Calderon Road, Leytonstone E11 4EU

WATFORD Kay Horsfield Email: horsfield.k@gmail.com Tel: 01923 266163

WELLINGTON Zoe Ainsworth-Grigg, 4 Kingdom Lane, Norton Fitzwarren, TA2 6QP

WELLS-NEXT-SEA Joolz Saunders, Caprice, Clubbs Lane, Wells-next-Sea NR23 1DP
Email: joolz.saunders@inthelight.uk.com Tel: 01328 711085

WEST SCOTLAND Nicola James Maharg, The Mill, East Kinharrachie, Esslemont, Ellon, Aberdeenshire AB41 8PQ
Email: nicola.james53@gmail.com Tel: 07595 370376

WINCHESTER Andrew F Rutter, 1 St. Johns Road, Winchester SO23 OHQ
and Irene Ashby, Email: ireneashby@yahoo.com Tel: 07477 138803
WOKINGHAM Anne Le Marinel Email: lemarinel@hotmail.co.uk Tel: 0118 9617109
YEALAND Lesley McCourt Email: lesleymac@phonecoop.coop Tel: 01524 702281
DISTANT HEALING GROUP: Maureen Anderson Email: maureen.e.anderson38@gmail.com
URGENT PRAYER GROUP: Anne Brennan 3 Annandale, South Street, Castle Cary BA7 7EB
Tel: 07969 689406

FFH Thursday Group

This meets on zoom on the second and fourth Thursdays of the month at 2:30 pm. It is an experience of giving distant healing in the context of a healing meditation and silence. Please contact Gervais for the link.

AGM

The AGM will be held on Zoom on 16 November at 2:00 pm. The link is the same as that for the Thursday Meetings.

Subscriptions

Subscriptions are due on 1.1.25, unless you are paying by standing order which specifies a different date.

The rates are shown on the inside cover of Towards Wholeness. We appreciate prompt payment. Thank you.

Healer Support Weekend

There will be Healer Support Weekend on Friday 20th June -Sunday 22nd June 2025 at Claridge House.

The weekend will give Probationers and full Quaker Healers the opportunity to practice and receive healing in a friendly and supportive environment. The programme will be given when you arrive.

There will be a 40 minute Zoom session included Saturday afternoon for QSH Healers to discuss aspects of healing. (Details of link and time will be circulated nearer the time).

If you want to book please contact Cherry Simpkin 020 8852 6735

QSH Training Course

Training in practical healing for those interested in becoming a Quaker Spiritual Healer, enabling exploration of healing potential in a safe, supportive atmosphere. Experience is unnecessary, only a desire to help. Applicants should be sympathetic to Quaker values and attending a Quaker meeting regularly. Completion of the course is the first step towards a healing qualification and does not itself lead to full membership.

The next training course will take place on 23rd - 27th June 2025 at Claridge House, cost £550.

Please book directly with Claridge House. Please contact Cherry Simpkin regarding bursaries.

What is it that truly connects us as Quakers? Are you like me a seeker exploring the answer to that question? I have now been attending meeting for worship for a little more than two years. Quakerism has got at the core of me. I want to find out more and experience more. Attending several Woodbrooke online courses has helped me understand more clearly the historical background to Quakerism and some of our current concerns such as climate justice.

Just over a year ago, as part of my quest to explore the world of modern-day Quakers, I decided to visit other local meetings once a month. Generally, there was no need to travel too far. As I live in the middle of the country, I have quite a lot of choice. Many of these meetings, I can access by train. In my head, I started to call myself an itinerant Quaker, although I am very much attached to my local meeting and attend my local meeting regularly.

On 23rd November 2023, I read about Matt Rosen in my weekly online update *Quake!* <https://www.quaker.org.uk/blog/travelling-in-the-ministry-sharing-joy-and-community>. Matt has travelled up and down the country and calls it '*Travelling in the Ministry*' – a phrase I like. He is a true itinerant. I am a monthly itinerant and my ministry is usually of the silent variety. I agree with Matt that travelling to other meetings has brought me joy and a sense of connectedness.

On my travels, I recently visited Dolobran Meeting House in Mid-Wales and was able to turn it into a short holiday as there is a cottage attached to the Meeting House available as a retreat. On my return, I felt the urge to shout from the rooftops how special and timeless it is. It is not only the place itself, which is drenched in Quaker history that is so special nor the people I met but the abundance of life in all its glory that you encounter.

