

R·E·T·R·E·A·T

ISSUE No. TWO



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DISPLAY COPY

'Retreat 2'

MORAL RECOVERY IN THE PHILIPPINES
WORLD PARLIAMENT MEETS IN CHICAGO
LEARN HOW TO MEDITATE
THE STEP II PROGRAMME
HOSPITAL WITH A DIFFERENCE

GLOBAL RETREAT CENTRE OPENING

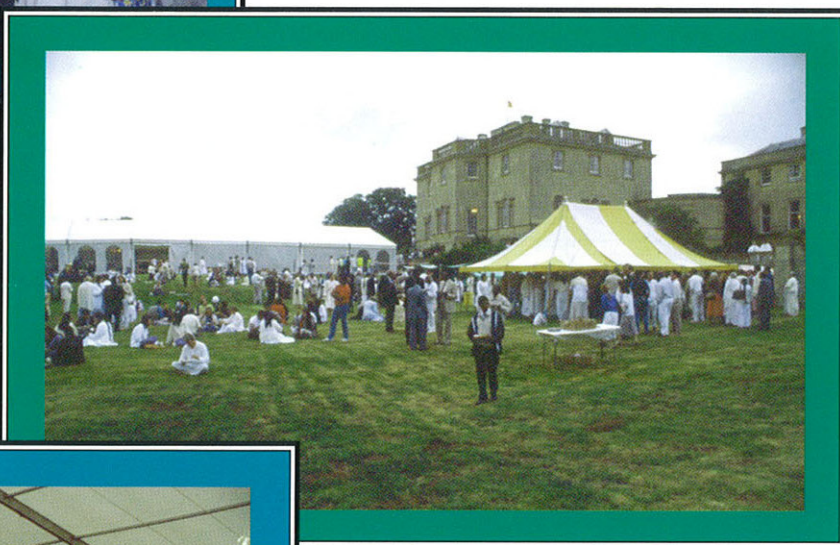


Dadi Hirdaya Mohini opens the Global Retreat Centre

The celebrations began with rustic music and dance by students of the Brahma Kumaris. Poetry, composed and read by actor Robin Ramsay and English teacher Anthea Church, wove a thread throughout the whole joyful event. The audience was addressed by distinguished speakers who have worked closely with the University over the years. Lord Ennals announced the forthcoming publication of the "Global Vision Book" Project; Rev Marcus Braybrooke, Chairman of the World Congress of

On June 26th 1993 the Global Retreat Centre was opened in style with music, dance, painting and celebration. This 18th century stately home, originally the seat of the Harcourt family, is set in 50 acres of the beautiful Thames valley. It now extends its hospitality to visitors from all over the world who come to enjoy its peace and tranquillity. In previous years the House has welcomed nobility and royalty, including Queen Victoria.

The special guest for the occasion was Dadi Hirdaya Mohini, Director of the Brahma Kumaris in Delhi. As she stretched out her hand to cut the white ribbon, the words Om Shanti rang out and Dadi shared her vision for the Centre as, "a lighthouse, spreading light and power to the world".



The Weather was almost perfect as guests dined in the grounds after the ceremonies.

Faiths, expressed his hope that the Centre would develop links with local religious communities; Sister Mohini, Director of the University's centres in the Americas, and Sister Jayanti, Director of the London Centre outlined some of the aims and activities which the Centre will offer to those seeking the benefit of

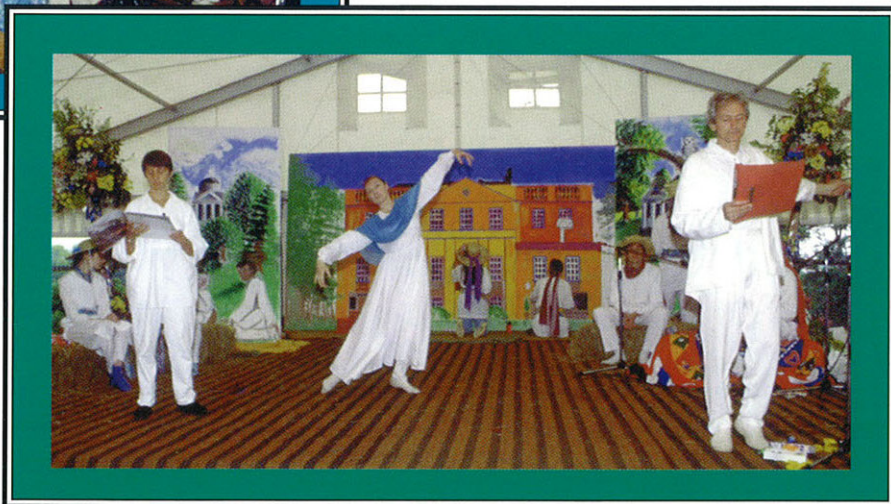


Over 700 guests enjoyed the opening celebration

a spiritual retreat.

Dadi Janki, the Additional Administrative Head of the University, and whose inspiration since arriving in London over twenty years ago lay behind the acquisition of an international retreat centre, spoke about the power of silence as a tool for positive transformation in our lives.

Finally, there was a magical pin-drop silence as over 700 people sat in meditation before dinner was served in the grounds and gardens of Nuneham.



A presentation through song, dance and poetry threaded the opening ceremonies together in true country style, while artists completed a large painting of Nuneham Park as a backdrop.

For further details of forthcoming retreats and other events please write to the address below.

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Painting by Mira Subirana

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IN THE LIGHT OF EXPERIENCE

*W*elcome to the second issue of *Retreat*. Following your warm reception and acceptance of the first issue, which celebrated the opening of the Global Retreat Centre in England, we have decided to make the magazine a regular international event.

The purpose of Retreat is threefold. First, to provide the reader with the insights of those who have been walking a spiritual path for some years, and have integrated spiritual principles into their lives. Second, to give the contributors to the magazine, few of whom are regular writers, the opportunity to share their experience and wisdom. And third, to encourage you to retreat, not physically, but spiritually, to take time out for yourself and your own personal spiritual development.

In this issue we travel the world. From a unique hospital combining conventional medical practices with spiritual principles in the mountains of India to the launch of the "Visions for a Better World" book at the United Nations in New York. From detoxification of drug and alcohol addicts in Sydney to an international forum in Sardinia on 'Spirituality in the Arts'.

In a world where the scale and extent of chaos and change is constantly increasing, answers and solutions are harder to find. We hope you may find some light in these pages. Most of the contributors have been regular students of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University for many years. While they write from many different backgrounds what they have in common is the rediscovery of spirituality in their lives. By experimenting with specific spiritual principles, respecting certain spiritual laws and integrating the practice of meditation into their lives, they have found practical methods and solutions to face and resolve the tremendous challenges of a world which continues to become more dangerous and uncertain by the day.

On page 8 we begin a series of articles based on the Foundation Course in Meditation, taught in the University's 3,000 centres worldwide. From this course there is an understanding and method which you can use to raise your awareness of what is true, what is right, what is valuable, and re-establish your own personal relationship with God. For those who have tasted the benefits,

meditation is a daily practice and a proven way of increasing personal spiritual power.

Most of us are addicted to something in our lives, whether it is TV, too much sugar, or relationships. These are painful experiences for many and on page 16 in 'Recovery - An Inner Awakening' the role of meditation in successfully overcoming addiction is precisely explained.

And finally, if you have missed Issue One and you'd like to catch up, please write in (enclosing a stamped addressed A4 envelope) and we'll send you a copy. While the first issue is free we do make a small charge from Issue Two onwards to cover our production and transportation costs. This may vary from country to country.

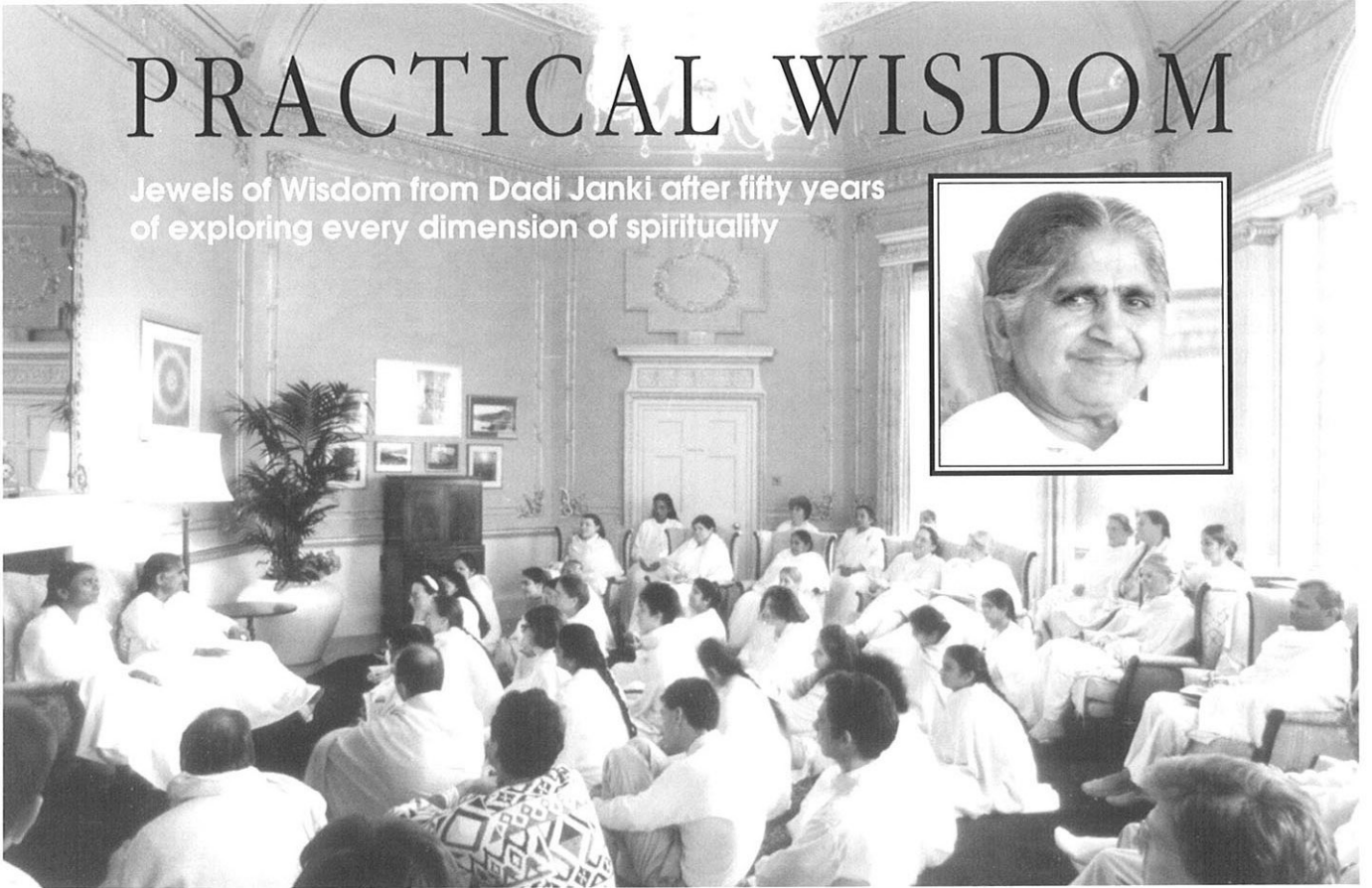
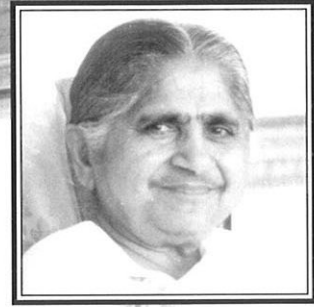
In the meantime we hope you enjoy *Retreat* number two. Please do write and give us your feedback, comments and experiences - briefly! You never know you may find yourself in print.