The meeting house and cottage are one single building separated by a solid internal wall. Gentle footsteps and the murmur of voices told us that we were no longer alone. Ruth popped her head in at the open cottage door smiling and inviting me to meeting for worship. All I had to do was to walk out of the cottage door, turn left, take about three steps and then I entered the meeting house itself. On that Sunday morning in May, the Dolobran garden was bathed in golden sunshine. I sat inside on a wooden bench facing the open meeting house door. To my left, lying on his own special rug was Bron's golden spaniel Sam. As I settled into worship, I listened with pleasure to Sam's rhythmic breathing. It had a powerful calming effect. To my right, within a few inches of my feet, lay a well-behaved and alert Lurcher called Mabel. Her slender muzzle was stretched in my direction on a comfortable blue rug. Occasionally her ears and sometimes only her eyebrows raised at the sound of a creature unheard by human ears. Outside, I could hear the wonders of nature, beautiful birdsong and the rustling of shrubs and trees in the gentle spring breeze. A field mouse scooted past the meeting house door at great speed.

I rejoiced 'in the splendour of God's continuing creation.' Advices and Queries 42.

That afternoon as I explored the 17th Century Meeting House at leisure, (it was actually built in 1700) I discovered on a shelf almost hidden away, a small turquoise-bound book entitled 'An Ocean of Love.' I realised that it had been waiting there to be found.

It gave me the words that I needed. That morning, I had bathed in 'An Ocean of Love' warmed by the sun's rays, soothed by sounds of the animal kingdom and blessed by the generosity of the Dolobran Quakers.

If I can come away from meeting for worship feeling part of something bigger than myself, I come away with renewed hope. That is all I need.

Then I opened this slender volume and read the quotation from George Fox that had inspired the blue book's title:

'I saw that there was an ocean of darkness and death, but an infinite ocean of light and love, which flowed over the ocean of darkness. And in that also I saw the infinite love of God.'

Please, if you wish, substitute your own word for the word *God* used in both of my quotations. It is not my preferred word. At present, I can't find a substitute word only a feeling and an image in my mind of that Sunday morning in May at Dolobran.

If you are interested in staying at the Dolobran cottage, below are contact details and the website link.

dolobranquakers@gmail.com

<https://dolobran.llanhub.uk/>

At a moving MfW in the Meeting House this morning/recently it felt like we were seeking ways to respond positively to the pain in our world.

I was asked to share, more widely, these lines from Rumi - 13th Century Sufi mystic & poet.

You are a longed for love-song

Aim at your innermost centre

Go through yourself to where the stars circle,

where breath flows forth,

where there is silent understanding.

Plant seeds into the earth, then cover them.

DELIVER US FROM EVIL

Crystal Dickinson ed Liz Silk

Crystal Dickinson's volunteering at Yarl's Wood Immigration Centre was very important to her. Late one evening she phoned me and sent this story, asking me to edit it, ready for reading at a lecture she was giving the next day. It needed a lot of work because it was full of her anger and personal judgements, and it was also too long for the time allowed for the talk. So I had the privilege of rewriting this remarkable story (and staying up half the night!) and it is now, in the writing at least, half mine, half hers. I cooled it down and put it in the third person.

I must emphasise: this is a true story.

Liz Silk

Patricia

MUCH OF AFRICA IS STILL RULED BY SPIRITS. Isolated, self-governing villages prosper if the land is good, rain comes at the proper time and the spirits are pleased with them. If the spirits are angry, the people starve.

The spirits seem to favour hardworking villages with strict traditions. Everyone must do what the ancestors did and all must be done for the common good. The blacksmith, the doctor, the maker of fishing-traps, continues the hereditary skills of his ancestor, but woe betide the village where the child of the healer should want to make fishing-gear. The spirits will never agree to such a breach of tradition and so the village elders cannot allow it. They severely punish nonconformity, with death if necessary.

Tradition keeps the village safe, but a degree of curiosity about the outside world may be managed and even encouraged—if the spirits agree.

Occasionally the Elders will send a particularly bright child hundreds of miles to obtain modern schooling, but at the end of their studies, the youngsters are expected to return, be purified of all alien spirits, and reintegrate fully into village life. For girls, particularly, this involves marriage to an older man, and probably also to his senior wife.

In 1983, in the village of Mwa, one such girl was born, at the cost of her mother's life. Aged eleven, she was chosen, and sent seven hundred miles from home, alone, to be educated by Scottish Presbyterian missionaries.

She flourished as Patricia and became a deep, sincere, Christian. But the binding of tradition remained. She was heir to her grandmother, and must become her village's "M'fulah" the one who cuts the genitals of all girls before marriage.

Her biology lessons showed her there was no possible benefit from FGM, only harm. Patricia reasoned as a student and as a Christian. She had no right to inflict harm and destroy part of God's gift to womankind. This conviction hardened in her, and in great distress she contacted her village elders, who summoned her to a meeting. It was declared that once Patricia's grandmother, the current M'fulah, died, it would be her absolute duty to return home and step into the role. No, the spirits were clear. While Patricia lived her younger sister could never become M'fulah. As long as her grandmother lived, she should stay at the mission, and continue her studies. The village would pay for her western higher education. She was clever, diligent, and much beloved in Mwa.

Back at school, everyone prayed for her grandmother's continued good health. Patricia earned a degree in geology, but in the week of her Finals, her grandmother died.

The Elders of Mwa sent for her.

Come home, and be honoured for your studies; come home, and now you must be married and yourself undergo circumcision and initiation as an Adult. Come home! The spirits demand your presence, and we need you. Seven girls' lives are now on hold, all old friends from your childhood, because they are waiting to be married but cannot be married uncircumcised. Come home to your duty!

The penalty for disobedience would be death. Not a quick death, but death by a form of torture appropriate to the offence, in order to placate the spirits on behalf of the rest of the village.

The Presbyterian mission saw escape as the only possibility. The missionaries lived in holy poverty, but they raised money overnight for a flight to Britain and a little extra to help on arrival. They sat up all night writing letters, setting forth her case for immigration. When the procession arrived from Mwa to escort their new M'fulah home, Patricia was flying over the Alps.

The UK Immigration Service routinely disallowed her claim for asylum, refusing to believe the reason. Immigration thought it was a peculiarly disgusting, and ingenious attempt at deception.

Patricia was sent to Yarl's Wood Immigration Removal Centre, to await return to her own country. The Befrienders found her an excellent lawyer, but he could make little headway against the intransigence of the authorities.

It would be impossible for Patricia to hide if returned to her country. Her surname is actually Mwa, the same as her home village, and her birth-name appears in her papers alongside

Patricia. It would be a simple matter for the Elders, made cruel and relentless by fear of their avenging spirits, to bribe their own national frontier guards to arrest anyone of that name and hold her for their collection.

“Maybe they won’t want you back,” her Befriender [Crystal] hoped.

Patricia explained, as to an innocent child,

“If my village do not collect me, then the border guards will keep me and use me. If I survive that, they may then let me go....”

The Befriender worked hard to collect evidence for the lawyer, including anthropological reports about the practice of FGM. She wrote passionate appeals to senior Christian churchmen, always with the same pointed question:

Is it really the business of a Christian country to make Christians into martyrs? If not, how can we stop this?

And the Bishops, and the Moderators of the Church of Scotland, and the General Secretaries of the various Nonconformist Churches all understood at once. Yarl’s Wood is in the diocese of St Albans. St. Alban was the first Christian martyr in Britain, and the Bishop of St. Albans led the struggle in key places where the Befrienders had no access—the House of Lords, the Home Office.

With all this heavyweight support, everyone thought Patricia would be safe—but she was not. Her individual Befriender, whose Christianity was intensely physical and immediate, believed in an infestation of devils inside the Home Office, sneaking around the long corridors slipping evil, mean thoughts into civil servants’ heads.

The fight was lost and Patricia was told to prepare to be flown home on a certain day. Her friend made a farewell visit. Patricia

was calm. She knew every move of the fight, and said how deeply grateful she was for these efforts. Friend and prisoner shivered and clung to each other.

As she was being led away, Patricia dashed back and thrust out a paper.

“Take this! Promise me you will send this as a fax, and send it tonight.”

“Yes. I promise. Tonight.”

And she was gone.

The fax gave her flight details and was addressed to Reverend Unpronounceable, address unpronounceable but somewhere in Africa. Please pray for me, Your daughter in Christ – Patricia Mwa.

Two beefy escorts flew with her to Nairobi. From the international airport they walked her across the city in handcuffs to the local airport for her final flight, a public humiliation. Still escorted, she was flown to her home airport, before the long walk to the frontier post.

They walked her clear out of the airport, past the guard boxes, one escort carefully walking on either side, right into the noisy, swirling crowds of an African town square. Patricia heard now the familiar, terrifying rhythm of the Mwa village drummer. And then, coming up the hill from one side, she saw a procession of a dozen men and women, all familiar as the Elders of her village. She had sat on their knees as a child, and now they were coming to get her.

But a new sound collided with the drumming. Coming from the opposite direction she heard trumpets and bagpipes and the boom, boom, boom of the big bass drum and many people belting out Onward Christian Soldiers. Up the hill they came, a

huge procession, all the local churches with their different banners and a big crucifix. The Roman Catholic bishop was there in his red and white vestments, and the Reverend Unpronounceable who had baptized Patricia, and all the choir she used to sing with, and the Baptists with their standards and her old teachers and Mr. Arbuthnot playing the bagpipes and many more people she did not know.