Om Shanti



PRACTICAL WISDOM

Jewels of Wisdom from Dadi Janki after fifty years of exploring every dimension of spirituality



ON HAPPINESS

Know how to spend each moment in happiness. You experience happiness when each moment is being used in a worthwhile way. For instance, when you have tolerance you're able to remain quiet and happy inside. To stay happy we need power. The moment we become weak we become very dry. The moment we are strong we say everything is fine, no matter what happens. Be those who remain happy and make your religion that of giving happiness. To remain happy and share this happiness with others is the greatest act of charity. Arrogance makes you insult others. Have love for humility, humility helps you remain happy. God doesn't like a sorrowful face. Why should we become unhappy? It's just a habit. Keep yourself cheerful internally.

ON GOD

By knowing and understanding God we gain His qualities. Where there is a relationship with God there is a will to draw His virtues and power into the self. When God is your companion He guides you through life's storms. Don't let go of God's company, God's hand. Make this promise. No matter what our age, we are God's small children. Even if a child isn't worthy, parents still give love. I may have doubts in myself, but God doesn't. See yourself as God sees you, and see others as God sees them. The feelings God has towards us we should have towards each other. God has love for all the souls of the world and we have to develop this nature also. We have to like that which God likes. No one should doubt that they are a child of God. The beauty of the Supreme Soul is so elevated, so just think what you will become by considering yourself to be a child of God.

ON PEACE

To have peace and love you need patience. Having patience in a deep way brings all virtues. No matter how much love someone may have for God, without patience they can't experience peace. Let there be love for peace. When I experience peace, an atmosphere of peace is created all around. There is sweetness and happiness and easiness within peace. You should experience that peace is a garland around your neck. Make peace a huge treasure for yourself.



ON LOVE

God's love gives us power. Instill the habit of being loveful and peaceful. Let the river of love and wisdom flow. Don't be dry rivers. We aren't officers that have to be bossy and official, we are children of God. We can share the love we receive from the Mother and Father. If I have incognito love for God, I can never come under the influence of anyone. No one stops giving love. It is when we stop giving it that we can no longer accept love from others. Then we feel empty. We should not have greater love for one person and less for others. When you remain detached you will be able to receive and give love.



ON CHARITY

By doing something good you gain strength. Don't have the desire to be praised for what you do. God knows who are His helpers, you don't need to receive name and fame. Many help God through their body, wealth and head, but not the heart. There should be benevolence for every soul. In bringing benefit to others, consider the sorrow of others to be your own and help them. That doesn't mean taking on the sorrow of others, but having the love to remove it. By staying in the remembrance of God you're able to uplift souls. Souls who uplift others have a lot of love for others. Because of that love they consider even those who defame them to be their friends. Revenge isn't in the thoughts of those who have love, compassion and mercy. Constantly have a big heart.

ON THOUGHTS

Don't create negative thoughts, because they will reach others. Let my good thoughts reach others instead. Even if there is a small weak thought, finish it. It's up to us how we use our thoughts. If you have a positive thought to do something, fill it with the power of love. Don't have a lot of thoughts which aren't useful. You may not have bad thoughts, but if they don't have the power of love they will be dry. The thought is the seed and love is the water. Your thoughts should have power and should become practical. If success is delayed, go into silence and think about it and you'll see the reason. Don't start blaming others or the place, but look at your own self. Those who have learnt the art of creating pure thoughts become free from waste thoughts forever. Day by day we should realise the value of our thoughts.

ON VIRTUE

Others shouldn't tell you of your defects, but you should check your own self. To check yourself, remain silent. Don't just be happy with the little effort you are making. Imbibe all the divine virtues. Only see specialities. Your eyes will hurt if you see defects; train your eyes not to see others' defects. When you look at yourself inside there's humility and the desire to learn. Having patience in a deep way brings all virtues. There has to be the interest to become complete in all virtues. Recognise everyone's virtues and donate virtues. Pay attention to the self, remain pleased with the self, and others will remain pleased with you. Learn to keep your face and activity like that of a deity. A beautiful virtue which is essential is never to get upset with the self or others.

ON SILENCE

Those who are mature remain silent; a silence in which to attain something. Whatever situation arises, go into deep silence in a second and see the power that comes. Don't come into thought or words too quickly. Draw sweet silence from God, the Ocean of Silence, and remain in that atmosphere. We should spread waves of silence and love. The experience of sweet silence gives you the power to pack up your thoughts and accommodate everything.

ON THE MIND

Worrying is bad for the soul and makes it weak and confused. Your thinking should reflect faith. Let there be no room for anything negative. What we say to our minds should be useful. Why think about the past? You can't force your body to work, but you can make your mind work. You mustn't allow even one thought to go to waste. Each human being has to keep his own mind under control. Sometimes our minds won't allow us to think positively. In fact, if the mind would accept what God says instead of what humans say, it would become stronger instead of weaker. Make your mind completely full of good wishes.

ON MEDITATION

Meditation is to sit and think about everything. Forget the physical body and focus the mind on the centre of the forehead. In meditation, focus the attention on who you are; the soul. Only when you remain conscious of being a

soul are you able to remain the embodiment of peace, happiness, love and bliss. Without practice you are unable to create such a state of mind. In the early days of this university we would only take up the question of the soul. All we would share was 'I the soul am the embodiment of peace and power', yet we would experience that very deeply. By saying 'I am' you do become that.

ON TIME

Give time to yourself. This isn't selfishness and it is better than wasting time in wasteful matters. To gossip is a great mistake and so don't waste time in this. If you don't have the habit of applying a full stop you waste a lot of time and energy. Time, thoughts and breath shouldn't be wasted. If something is not necessary don't do it. Time won't wait for us, so why not use precious time in being happy. You mustn't wait for a time in the future to change yourself: If not now, then never. If you do it now, you receive strength and inspire others also. We shouldn't say 'wait' for any reason, we should be ready ahead of time.

ON HONESTY

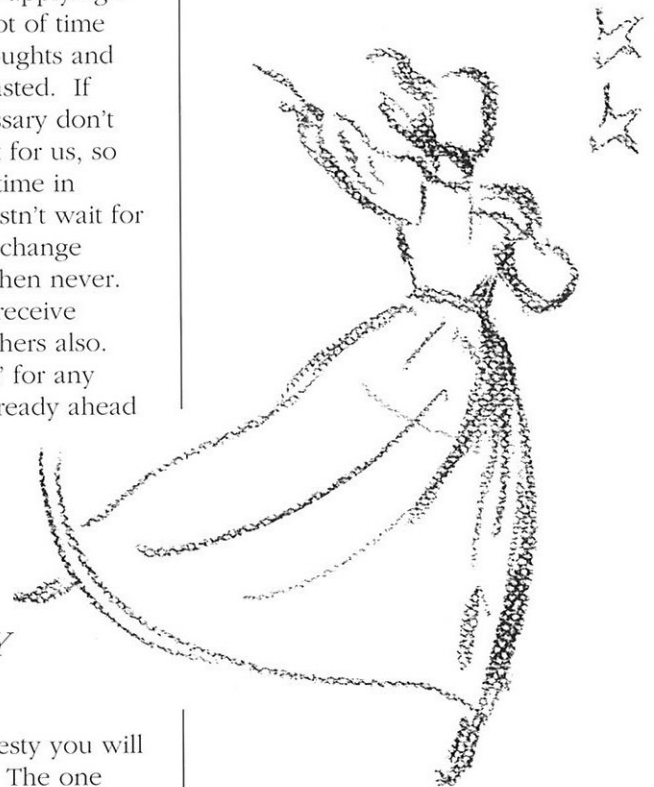
If you speak with honesty you will get a chance to learn. The one who is honest will speak about themselves first, not about others. Honesty shows on your face. Others don't get impressed by your words, or even by your face, but by your honesty and truth. Ensure your relationships are filled with honesty. There is a lot of royalty in honesty. If you have an honest heart you will be ready to please God.