The Elders saw them coming, and they were nearer, so they hurried towards Patricia, but the older churchmen sent ahead the young and the swift and they surrounded her until the rest came up.

The Elders of Mwa backed away, the beefy escorts shouted above the racket.

“You alright, Miss?”

“Yes, thanks!” and she never saw them again.

The next day she was put on a plane to Brazil. She was met in São Paulo by nuns from a Catholic Mission who took care of her until she could sort out a life for herself. Accommodation and work, lovers and children and all the rest.

And they say, and we must believe, that the Elders of Mwa know she is alive and so they cannot make another M’fulah while she lives and so the girls of Mwa remain whole and may have lovers, true lovers, of their own.

And this is a true story; it is not typical or any more than very, very rare. But it happened, and for Crystal it demonstrated the wonderful and mysterious workings of her god.

We Friends of Charlotte Friends Meeting (North Carolina USA), have a wonderfully simple email healing ministry. Welcome to the 21st century internet technology! It's hard to pinpoint how this healing ministry started... it seems to have a life of its own. If I had to guess, I would say that a few members of our meeting started sending messages back and forth about people in need of prayers approximately five years ago. At the present, 48 healers from our meeting respond to requests for prayers/holding in the Light. We have a simple process. Requests for prayers/holding in the Light are sent to me by email and I forward them to our group of healing ministers. Requests can be for any need: health, global, personal, others in need, employment, death of loved one, and any need you can think of. In a meeting of healers a few years ago the message was clear: we are busy, keep it brief, and no meetings! Ideally we like the requests to be in the words from the person in need. This comes from the belief that within each of us is the knowledge of how to be healthy. People are encouraged to follow this inner knowledge – for some the message is loud and clear, for others it's a bit feeble. We healers honour this message, which may change as the healing progresses. We Quakers would explain this inner knowing as the God within each of us. Again, ideally, the person in need has given permission for us to pray/hold in the Light. This is not an ideal world and permission is not always possible. To our surprise a few people have not wanted our prayers even though there was great need. We honour this knowing that all ways are the way. It would take much time to write about the benefits received by those in need. This simple ministry has brought our spiritual community closer. We all have so many, many demands and this is one way to take care of each other. We are constantly amazed by the impact of our service with the Light. Whenever the Spirit moves me, I send a note to the healers to let me know if they want to continue to serve in this healing ministry. If a commitment has come to an end, we release our friends with love and gratitude for their

willingness to serve. A curious observation is that requests seem to often come in clusters. I wonder if any readers have an explanation for this phenomenon.

Have peace in your heart, and thousands around you will be healed. St. Seraphim of Sarov

Reprinted from TW 116

QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS TRAINING COURSE.

Lee Britten-Jones

The Training Course for 2024 was held at Claridge House with good attendance. Two candidates following a period of probation were Accredited, including one member flying in from Poland.

It is encouraging that Friends from other Faith Groups are joining the course, this is giving us a sense of diversity, awareness and freshness to those attending. The course is practical based with an emphasis on encouraging confidence in offering healing to others. The course appears to attract people from 'Caring and Medical backgrounds' providing the course with further professional and practical support.

The philosophy of the course is based on the Quaker significance of silence and that healing does not come from the individual but from the Divine /God. 'To heal is to make whole: to be healed is to be made whole'. (Dr Leslie Weatherhead: Psychology Religion & Healing 1951: p. 492.

Comments from course .member included: 'I felt like I had been on an incredible dream..returning home ..with sharing I felt grounded'.

Another course is planned for 23-27 June 2025 at Claridge House.



QUAKER SPIRITUAL HEALERS TRAINING COURSE 2024. Photo: Anne le Marinel

HEALING AS A SPIRITUAL PRACTICE *Brian Ackroyd* (TW 120)

In a Quaker meeting for worship we have the opportunity and the environment, to reach Spirit, which not only is a source of wisdom but also the agent for healing. The more we heal the more our connection to the Source is strengthened and the easier and simpler healing becomes.

In the light of the above, one's personal development becomes focused on achieving a deeper and deeper connection with that Source. The process is not a matter of amplifying the Spirit by various exercises but is one of simply getting the I-ness out of the way and allowing that infinite Source to flow. Having said simply, it has to be said that getting out of the way is not easy, indeed the structure of one's ego invariably manages to get in the way, usually with relative ease.

This I-ness has a number of powerful voices, which are marshalled as soon as we move towards that place that is beyond ego and is the home of no things, a place that appears to be oblivion to the ego, though in reality it is the fullness of the All. One voice is the voice of judgement, an inner judge, put there by our negative conditioning in childhood, which created limiting patterns of thought and knowing, which hold us back from the deepest levels of spiritual experience. It is extremely difficult to reach the deepest levels if we don't kick this inner judge into touch. Another voice is one of cynicism, whose task is to disconnect us from what we are actually experiencing, keeping us detached from the reality of our inner and outer worlds; the third voice is one of fear, a feeling that we all have at times but which we have learnt to cope with during our lives by building up a set of strategies to deal with our circumstances. These strategies come into play as soon as our I-ness perceives any threat to its continued existence.

All coping strategies are in place to deal with any perceived threat to the ego and the biggest threat we will ever face is when we make the journey to our true home—that inner Source of power and knowing. What we need on this journey are ways and means of dealing with the inner voices of judgement etc; ways of undoing our conditioning which tends to deny our true reality, and overcome our fears, both rational and seemingly irrational. There have always been spiritual practices that assist us in this task but these days there are also a great range of spiritual and psychological practices, derived from both Western and Eastern sources, that can assist us in the work of removing obstacles to the journey and open up the way for us.

One of the joys of being an agent for healing is that, as well as providing healing to others, it requires us to embark on the journey to the Source – a journey that all of us, healer or not, seeker or not, are attempting. This journey is no different from that which is undertaken in Meeting for Worship, the process is the same, the goal is the same and the connection is the same.

ANGER AND CALM

Stephen Feltham

All we sometimes know is what offends us.

Never might we consider why it is so, or
what may, or should, be just.

Gone is caution, wisdom and the restraint
that one should prefer?

Entertain only self-hurt and judgement and
how things or other people err?

Reflect then in stillness, assuage your anger;
and wash away such thoughts as dust.

Cast your eyes upon the wonders of the world
beneath the deep blue firmament.

Awaken; breathe deeply, slowly; see, hear,
touch; smell every scent.

Laugh at those irritating interruptions to your
harmony, peace and calm.

Mastery of self, not life's random circumstance,
shall be your soothing balm.

Mary was a sensitive soul. She was both responsible and kind. However, her life had left her with many scars that she wanted to heal. It had all started with an abusive father, which was then followed by a traumatic marriage, and finally, a divorce. Her children also blamed her for their many problems and catastrophes. Mary felt that she was a failure as a wife, a mother, and not a good person. She believed that she deserved much, but not all, of the nastiness that she had experienced. Somehow, this abuse was her fate, or her destiny, her curse, or a punishment for something that she had done.

At the annual summer Friends General Conference Quaker Gathering, she took a workshop on Quaker healing. This was a workshop with 30 other Friends that met for several hours each morning for six days. Mary wanted personal healing and felt that this was the place for her. She planned on being with other good folks during a week which was to be spent on her healing and recovery. Mary had spent many years in therapy and she thought that maybe she was ready to try something 'spiritual' which focused on her healing in a Quaker context. She really didn't expect much in terms of results from this workshop.

During the course of the workshop, she was asked to participate in Healing Prayer Worship. Indeed, in this worship, she would be one of the folks offering healing, as well as receiving healing. Everyone would be a participant in worship and possibly in healing. Each individual was encouraged to offer ministry if moved by the Holy Spirit. This ministry might be in terms of a spoken message, a song, a prayer, or even, spiritual touch.

The workshop participants had already done some prayerful work in terms of experiencing what loving healing energy might be like. Mary had experienced warmth and a fuzzy energy in her hands. She had been trying to do some personal work on herself since that experience. Leading into today's Healing Prayer Worship, Friends were encouraged to offer 'laying on of hands' if spiritually moved to do so. Mary was

afraid and thought that she would be inadequate in this process. She really felt like running from the room and just hiding somewhere.

When it came down to it though, Mary didn't have the will to move, she was numb; so she just stayed where she was.

Who was she to offer healing? Wasn't she the one who had caused so much drama, tragedy and pain? Wasn't she somehow cursed? Wasn't she in the wrong place to be offering spiritual healing and wholeness to others? Wouldn't she do it wrong? Wouldn't she screw it up? How could the Holy Spirit move through her when she was so flawed? What if she made a grocery list in her mind, when she should be concentrating on praying in a 'holy' way? Wouldn't she block the healing energy in the group? What if someone else blocked the healing energy?

Mary was flooded with doubts and fears. Wasn't there a special prayer that she needed to say? Wasn't there a mantra, or a Buddhist prayer that she needed to do? Didn't she first need to spend a month with Trappist monks practising Holy Silence, before she ever prayed for someone? Wasn't she a healer in one of her past lives and didn't she burn at the stake for it? Didn't the group need to protect itself from evil spirits and ghosts, especially those that she might have brought along?