ON SELF-AWARENESS

Consider yourself as a soul and think of your body and bodily relations as something you have to take care of, like a trustee. Nothing really belongs to you. If you say 'mine', there is a lot of attachment in that. Ego makes us blind. Open your third eye of wisdom and see who you really are. The soul is like a bird. These bodies are created and cremated and the soul flies away. The more you remain soul-conscious the happier you will remain.

®

As one of the founding students of the Brahma Kumaris in 1936, Dadi Janki is one of the two Administrative Heads of the University.



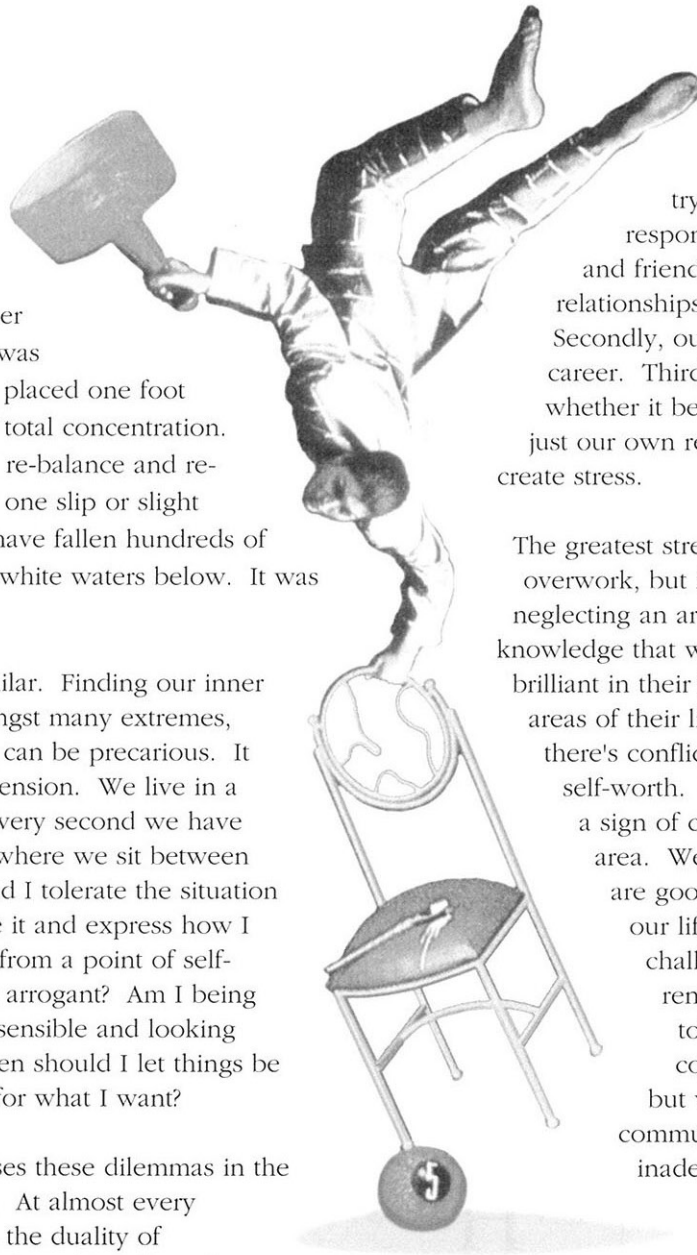
LIFE IN THE BALANCE

Charles Hogg explores the trick of maintaining balance in life

Some incidents in childhood leave deep impressions. I have a deep memory of a television programme showing a tightrope walker crossing Niagara Falls. I was fascinated as he carefully placed one foot after another in a state of total concentration. Sometimes he stopped to re-balance and re-assess his position. Only one slip or slight imbalance and he could have fallen hundreds of metres into the turbulent white waters below. It was breathtaking.

Some of us feel life is similar. Finding our inner balance while living amongst many extremes, like the tightrope walker, can be precarious. It can create extraordinary tension. We live in a world of duality, and at every second we have to make decisions about where we sit between so many extremes. Should I tolerate the situation in silence or should I face it and express how I really feel? Am I coming from a point of self-respect or am I just being arrogant? Am I being selfish or am I just being sensible and looking after my own needs? When should I let things be and when should I push for what I want?

Taoist philosophy expresses these dilemmas in the ancient Yin Yang symbol. At almost every second we are faced with the duality of opposites. Unfortunately, there is no formula for finding the right balance. Each situation requires a different mix of seemingly diametrically opposed forces. Some situations require us to be totally assertive and express how we feel. Other situations require us to let go in favour of others' needs and desires, and at other times a mixture between the two. Every situation depends on our ability to view objectively a situation and discern the middle path. In my experience, the middle path means to find a point of silence from which I observe all the tides of influences and opinion. From that point I clearly see the path I need to take.



Most of us find life a constant juggle in which we try to fulfil many different responsibilities. Firstly, to our family and friends - most of us do feel relationships to be the highest priority. Secondly, our responsibilities in our chosen career. Thirdly, to our other interests, whether it be community service, sport or just our own recreation. Neglecting one can create stress.

The greatest stress does not come from overwork, but from the worry that we are neglecting an area of our life. It's common knowledge that workaholics who may be brilliant in their field often use work to escape areas of their life they find difficult. Perhaps there's conflict at home, or even a lack of self-worth. Going to an extreme is usually a sign of covering up a lack in another area. We seem to pursue the things we are good at, but very cleverly create our life to avoid those things that challenge us or we find difficult. A renowned public speaker once told me he had so much confidence in front of a crowd, but when it came to one-to-one communication he often felt totally inadequate, so he avoided it. The result, imbalance!

I took up the practice of meditation when I was just twenty-one years old. One of the wonderful benefits of meditation I discovered was the art of objectively viewing myself, like a member of an audience watching my own performance on stage. As I watched myself I could see how hard I was trying to please others, constantly compromising what I really wanted or needed. It was more important to seek respect from others than from myself. The result ... more imbalance.

So, do I have a responsibility to myself, and what is it? How many of us reach a point where the anxiety of juggling our various responsibilities reaches an extreme. It's often at this point I re-assess my priorities. An Australian social researcher, Hugh Mackay, described the 1980's as the "anxious 80's". He observed that many people are opting for the "inner journey"; a total change of attitude where we begin to look internally to resolve our anxiety and extremism. Blaming others and situations is the path of self-deception, but taking responsibility for how I feel is my true path. I neither resist the challenges that life brings me nor am I overwhelmed by them.

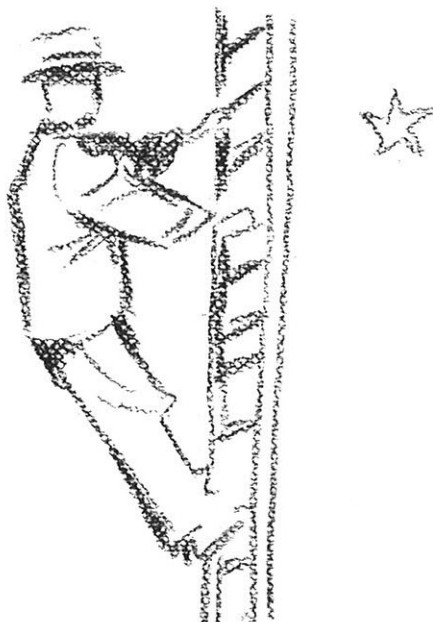
But how do we find our point of balance in each situation?

We need to extract ourselves totally from influence, opinions and even past perceptions and take the "helicopter view". From there we can view the whole picture with clarity. Detachment has always been the mark of great thinkers because it is only when we see the situation as a detached observer can we perceive the real truth. Otherwise our emotions, desires or attachments cloud our clarity. Detachment is so necessary to find true balance, but to many of us it can tend to feel clinical, or lacking in heart. That is why the first and foremost balance is love and detachment.

Love is the greatest need. Those who always express their love with a pure motive will always feel full of love. But to be truly loving we need detachment. When we are detached from others we are not irritated or affected by their actions, so we can maintain our love. Our love isn't conditional on others' responses. We are not

trading in the business of love which says, "If you do this, only then will you receive my love ..."

Sometimes we have to show total love and support but other times we have to stand back and allow others to stand on their own feet. Here, our detachment can be a form of respect, where they can do without us. Being loving and detached is like a protection from different influences and atmospheres, where others' moods, inaccuracies and perceptions cannot disturb our clarity.



The practice of meditation takes you into the "helicopter view" naturally. From there you can see the complete picture and become a more balanced person. Some of the areas in which you will find balance are:

Analysis and Acceptance

Some situations require clear analysis, but analysis does not end the matter. The mind repeats events again and again and we try to maintain our objectivity. But acceptance can clear subjective feelings and allow us to get on with life. Acceptance does not mean denial or suppression but a

deeper wisdom that realises nothing more can be done. All we can do is take the lesson from whatever has happened and progress into the future.

Humility and Authority

When we have self-respect, our words and actions express humility. Some say they admire humility, yet feel that humble people can become doormats. But true humility is a point of gentle strength and authority. This is self-authority, not an authority that imposes control over others. The one with humility will speak with truth but their authority will not hurt the hearts of others. Others will admire the dignity and self-assurance of such a person. The balance of humility and self-authority is the foundation of a great leader.