Furthermore, she worried; didn't she first need to find her Spirit Guide? Was this the right season for healing? Wasn't healing prayer best at sundown on a Sunday, in late winter, with no one wearing metal objects? Mary had taken a lot of workshops and she knew a lot of stuff about the right and correct way to do spiritual stuff. Healing prayer, in order to work properly, must need to follow the spiritual laws that she had learned about in these workshops. Shouldn't the group first be smudged with sage? This worship just didn't have enough spiritual rules and laws to deal with her many issues.

She had this inner sense that not only was she cursed, but also, somehow, she deserved what she got in life. Mary's greatest wish was that she not pass on her curse to others. Wouldn't she harm a person

somehow if she prayed for them? Tom, her new workshop friend, was on the list for prayer and said that he was open to healing through touch. Wouldn't he get the wrong idea if she did "laying on of hands" on him? If she physically touched someone, wouldn't her curse instantly get passed on to them? She didn't want Tom to somehow get her curse. Mary was certain that she would screw everything up.

She raised some of her many concerns to the workshop leader. He quietly listened and then spoke to her from a loving spirit and said, "A loving God, in a universe created by love, will not allow spiritual harm to come when two or more are gathered together in a prayer of love and compassion." Mary wasn't so sure that this was true. Didn't this workshop leader admit to not being especially holy himself? What did he know anyway? This guy didn't seem to talk about the spiritual laws that she had spent so much time and money to learn. He didn't even know how to do Quijong, he said.

She thought that a couple of the other folks in the workshop were not very holy either. In addition, there were eight folks who were teens or in their early 20's. They seemed so very young and she felt so very old. She was positive that she wasn't very holy. She wondered just how many "Holy Folks" did it take to undo the evil that unholy folks like her and others can do? Mary wasn't sure that God had quite organised the universe correctly. Maybe he was just a trickster laughing at everyone. Maybe he enjoyed witnessing suffering and pain. Maybe there was no love and compassion in the universe at all.

While Mary knew that she didn't have to participate in the Healing Worship, if she didn't want to do so, she sat in the worship anyway. She still felt sort of frozen. Mostly, she was curious to see just how bad things would get screwed up. She knew that she would never be able to help to heal anyone, no matter what happened.

In the gathered Silent Healing Worship, the Holy Spirit came. Mary felt warmth and a sense of healing power in her hands. This was like what she had experienced earlier in the workshop, only much more powerful. She felt uncomfortable with just sitting there with this

healing energy without using it. Mary knew without any doubt at all, that she must do something.

She got up and went to lay healing loving hands on Steve, who was currently the focus of the Healing Prayer for the group. Throughout the week she had quietly hated Steve. He reminded her so much of her abusive father. Mary didn't like how Steve looked, how he moved, what he said, and even how he smelled.

But when the Holy Spirit came, Mary could no longer find the hate and dislike for Steve that she used to feel. Instead, she felt love and compassion and realized that he was a child of God.

As she moved closer to lay healing hands on Steve, Mary even realised that her own abusive father was a child of God. In the instant when her hands touched Steve, Mary was healed.

Reprinted from TW120

WORD SEARCH

Anne Smith (TW116)

How do I find the words
to give your spirit wings
when mine stays earthbound
in the heat of this dark night?

How do I find the words
to send you the love you may be needing?

Slowly the sky fills with light,
giving colour to the trees where birds begin to sing.

Slowly comes a breeze of morning
lifting the weight of heavy heat,
dispelling darkness of foreboding,
bringing us all a new awakening.

Our cat died recently. She'd been with us for seventeen and a half years and had been a much loved member of the family. People who haven't had a relationship with an animal really don't understand what the fuss is about when a pet dies.

I look out over our wind-swept, bedraggled garden and give myself time to mourn Fluffy's passing, and to ponder on the gifts that her feline life gave to us. As with so much else in life, we don't fully appreciate what a unique contribution a person, a pet, a home, or an object bestows upon us until it is gone. We may have moments of delight in that being, but generally it is the absence that makes us aware of what was. And so it is with Fluffy.

I see her in my mind's eye: spread-eagled in the sunshine in summertime, curled up asleep on the garden bench, sitting bolt upright under the tree with her paws neatly paired in front of her, watching. I remember her as a younger cat, crouching low to the ground, bottom wagging, preparing to pounce on an unsuspecting bird. I remember her happy half-purr, her half-meow as she sped across the doorstep in the morning, anxious to get at her food. I remember her full purr – that wonderfully regular, delightful, comforting sound and vibration when she sat on my lap; and the needlesharp claws that dug into my knees as she settled! I remember the clumps of grey, cream and golden fur that used to map out her path round the house in moulting season; and the way that, being predominantly grey, she used to disappear in the shadows, and I'd trip over her, or stand on her tail – sorry, Fluffy! But above all, I remember her simply being there: always there, predictably there. It didn't matter what else was going on in our lives, she'd just be there: eating, sleeping, purring, meowing, demanding food, coming for a stroke,

licking a hand, interfering with my reading – a metronome to our living. Now she's not there anymore and life is so much the poorer. We never spoke in words, held a conversation like people do: and that's why, for one reason, non-animal lovers can't see why pet-lovers are so upset when their animal friends die. There's something very subtle about human/ animal relationships. It's to do with this beingness, and this unconditional and wonderfully simple relationship that can exist between a person and an animal. I remember looking at my first cat when I was about seven years old. He was pure white and sat under the chair, all-eyes it seemed to me at the time, and I remember thinking, "Now I've got someone I can tell my secrets to." I knew that he would keep them, not comment or criticise, but merely accept me for who I was. These qualities are, I am sure, some of the greatest gifts that our pets bestow upon us. There's no need for social niceties, professional masks, all that kind of human manoeuvring. Predictable presence and unconditional love, that's what animals give to us. Generally people view animals as lesser beings, less developed than humans; but I really do wonder....

Reprinted from TW120

FOR THE GARDEN OF YOUR DAILY LIVING

Plant three rows of peas

Peace of mind

Peace of heart

Peace of soul

Plant four rows of squash

Squash gossip

Squash indifference

Squash grumbling

Squash selfishness

Plant four rows of lettuce

Lettuce be faithful

Lettuce be kind

Lettuce be patient

Lettuce really love one another

No garden without turnips

Turnip for meetings

Turnip for service

Turnip to help one another

To conclude our garden we must have thyme

Thyme for each other

Thyme for the family

Thyme for friends

Water freely with patience and cultivate with love.

Anon (TW120)

Wisdom is the source within
Each one of us – all is connected.
Let universal energy
Light up our optimum alignment.
Balance is the key: *yin* and *yang*.
Every healing act comes from the Source;
Indeed the healer is the key to channelling.
Neglect not first the focus on yourself –
Gives limitless capacity to help others.

(Written at Claridge House during Quaker Spiritual Healers support group meeting, 31/8 2024.)

BARBELO

Gervais Frykman

I am the first emanation from the Unity, the Source. The reason for my emanating was to set up Duality. This enabled the creation, which depends on Duality for Polarity, such as Male and Female, and for characteristics, this and not that, also to enable a multiplicity of species and of members of each species. It also enabled free will to be set up and given to certain species.

Emanating felt very strange, but I can't say it was painful, because all the fullness of the Unity came with me. A space or home came into being for me to emanate to. This is called the Pleroma.

My first act was to look back. I could see all the contents of the Unity. I could not see the Unity itself, because by virtue of my emanation I was in Duality. But my looking called into being another Divine Person. I am androgynous, necessarily, as my emanation was total. So is the Divine Person whom I called into being, for there is nothing lacking in my looking. If you like, you can see me as female, and the other Divine Person as male, but this is only for convenience. Men call me Barbelo¹, but my truth is that I am the first emanation from the Unity. My partner is called God the Father, and we are at one. I did not need to be wooed. My lovely female energy united with his gorgeous male energy, and so God the Son came into existence. He too is androgynous. He called the Goddess Sophia into existence from the Unity as I called forth God the Father.

Some men have supposed that I was re-absorbed into the Unity, but the opposite is true. Duality is essential for the creation to exist, and God too. I shall stay emanated until the last soul has returned from his long outing, and then (I speak as though there were time) just as I was the first emanation from the Unity, I shall be the last to return. Then, as Paul says in his language, God will be all in all.²

¹ Apokryphon of John: Nag Hammadi Library.

² 1Cor 15:28

Some men have called me goddess and whore.³ They were wise in that they wanted to think outside the box, but I am not a whore. They swive for money: I have no need of money. But I should say that I give my female energy to everybody who wants it, indiscriminately. It is the essence of female energy to flow. I flow with each new day, and whoever can may feel my lovely energy. I flow into emotional wounds, filling up the perceived lack, and healing them. I flow into the grass, and it thrusts upwards, penetrating me.

As I said, I am androgynous, so I have all the Divine Masculine energy within. This is strong, tender as the feminine energy, loving, nurturing, apt to make structures, to stand as if saying "This is what I am." It assesses the entities with whom it has to deal, but does not judge. It is wholly loving, as is the feminine energy, but in a different way. It can never become angry.