Satisfaction and Ambition

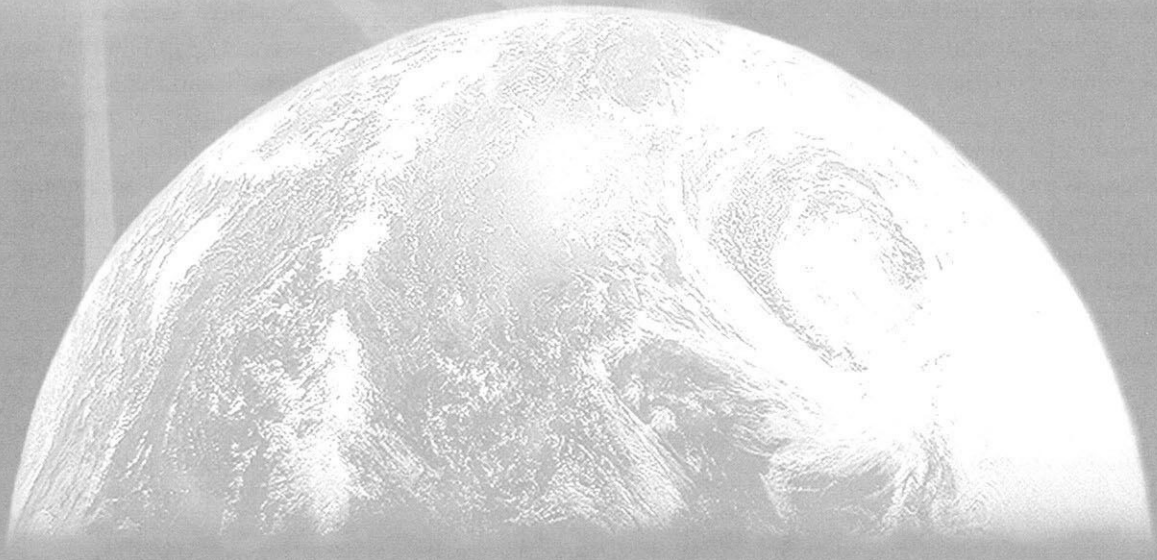
Some people are never satisfied. No matter how much they have, they want more. It is a cancerous type of inner peacelessness that never allows them to be quiet and enjoy the present. Others seem to have no motivation to improve on any level. One of the gifts of meditation practice is discovering a deep awareness of our spiritual self and our relationship with God.

This cools down the ambition for recognition, and creates a feeling of fullness and contentment. However, even with this inner satisfaction, there can still be the ambition to improve our own life and to help others. But this is not an ambition that seeks the approbation of others, but comes from a point of genuine benevolence.

Charles Hogg is the Director of the Brahma Kumaris Raja Yoga Centre in Sydney.

WHO ON EARTH ARE YOU?

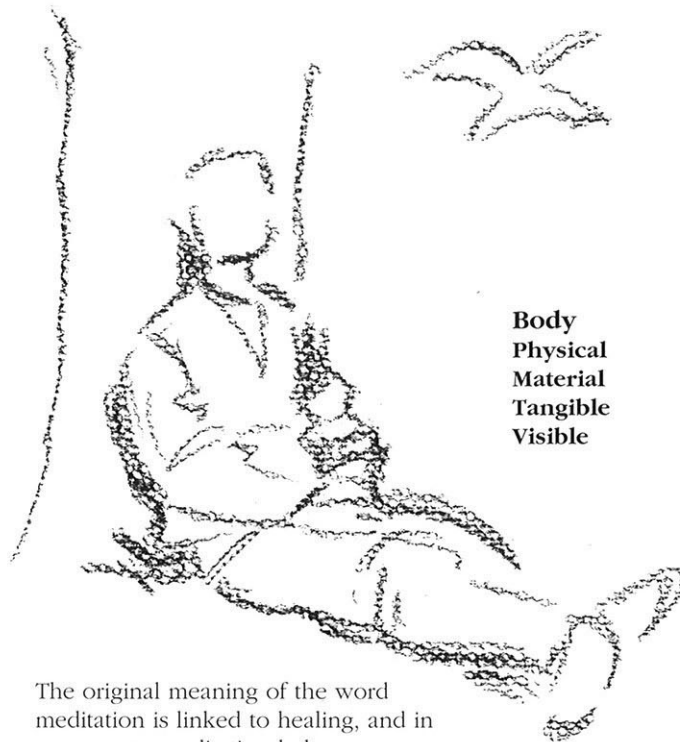
Foundation course in meditation – part one



Since the Brahma Kumaris opened the first University centre outside India in London in 1971, hundreds of thousands of people have learnt how to meditate in centres in over sixty countries. Each centre offers the Foundation Course in Meditation. The course is a mix of theory and practice giving new students a solid grounding in the technique and an experience of the benefits of meditation. In the following six issues of *Retreat*, each session within the course will form the basis of a short article. Session One, the most important, clarifies the question of personal identity, i.e.

who am I?

Most people are attracted to learn meditation because they experience some restlessness or peacelessness in the mind - a feeling of dis-ease. When confronted with physical disease, doctors prescribe medicine, a sensible diet, exercise and a balanced lifestyle. Meditation is a similar prescription, providing the right exercise and diet to restore balance to the mind.



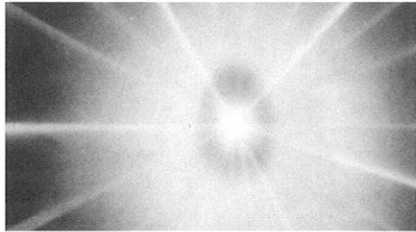
Body
Physical
Material
Tangible
Visible

Mind
Non-Physical
Mental
Intangible
Invisible

The original meaning of the word meditation is linked to healing, and in many ways meditation helps you become your own doctor to treat any thoughts and feelings of uneasiness which you may be experiencing.

In order to practise meditation, however, it is important to understand who and what is meditating. The answer lies in the difference between the mind and the body.

The mind and body are two different kinds of energy, where one (the mind) has control of the movement of the other (the body). Today, we are unsure of this difference and tend to mix the two; instead of seeing the body as the package and the mind as the contents, we see ourselves mainly as the body. We spend a lot of time, energy and money looking after the



CHARACTERISTICS OF YOU THE SOUL

Nature **Peace, Love, Truth**

The original nature of the soul is peace, love, truth, purity, happiness.

Purpose

Self-expression in relationship with others (without your body you could not express and relate to others).

The main aim of meditation is to experience each of these original qualities. To achieve that, it is necessary to understand more fully the great mistake we have all made, which is to identify ourselves only with the physical form.

body, but very little time caring for our minds. This is like buying a packet of peas, taking it home, throwing the peas in the bin, and cooking the packet.

Another way to experience the difference, is to be aware of your self. Your leg, your arm, your stomach don't have self-awareness, yet 'you' do. You can say "I am" and be aware of your self. You say "my body", and again distinguish yourself from your body.

So quite clearly the mind is the being with self-awareness, and the body is the human which contains the being. This being, which is you, is situated just above and behind the eyes. This is the driving seat from which you instruct and direct the vehicle of your body. Be aware of yourself there for a moment. This is where you do your thinking. This is where you make your decisions. Be aware of yourself directing every movement.

This is where you are conscious of yourself, and the world. In fact, you are consciousness itself, and your mind is your conscious ability to think. So your mind is not separate from you, but an integral part of you: the point of consciousness within the body.

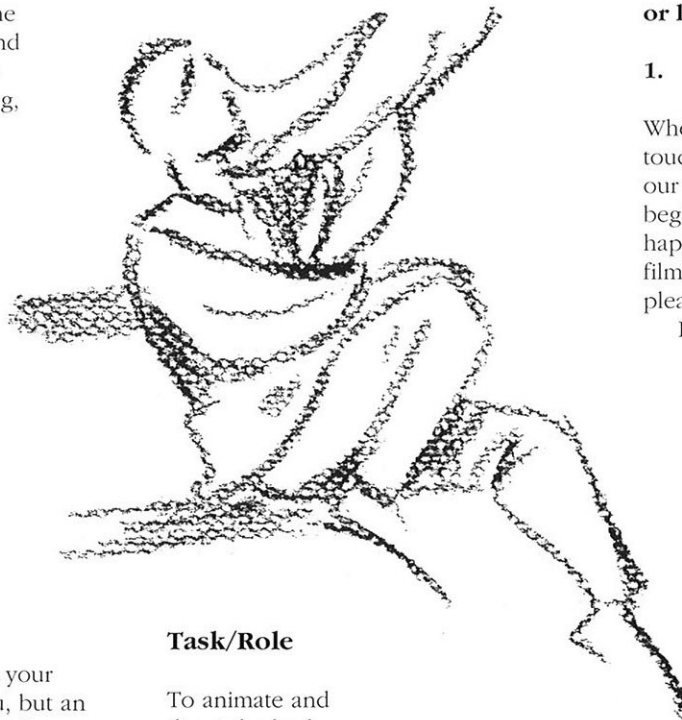
Another word for this point of consciousness is soul. It is not that you have a soul somewhere in your body, but that you are the soul in your body. It is the soul that brings the body to life. This fact, which you will experience as you practise meditation, is the most important aspect to which we will constantly return throughout the course. As you will see, it is something each one of us has to learn to remember.

Form **Point of Light**

You are a conscious point of spiritual light energy and cannot be seen by physical eyes.

Position **Centre of Forehead**

You the soul sit just above and behind the eyes, inside the brain but separate from the brain. The brain is like the computer and you, the soul, are the programmer.



Task/Role

To animate and direct the body
It is the soul that brings the body to life. Without the body the soul cannot express itself.

Lifespan
Eternal, Indestructible

The soul cannot be created nor destroyed. There is no such thing as the death of the soul, only the death of the body, at which point the soul leaves the body and takes another body.

When we do this, two things result:

1. **We think all our experience comes to us through our physical senses.**
2. **We create many identities or labels for ourselves**

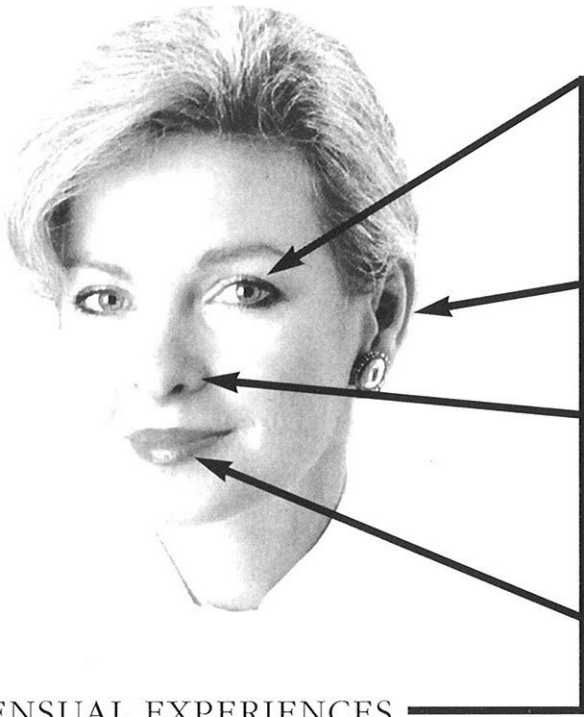
1. Experience of the senses

When we think the five senses of touch, sound, sight, taste and smell are our only source of experience we begin to rely on external things for our happiness and peace. Food, music, films and cars for instance, give us pleasure and make us happy.

However, in the physical world, everything changes and comes to an end. And when those sensual pleasures end we become unhappy and peaceless. We desire more, and a never ending queue of desires follows, and we become dependent on external stimulus. Our moods go up and down, conditioned by how satisfied our physical senses are. And when we don't get what we want, we get angry, and that anger can lead to violence. And

even when we do get what we want, we want more, so we become greedy. Or we show off what we have got, and we develop ego. All these things make us feel powerless and unhappy, feeling OK one minute and not OK the next.

We can't understand why this happens, so we go searching for answers. And that's why many of us learn meditation, hoping it will help to



SENSUAL EXPERIENCES

find inner peace and freedom in a life full of ups and downs.

2. The Traps of Different Identities

When we think we are the physical form., the outer packing, we give it labels. Each label is a different identity. National, political, family, religion, profession, colour, sex, are all labels. This results in two negative side effects. First we are never sure who we are. Which label is really me? When am I one label and not another? And as we shall see later each label or identity brings with it certain values and therefore certain ways of thinking and acting. In the end, if there are too many identities, or ones we don't like, we react, either against ourselves or against others. The result is once again peacelessness or even violence.

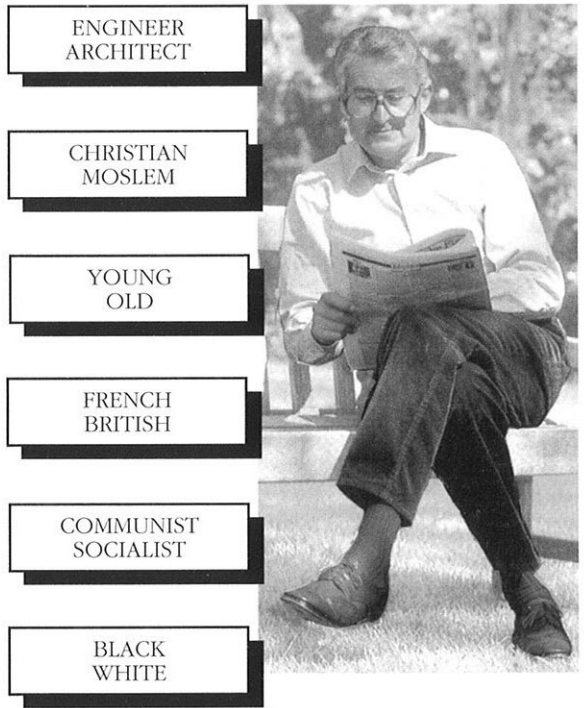
The second side effect is to put labels on others. We put them in boxes or categorise them and that also ends in conflict. Black against white, Christian against Muslim, nation against nation, Labour against Conservative and so on. Once again the result is anger and conflict, contrary to our true nature

and our desire for peace. And yet it is easy to resolve both these mistakes which are the result of thinking of ourselves as physical. Instead be aware of yourself as a soul, a conscious, eternal being; a point of energy with no physical identity. This resolves all conflict within ourselves as we cease to identify with all those labels. There is no need to sustain and defend them any longer. Therefore you cannot be threatened. You then begin to see others as the same, also souls, not merely physical costumes. This also resolves the conflict between individuals and ultimately, if practised by many, could resolve conflict between nations.

This realisation of your true identity as a soul is thus the key to experiencing your real nature of peace and happiness. This is the key to understanding yourself. This is the key to harmonising with others. Soul consciousness is the key, and the method to experience and cultivate it is meditation.

No need to reject your body. When you know the right relationship between you and your body you can take care of it in the right way, because it will not take care of you!

The labels we give to ourselves and others



MEDITATION - THE METHOD TO KNOW YOURSELF

In meditation you experience yourself as a soul. By sitting in a comfortable position, let go of all the different identities you associate with your body, try to let go of all the sounds and sights around you and turn your attention inwards towards yourself. Bring all your attention up to that point in the forehead where you are seated. Be aware of yourself there. If your mind seems to be running with many thoughts or memories, just observe them and watch them come and go. Keep gently bringing your attention back to yourself here and now, sitting on your seat of consciousness. Gradually your mind becomes more peaceful and your thoughts slow down. Create the thought of peace, concentrate your attention on that thought, and gradually it becomes your experience. You experience internal peace, the true nature of you, the soul. Try this once or twice a day to start with, in a quiet place at home or at work. These are the first steps to learning how to meditate and regaining control of your thoughts, feelings and your life experience. If you find it a little difficult, be patient. Don't give yourself a hard time. Regular practice will make you perfect. ®



Nikki Malet De Carteret discovers the Global Hospital in the mountains of Rajasthan in India

In most countries the hospital scene hits home hard these days. Long queues, dingy corridors, confusing information, stressed and overworked doctors and nurses. Patients feel as if they are little more than a number on a never-ending production line. Symptoms are to be dealt with quickly, "we need the hospital beds" rather than deeply explored and gently overcome. An exaggerated view, perhaps, but one that can easily dissuade many of us from ever entering the front door of a hospital, except under dire circumstances. We would rather suffer in silence! So what's the alternative?

Medical staff of one private hospital in northern India think they may have a solution. It lies, they claim, in their own positive state of mind. This, they believe, can determine the quality of health care, influence the speed of a patient's recovery, and create the right atmosphere for healing to occur.

"It's all part of an integrative, holistic and self-help approach", explains Dr Pratap Midha, Superintendent of the Global Hospital and Research Centre in Mt. Abu, Rajasthan. "A working model of the old dictum 'physician heal thyself'. Good health", he

states, "begins with the mental attitudes of the medical practitioners themselves." He and his colleagues hope the model will soon catch on in other parts of the world.

Already described by the media as "a unique experiment", the Global

who are all practitioners and teachers of meditation. The aim is to provide a comprehensive health package for mind, body and spirit.

Dr Midha juggles hospital administration with his role as a pediatrician. He believes that when doctors are in control of

their own thoughts, emotions and moods, they are better equipped to give their patients quality time. Moreover, they are willing to search out the causes of complaints rather than deal superficially with the symptoms. "90% of all problems are caused by the self," Dr Midha says. "One has to know the human mechanism very well, because mind and body are intimately connected. They both influence each other. When someone is in a state of depression, he catches diseases more frequently. When he is in a cheerful

mood, he feels strong. In the same way, a cheerful doctor who possesses a peaceful state of mind can create "an atmosphere which is positively charged".

Such claims sound wildly exaggerated until you visit the hospital yourself. No sooner than you step in the door, you feel as if you are entering a temple, not a sanatorium of the sick. The facility is constructed in circles and semi-

THE HEALING HOSPITAL

A NEW HOLISTIC HEALTH MODEL FOR THE FUTURE IN INDIA

Hospital offers a combination of orthodox and alternative treatments. Hospital staff are not only anxious to meet the needs of local residents and tourists visiting Mt. Abu, but they are also committed to serving a floating indigenous population in one of India's least developed regions. Part of the scheme includes a preventative health programme, educational outreach projects, as well as a team of medical experts

circles, with domed roofs and large windows to fill the reception and corridors with light. A sense of peace and cleanliness pervades the atmosphere. Three times a day, gentle music flows from the public address system. Staff and patients are encouraged to stop all activities for a few minutes of quiet relaxation.

"This improves the quality of work and has a good effect on staff relations," says Dr. Midha. "Here the staff work as a family; we are united. It's different from other hospitals." To foster unity, staff members begin and end each working day meditating together in the hospital's large meditation room.

Someone who shares Dr. Midha's view is Dr. Vinai Laxmi. She is in charge of the busy gynaecology department, treating 30 - 40 patients a day. The most common disorders she attends to are infections and inflammatory disorders. These have been neglected for months because village women have learnt to suffer ill-health in silence - maybe even die from it. The 38 year-old gynaecologist, who trained in India and Scotland, argues that "the attitude and state of mind of the doctor is the most important aspect of a doctor-patient relationship."

In what way has being a meditator made a difference to her work? It gave her, she attests, a quick presence of mind which was needed to perform an emergency operation two weeks after the hospital opened. A pregnant woman came in dripping with blood. She had fallen and lacerated the main artery in her vagina. The operating theatre was not yet ready, so Dr. Vinai Laxmi placed the woman on the gynaecological bed, stitched her up and thus saved the pregnancy.

For local people, this has been just one of the many "miracles"

performed at the Global Hospital. Prior to the hospital's opening a year ago, the region was sorely deprived of adequate health services. Patients requiring minor surgery would have to be rushed to the nearest large Government hospital at Palanpur, three hours away. Other more severe cases would face a taxing journey of five or six hours to Ahmedabad. Not surprisingly, patients would often die before reaching their destination.