It has nothing to do with patriarchal energy. This is a destructive energy brought into being by men who wanted to rule, curious idea, and to rule without the female energy, which they sought to destroy. It has no place in the pleroma.

As you can imagine, love between two androgynes is a complex, sophisticated thing, indescribably rich and voluptuous. We don't negotiate who will take the male role and the female, or agree to alternate. Our loving involves creating delicate patterns of the four constituents, or wrapping them round each other, and can result in progeny as you have heard.

Our love stands as an archetype of the love between androgyne twin souls. We do not need a relationship, because we are each complete in ourselves. So need cannot distort the relationship and hinder the loving. There is no need for wooing. We recognize each other at once. There is no defensiveness and no teasing. We love each other without condition. We hold nothing in reserve.

³ Thunder – Perfect Mind: Nag Hammadi Library

I suppose they can couple physically, but it seems a curious idea, to revert to a method of relating that belongs to regions several levels below ours.

Some of the legends written about Sophia speak of a higher Sophia and a lower Sophia. The lower Sophia left the pleroma and became a whore, until she was redeemed by Christ. She was also complicit in the creation with the Demiurge or ego-god.

I do not recognize the word redemption. That implies that somebody was in jeopardy. She could not have become a whore because she didn't need anything. Neither was there any mistake in the creation. She would not have recognized the Demiurge, let alone made a conspiracy with him. These writers tried to explain how seeds of Divinity could have become separated and trapped in matter, which is the human predicament.

But the predicament is the solution. Seeds of Divinity became incarnate in humans, who left the pleroma and entered the realm of Duality which I had caused to exist. There by making certain choices they lost the feeling of their Divinity, and lost the knowledge of it too, and even the memory. It must have been the humans themselves who landed themselves in the predicament, because free will or the ability to make choices was necessary and only they had free will. God the Father would not have shut himself off. We can only give. The way back is theirs, by making other choices. Nobody else can do it for them.

Quite a time into the creation, when men had conceived the curious idea of ruling, and ruling without my feminine energy, their desire created the Demiurge, He was a useful bogey-man with which to terrify other humans, or themselves in other incarnations, but he is not real because everything in my realm of duality springs from polarity, with male and female energies balanced. Ruling and the Demiurge, the false Divine sanction, are necessarily doomed, for all that they have lasted many thousands of your years. I don't believe in them.

MEDITATION ON SUMMER FLOWERS

Rosalind Smith

Relax and take slow deep breaths, watching the breath as it dies away. And right in front of you there is a deep red Rose. It is beautiful, like the old-fashioned roses in some country gardens. Lean towards it and inhale its perfume... As you pull slightly away from it you will see that you are, in fact, surrounded by a large bed of these deep red roses. Give time to appreciate the effect these are having upon you.

Mentally close your eyes again and when you open them you will find yourself surrounded by a bright mass of orange Marigolds. The colour is bright and cheerful and as you gaze at them you may well find your mood lifted, giving you a lightness of heart. Allowing your gaze to wander a little you will see that the orange flowers are giving way to marigolds of a yellow hue and that they are growing in size and subtly becoming large Sunflowers.

Let yourself now be aware of the warmth and beauty of these bright yellow sunflowers. They are growing peacefully together in a large field, and they gradually turn their faces towards the sun as it moves across the sky. Absorb their strength and vitality.

The yellow sunflowers have been very bright and have given of their energy to you, and now you need to leave them and walking on a little way you will find yourself in the shade of the rich green foliage of Forest Trees. Their coolness is welcome at this time, and the green ferns and lush grasses beneath them are cooling on your feet. Take time now to enjoy and appreciate them.

Looking down you may see some small blue flowers, which, as you continue seem to grow larger until you realise you are gently walking into a meadow of Cornflowers. Look across the meadow, and as far as the eye can see there is a sea of cornflower blue. You take a rest here and sit on a nearby bench. You can hear a gentle hum of bees, busy

about their work of pollen gathering. Multitudes of cornflowers are swaying in a gentle summer breeze, and here and there butterflies hover and then choose to land. Perhaps one has chosen to visit you? If this happens try and take note of its colours.

In the depths of the cornflowers there may be indications of a darker blue, or indigo colour, and you will now see, hidden amidst the cool grass little Violets growing. They lead your gaze to a couple of stone steps, and you are now invited to step up where you find yourself in a wonderful large garden where all the flowers and blooms are white. Everything here is eternally in flower and immediately gives you a feeling of peace. You are invited to walk around this gloriously peaceful white garden... and know that in our world and in spite of appearances, all is well – and all shall be well, and all manner of things shall be well....