Residents of Mt. Abu decided to take action in 1989 and formulated plans to secure proper medical facilities for their community on a self-help basis. The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University, one of India's largest meditation teaching institutes, whose headquarters are in Mt. Abu, established with others a trust to

finance and co-ordinate the venture. At a cost of 17 million rupees (£400,000) the facility was finally inaugurated on 24th October, 1991 by India's Health Minister. And up to this year, a further 50 million rupees (£1 million) has been spent on the completion of a 150-bed in-patient wing and other facilities.

In spite of the vast sums required for its construction, the Global Hospital is hardly a commercial venture. Staff members work on a voluntary basis. Consultations are completely free of charge. Treatment and surgery are also free for those who cannot afford to pay; those who can, pay 60% of the going rate. In this way, financial stresses are also eliminated.

Whilst meditation is viewed by the hospital's team of 11 doctors as a useful therapy, even the backbone of good health, it does not replace orthodox and alternative treatments. The Global Hospital boasts of a range of modern departments, including surgery, orthopedics, general medicine, radiology, ENT, etc.

The department of alternative medicine is still in its fledgling stage. So far it comprises a homeopath, magnet therapist and physiotherapist. Plans, though, are underway to construct a complete 'alternative medicine' wing by 1993. On offer will be colour therapy, music therapy, ayurvedic medicine, hydrotherapy, naturopathy, yoga and counselling (including one full-time psychiatrist).

For the future, organisers envisage a research department to investigate the effect of meditation on hypertension, diabetes and mental health, the impact of counselling before and after surgery, as well as the importance

of vegetarian diet in recovery.

How co-ordination will eventually work between the various departments is still under discussion. At the moment it operates on an ad hoc basis. Patients with general complaints are examined by a physician who directs them to the appropriate department or asks their choice of treatment. Orthodox practitioners claim to be 'open' to alternative means. Dr Midha will refer, for instance, a child with a mild tooth infection to the homeopath. Dr Vinai Laxmi will refer a woman with minor pelvic pains to the magnet therapist. The homeopath is already seeing one fifth of the patients who visit the hospital daily. But in spite of such openness,

allopathic doctors tend to reach quickly for the prescription pad when patients want fast relief, rather than prescribe more long-term alternative treatments. Dr Midha hopes this will change with the advent of the new alternative medicine wing and the appointment of someone to co-ordinate the all-round effort.

He and the other staff are eager to involve more participation from abroad. They hope that one day

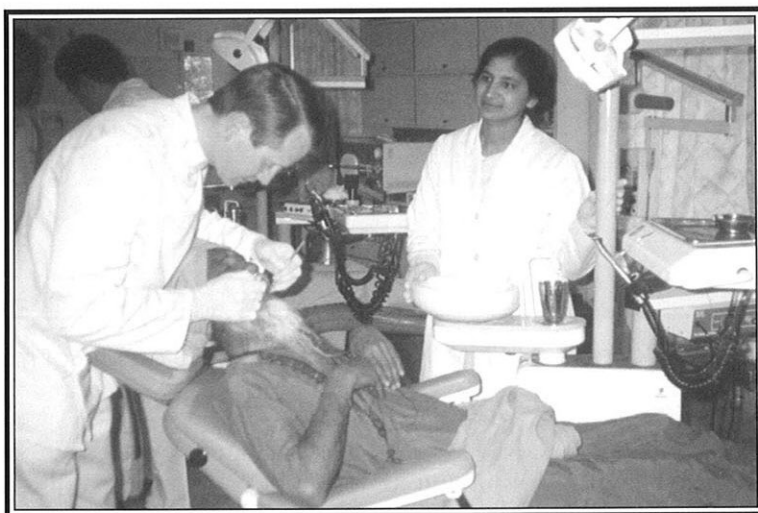
their project will serve as a teaching centre for the world community in matters relating to holistic health and research.

Even if this vision takes time to materialise, the Global Hospital still fulfils a vital role in the community. The words of Heera Lal Garg, uncle of a 12 year-old boy coaxed out of a state of severe shock by Dr Midha, sums up the general public's response: "If this hospital were not here, we would

have taken him to Palanpur. God knows what would have happened. He probably would never have survived."

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Nikki Malet de Carteret is a freelance journalist and independent trainer. She has been a student and teacher with the Brahma Kumaris for 8 years.



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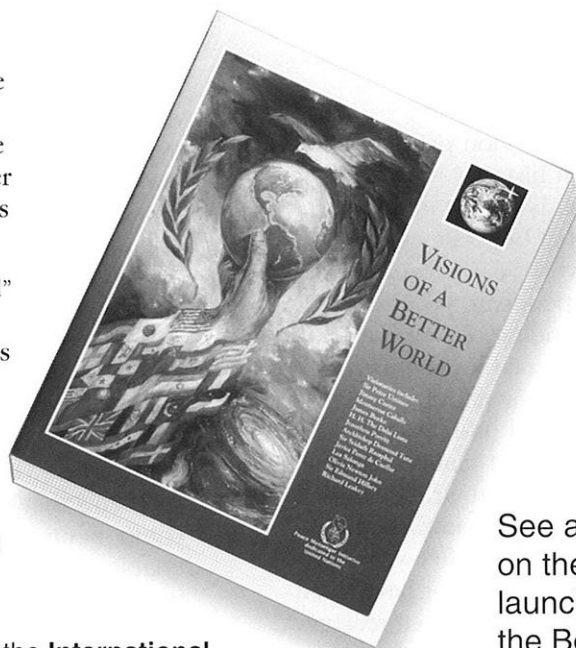
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See article on the launch of the Book on page 34



Ken O'Donnell argues the need for personal positivity to enhance the quality of modern management

When the Bhopal plant of the Union Carbide company spewed out its deadly clouds of methyl isocyanate gas in March 1989, and killed thousands who worked and lived in the vicinity, there was enormous public outcry. It was not so much a problem of human error of a few workers, as a lack of corporate commitment to real quality processes.

The £420 million paid out in claims in history's worst industrial accident, is a drop in an ocean of losses that big business (and small) incur every year because of poor quality performance. Lack of understanding of social and environmental responsibility, lost time, manpower and opportunities, interpersonal or interdepartmental conflict, or just plain bad strategic planning, take their inevitable toll. Dozens of companies, high on Fortune 500's list five years ago, have disappeared or have been swallowed up for such reasons.

Speaking to a Brazilian government official in a department that

provides support for micro and small enterprises (up to fifty employees), I was recently informed that a reasonable figure for smaller concerns that don't make it through their first year, on a worldwide basis, would be around 70%.

All of the above problems have their roots, not so much in the constant economic restructuring that goes on at corporate, national and international levels but, in the individuals who compose the organisations. So it's not a question of simply introducing organisational or cultural changes within the company itself. Certainly this is a beginning as it reflects willingness to adapt to new realities. But methods have to be introduced to address the real problems that make the human components of organisations unable or unwilling to reach their true effectiveness.

Taking up the challenge to invest in what is called Total Quality Management (TQM) is part of

recent business history as any organisation worth its salt has scrambled to improve the quality of products, services, administrative processes and technical expertise. The jargon is rich.

Competitive bench-marking (copying of management techniques of the so-called market leaders), organised problem-solving, statistical flow analysis and Pareto's Law (80% of the problems are attributable to 20% of the people - mainly the managers themselves), amongst many others, have been used to bring companies up to par. It has been a question of survival for many of them.

Unfortunately, the vision of quality, as the word itself suggests, falls far short of being total. As with so many contradictions in the turbulent and uncertain nineties, TQM techniques are employed in bomb factories and pesticide plants to make better and more destructive bombs and deadlier

and longer-lasting pesticides. Quality, as such, loses its true meaning.

Many companies, however, realise that quality ultimately depends on the human factor. Dr W. Edwards Deming, one of the best-known "quality gurus", has alluded to fear as one of the greatest impediments to quality. It is not enough to come up with a five, ten or fifteen point programme and distribute posters around the office or plant, if the people who are supposed to embody them remain unmotivated or afraid to proceed.

One of the human resources directors at Brazil's huge state petroleum conglomerate, Petrobras, mentioned at a recent conference that they have invested heavily in TQM as well as in leadership and motivational training, yet still they are failing to achieve their objectives. The majority of key-people still adhere to outdated ways of doing things.

It is a difficult shift for any enterprise to move from the purely profit-oriented and isolationist ethic (we have to be number one and to hell with all others) towards a more organically inclined reality. The holistic view of business practice simply restates the obvious: All things affect all other things in some way. No company can win and go on winning forever at the expense of other competitors, the consuming public or the environment.

With the globalisation of economies and the shrinking of markets and resources this realisation is forcing a volte face on many levels. Companies, such as automobile manufacturers, that were previously arch-enemies are creating joint ventures to produce motors in the same plant. Paper manufacturers are moving to

protect forests. Genuine concern for the stress-levels of their employees provoke companies like Philips, Shell and large banks into exotic relaxation programmes for their executives. Some even go as far as creating such a relaxed atmosphere that productivity is smothered by uncharacteristically excessive goodwill. Such are the pangs of despair as the profit-at-any-cost motive that gave impetus to industrial "growth" in the last 150 years teeters on its last legs.

While companies strive to get the right mix between productivity and personal development of staff and workers, a third dimension emerges: values. The post-industrial era has arrived and the concerns are human and environmental. The consideration is values. In this new reality, the quality manager enters the arena.

The profile of such a manager can be summed up as follows:

INADEQUATE	ADEQUATE
Super specialized	All-rounder
Attached to outdated concepts	Open to new concepts
Centraliser	Leader
Tries to maintain 'caste' systems	Open to changes necessary
Difficult access	Capacity for dialogue
Timid in taking decisions	Courageous in taking decisions
Unconcerned with *HR & quality	Up-to-date with HR & quality advances
Depends on stimuli to move	Knows how to motivate him/herself
Does things from 'responsibility'	Cares for what he/she does
Lacks strategic vision	Keeps him/herself informed about overall plans
(*HR - Human Resources)	

It seems that the famous phrase of the French writer, Andre Malraux, "The 21st century will be spiritual or won't be at all...", is gaining ground in the way we approach our business practices.

Couched in terms like teamwork, self-management, leadership and synergy, what are essentially spiritual values creep into our organisations.

Synergy is originally a medical term used to describe the way the limbs of the body work together in a co-ordinated way. The hand is a

perfect example of synergy: each of the five fingers are unique and individually have their own roles, but together they accomplish much more in the tasks that the hand has to carry out. Imagine a group of five people that work together with the same functionality, or several such groups forming a department. Picture departments working together with such organic harmony and you can visualise a true quality organisation.

It makes plain business sense to aim towards that. The analogy of a castle under siege can be used here. If, whilst being attacked from without, the defenders are fighting amongst themselves, they impair their own capacity to defend themselves and the besiegers overrun the castle. In the same way, an organisation rife with internal squabbling has less chance at survival than the one that has sorted out its synergetic

relationships. In an environment of stagnation, development or recession, the organisation that adheres to the principles of positive quality management not only stays ahead of the majority but becomes an example for them.

Just make a list of the qualities that

individuals need to work together - respect, tolerance, perceptiveness, far-sightedness, humility and co-operation. In this, we can see that above and beyond winning or losing, technical expertise and statistics, the workplace where we spend up to a quarter of our lives can become a much more enjoyable place. Where there is enjoyment in work it will always be more productive.

[®]
Ken O'Donnell is the author of several books on self-improvement and one on positive management called "The Soul of Business". He has been a student and teacher with the Brahma Kumaris for seventeen years. Based in the Sao Paulo centre in Brazil, he co-ordinates the University's activities in South America.

RECOVERY – AN INNER AWAKENING



Judith Pemell describes her work using meditation with people in recovery from addiction and co-dependency

Carol Granger conducts an art therapy group at a Step 11 Retreat

The Step 11 Programme has borrowed its name from the 11th step of Alcoholics Anonymous which refers to "improving conscious contact with God through prayer and meditation". Step 11 focuses on meditation, inner change and spiritual growth. As founder and co-ordinator of the programme I aimed to fill a gap in the area of recovery which gets the least attention: the discovery and exploration of spirituality. It comprises ongoing, open, weekly sessions for people who wish to work at deeper and more spiritual levels of recovery.

Just as addiction affects physical, mental, emotional and spiritual levels of being, so must recovery. In working with drug and alcohol affected clients, it has been my observation that a spiritual opening-up connects the individual with a previously untapped source of healing. Even in very early recovery, I have witnessed clients take a leap into levels of motivation that enabled them to transcend mundane and negative thinking patterns. These are the patterns of thought that have trapped them in their addictive behaviour despite numerous attempts to recover.

In fostering this opening-up, I teach meditation and encourage daily practice. The particular meditation technique used is a direct method of changing thoughts, which has enormous benefits in early recovery. With regular practice meditation facilitates the changing of attitude, habits, behaviour, consciousness and ultimately the individual's nature.

I have found that meditation is an

integrative process which complements all clinical skills and is client-centred. It can enhance, significantly, the client's process of self-discovery which is essential to successful recovery.

RECOVERY IS AN HOLISTIC PROCESS

The process of recovery falls loosely into three distinct phases. The first is RECOVERY, which involves physical and mental withdrawal, sobriety being the primary issue. The next phase is UNCOVERY of the underlying reasons for using and acting-out, which involves identifying and grieving past losses and traumas and resulting Core Issues. Work at the emotional/feeling level is facilitated by self-help groups, group therapy, counselling and psychotherapy. The DISCOVERY aspect embraces a connection with the Inner Self as well as connection with a Higher Power.

In early and often extended sobriety, clients frequently allude to an inability to trust and a feeling

of emptiness inside, of something missing and a pervasive feeling of discontent and fearfulness. This is sometimes referred to as the void or the hole in the soul. Meditation and spiritual replacement assume primary importance in filling up the vacuum of SPIRITUAL BANKRUPTCY, for this is the space that physical fillers cannot touch. Nor can therapy, education or group work. Addressing spiritual bankruptcy is pivotal to the healing process.

WHAT IS SPIRITUALITY?

Spirituality refers to the nature of being a soul as opposed to identification only with the physical form. It is one's true, essential nature, an inner experience of "self". Meditation is the means for the individual to tap into his or her spirituality and to connect with a Higher Power. The more one experiences the inner self through meditation, the more



Creative movement Group during a Step 11 Retreat

one's real nature is revealed and the true qualities of the soul; serenity, truth, peace, love and power, are made manifest.

THE ADDICTION MODELS

MODEL	TREATMENT
<i>MORAL</i> <i>"I use drugs because I'm bad"</i>	<i>Legal response - punishment</i>
<i>DISEASE/MEDICAL</i> <i>Addiction is an incurable disease</i>	<i>Abstinence</i>
<i>GENETIC</i>	<i>Abstinence</i>
<i>PSYCHOLOGICAL/BEHAVIOURAL</i> <i>childhood issues</i>	<i>Therapy</i>
<i>SOCIAL LEARNING</i> <i>learned behaviour, peer pressure</i>	<i>Behaviour modification, aversion therapy, controlled drinking, cognitive approaches, motivational interviewing</i>
<i>SOCIAL-POLITICAL</i> <i>Drinks because from a minority or disadvantaged group, i.e. ethnic, gay etc</i>	<i>empowering interventions, revolution, assertiveness training, self-empowerment, etc</i>
<i>NEURO-ADAPTATION</i> <i>drinks because physically dependent</i>	<i>detoxification</i>
<i>SPIRITUAL</i> <i>spiritual deficit causes turning to external source of power</i>	<i>meditation, inner child work</i>
<i>SYSTEMS</i> <i>dysfunctional family</i>	<i>family therapy</i>

MOVING INTO AN ENLIGHTENED CONCEPT OF ADDICTION

Although the spiritual model enumerates a spiritual deficit, it fails to explain addiction fully. In reality, all of the currently defined models have limitations and suggest only partial aspects of the whole picture. Yet understanding addiction from its spiritual origin is very simple. The ancient Sanskrit word SANSKARA defines the innate qualities and characteristics of the soul. Sanskaras are an impression in the soul of innate tendencies, personality, likes and dislikes etc. Behaviour is an impression which deepens every time a certain action is repeated, forming a sense memory. The sense memory reacts on the mind, which then focuses on the sense impression and in an addicted person, obsession and compulsions are the result.

Sanskaras are not erased with abstinence or modified behaviour, which is why the Disease Concept, which states that alcoholism is incurable, has enjoyed great popularity.

A deep sanskara exerts a powerful and controlling influence on the mind. This explains the extreme difficulty experienced in trying to overcome obsessive/compulsive behaviours. Even after 20 years of abstinence a dormant sanskara will reignite instantly and take control of the mind and behaviour, after only a single drink or drug. Punishment, abstinence, aversion therapies, behaviour modification, assertiveness training, detoxification, meetings, therapy and self-esteem work, whilst of demonstrated value, cannot actually treat the source of the problem. In this light it can be understood that none of the Addiction Models are accurate, nor the suggested treatments holistic or complete.

THE EXPERIENCE OF MEDITATION

Meditation is the only way of changing and erasing sanskaras.

It is not a panacea however, as abstinence remains a priority for the chronically addicted. Psychotherapy, inner child work, working the 12 steps and attending recovery groups and learning living and effective communication skills etc., all play a vital role in the process of healing and change.

Meditation needs to be understood. It is not a relaxation exercise or physical focus, but a practice for disciplining the mind to slow down and think less. It

creates a presence of silence and space in the intellect and quiet in the sanskaras. Meditation centres and balances the mind and facilitates feelings of bliss and detachment from the sense organs. The subconscious mind is cleansed and strong behavioural tendencies are neutralised and re-shaped. With the changing of deep, subtle energies the effects of ongoing meditation are gentle yet profound.

Whilst there are many different techniques of meditation, I use the

Initially, there is an experience of changing consciousness and light, then gradually a loss of physical awareness, a feeling of lightness and total detachment from the physical environment. Waves of peace and bliss and love seem to wash over the soul as the mind becomes still and the presence of silence emerges, taking the soul into ever-deepening states of conscious awareness, bliss and union with a higher source of love, power and creativity. This is a place where deep and profound realisation and inspiration occurs.

It is also the seat of healing and change.

As the mind becomes balanced and anchored in its spiritual reality, the physical form automatically follows. Thus meditation has dynamic effects on physical health and disease which are well documented (Chopra 1988), as well as on mind and behaviour.



Group painting at Step 11 Retreat

open-eyed technique of Raja Yoga and find it an especially safe and empowering experience for even highly traumatised clients. The focus is taken away from the body and first of all concentrated on "the self" or the soul, which is experienced as a point of conscient light, situated in the centre of the forehead. When a stable stage of soul consciousness is achieved, the real engagement of yoga (meaning union) takes place.

Judith Pemell is a drug and alcohol counsellor at Jarrah House in Sydney, a detoxification and rehabilitation unit for women and their children. She is also a sessional specialist at Long Bay Gaol and Co-ordinator of the Brahma Kumaris Step 11 Programme. Judith has been teaching meditation to recovering addicts and alcoholics for 5 years.

This article is excerpted from a paper presented at the Winter School in the Sun, Drugs Down Under Conference, Brisbane, 5 - 9 July, 1993, sponsored by the Alcohol and Drug Foundation of Queensland, Australia.

AN AUSPICIOUS MEETING

Dr Craig Brown reflects on a weekend retreat at the Global Retreat Centre



The extensive terrace gardens at the Global Retreat Centre

What is your very first memory?

Few people believe me when I say that I can remember bumping up and down in my pram, as it went on and off pavements. But I have an earlier memory. It was when I was about three months old, and I was put in a cot for an afternoon nap. We lived in a terraced house in Glasgow, and this room was south facing, on the first floor overlooking a small garden. Despite the distant traffic noise, there was a peaceful atmosphere. The birds in the garden cheerfully sang, and the dappled sunlight illuminated the room.

The curious thing was that I was not in the cot, but had the experience of being out and above

the cot looking down. It was a blissful feeling. I then had to decide to enter that little body for a life. I recollected it was like the reluctance of getting out of a cozy bed in the morning to face the day. Now when I sometimes try to connect with who I am, I try to recapture that experience.

This was what I was thinking about when posed with the question of “Who am I?” on the first morning of the Global Retreat Week-end. Thirty of us had arrived the afternoon before, and I think everyone was stunned by the magnificence of the country house at Nuneham Park where the retreat was held. But equally impressive was the simplicity of the decoration, and the great

peacefulness of the place. After a delicious meal, we introduced ourselves, and retired to a comfortable bed for an early night. Meditation was at 7.30am, followed by a nourishing breakfast. Next was a talk on the practice of meditation, which was clarity itself, and where this question of “Who am I?” was taken up and also what prevents us from discovering “who I am.” The answer being “the noise” that constantly goes on in our heads for a variety of reasons. Consequently we were to spend the next six hours, until tea, in silence. I wondered if I could last, but it seemed a good idea.

My first place to visit was the meditation room which is itself the

essence of silence. Once there I tried to get hold of that feeling of detached peacefulness I experienced outside the pram. I would try to keep that soul nature at the centre of my attention during the whole silent period.

Once outside in the sunshine I walked along the splendid terraced gardens on the west of the house. The first thing I noticed was the crunching of gravel under my feet. A novel and rather pleasant sensation. Staying with my feet, I observed the difference on the tarmac and then on the grass. All my senses seemed heightened. This led to the main east entrance gate where I stopped. There are two huge oaks on the lawn, and both were filled with birds singing in full voice that seemed to be declaring to everyone, "Wake up



to the joy of life." Then I lost it. Back to the concerns of home. Problems of relationships. Worries of work. I had experienced twenty minutes of being a soul in a body relating to the world. Time to try again.

Further along the drive there is a pond with several tall poplars, and my attention was drawn to the sound of the wind in their branches shaking the leaves. I leant against the trunk of one of the trees, and imagined I was part of the tree, reaching up to heaven and my roots were penetrating down into the riches of the earth.

Then I realised the noise of the wind in the trees, was like the "noise" that was constantly in our heads. We can allow unwanted thoughts to pass right through us without affecting us, like the wind in the trees.

We ate our lunch in silence, and it tasted even more delicious. I could really have gone on for another day enjoying the silence. In the afternoon Sister Jayanti imparted to us some of her great wisdom in another talk. In the evening we were royally entertained. Sunday was a very moving and humbling experience shared with Dadi Janki which I think everyone present will remember.

And so after lunch the group broke up, some to leave for home, others to linger on, soaking up the special peaceful and enriching atmosphere of Nuneham Park.

What I gained from the weekend was a very necessary opportunity for silence and reflection. I am very grateful to the Brahma Kumaris for making that possible. I learnt that being soul-centred is not easy as there are many

distractions. It is something I will have to go on practising.

When I got home my nine year old daughter asked me if I had met anyone famous as I was away staying at such a grand house.

I answered her by saying, "Yes, I met myself."



Dr Craig Brown runs a General Practice in Brighton, England.

*Sometimes when you're feeling important
Sometimes when your ego's in bloom
Sometimes when you take it for granted
You're the best qualified in the room
Sometimes when you feel that your going
Would leave an unfillable hole
Just follow this simple instruction
And see how it humbles your soul*

*Take a bucket and fill it with water
Put your hand in it up to your wrist
Pull it out and the hole that's remaining
Is a measure of how you'll be missed
You may splash all you please when you enter
You can stir the water galore
But stop, and you'll find in a minute
That it looks quite the same as before
The moral in this quaint example
Is to do just the best that you can
Be proud of yourself but remember
There is no indispensable (wo) man*

Penny Reynolds

HEALING A NATION

Marge Enriquez describes the development of the Moral Recovery Programme which is nurturing the spirit of the Philippines

While economists have mapped out the seven tigers of Southeast Asia, the Philippines tries to come close to being the cub. Why is the most progressive and admired country in the ASEAN in the 60's dubbed, "the sick man of Asia" in the 90's?

Filipinos were euphoric when they united to help topple a dictatorship in 1986 and held high hopes for a better society after restoring democracy. But the momentum led to cynicism after the Philippines experienced several coup attempts, long hours of water and power interruption, increase in crime, devaluation and a deterioration in the quality of life; all compounded by a series of natural calamities. A report from the BBC described the Philippines political situation as characterised by "endemic corruption and patchy law enforcement."

Despite having laudable development plans and ample foreign aid, if there is a continued draining of government coffers, there seems little hope for the Philippines reaching the status of a newly industrialised country by the year 2000.

Senator Leticia Ramos Shahani, a



Senator Shahani

government minister and sister of the President, described the situation. "If you study the system, the Government has released millions of pesos for rural development. But the provinces are still desperate; there is no water for irrigation. Every year, we allocate money for reforestation.

Where has the money gone? A man from the Bureau of Internal Revenue says, 'Don't pay P1 million. We can settle this amount if you just give me P100,000.' The issue of graft and corruption is firmly entrenched in our system, especially in Government. Unless we change, we can't change the country."

Seven years ago, the start of then President Corazon Aquino's term, Ms Shahani saw the incongruence between politics and ethics and the need for an ethical dimension to complement economic growth.

The idea of a Moral Recovery Programme (MRP) became concrete after renegade soldiers staged a putsch in Manila on 27th August 1987, barely six months after a restored democracy and the elections.

Senator Shahani continued, "At that time I said, 'What kind of people are we? We've just overthrown the dictatorship, we've just been elected to the Senate? We were supposed to re-enact the laws and before you knew it, there was this violent upheaval where the rebels entered the grounds of Malacanang and people were killed. These rebels

used guns which were bought by our own Government. They wore boots and uniforms which were bought by the taxpayer's money. And here they were, destroying the institution which was supposed to be the guardian of the nation. So I thought, 'Maybe we need something more than just paying the external debt or all these talks about becoming an industrial nation. Maybe our society is sick, it needs to be healed, to be strengthened, to be renewed? It became clear to me that what we need is some kind of moral recovery programme.'

In 1987, a senate resolution created a committee of volunteer social scientists and academics to conduct a study on the strengths and weaknesses of the Filipino character. This had never been done by any previous political administration.

"First of all, we have to analyse what is wrong with our society not as a negative affront or as a means to debase the Filipino. This is also a favourite perspective held by some people who keep saying how awful we are. I don't believe in that, but I think we have to be detached and as the MRP says, be both a lover and a judge in looking at ourselves. That is the only way to heal ourselves." explained Ms Shahani.

The report, "A Moral Recovery Programme: Building a Nation, Inspiring Our People to Action." cited that the virtues of the Filipinos were empathy, family orientation, joy and humour, flexibility, adaptability and creativity, hard work, religiosity and resilience. The flaws in his character were extreme personalism, extreme family centredness, lack of discipline, passivity and lack of initiative, colonial mentality, crab mentality and lack of self-analysis and self-reflection. The study proposed strategies for change on the individual and institutional level.

Ms Shahani added that the fact that

these research professionals gave their services for free reflects one of the great values of the Moral Recovery Programme (MRP): a sense of the common good. The report has become a "how-to" book used in schools, NGO's and civic groups.

"I feel that the individual needs to be recharged. This is where the need for meditation, prayer or solitude is necessary to bring back that inspiration which sometimes gets lost in mass movements and political activism," said Senator Shahani.

Senator Shahani's speeches on this topic were compiled in two booklets, "Moral Imperatives of National Renewal" and "Foreign Policy for Our Future".

What started out as a movement advocating the inculcation of virtues in daily life to reach personal and national goals was subsequently institutionalised by the Government. Last year, President Fidel Ramos gave his sister a birthday present by signing a directive which urged the different sectors of society to join the MRP. The education department was to train resource persons to hold MRP seminars. The local government department formed a Moral Recovery Committee to implement moral correctness in campaigns and activities at the local level. The Office of the Press Secretary was to conduct a campaign on the MRP. For his part, President Ramos quit smoking his cigar and reported early to work to set an example to his colleagues.

Training modules for resource persons who will execute the Moral Recovery Programme in government institutions and another module on value education for high school students were implemented. The Philippine Institute for Alternative Futures designed a workshop for teachers and facilitators called "Wholeness: A Values Transformation Programme for Moral Recovery."

The participants undergo several days of creative visualisation, experiences of silence, sharing insights, games, expression through drawing, music and dance, and discussion on the relevance of the exercise in their life and in the country. They start with deep breathing exercises, limbering and stretches which release stress and emotional problems subconsciously lodged in tight areas of the body. They identify blockages, have a dialogue with themselves and their body and map out their life.

The self-discovery process is expanded to the awareness of values of relationships, communication and exercises on re-visioning the history of the nation. The awareness of social relationships leads to harmony with the environment. There are exercises on stewardship, respect for life and possessions. The seminar is highlighted by a session on building processes for the management of change, visioning for a better world and a better self which is shared with others and making a "bite-size contribution", or a personal and practical pledge for self-improvement.

In the first six months of the MRP trainer's programme since the launch last February, 180 participants from government agencies, including the police and private corporations have joined. During the workshop sharing, some have openly admitted their dishonesty in their profession and indulgence of vices in their personal lives and made a commitment to change for the better. In the evaluations, all were one in saying that the workshop was a very liberating experience. It fostered bonding and increased motivation in their work output. Self-introspection and being God-centred were the most important values they learned and also the most visible in their change. Relatives noticed that the participants were veering away from meat and junk food towards fruit and vegetables.

Knowing that the participants came from diverse faiths, Ms Shahani did not emphasise God-centredness. "I just tell people, 'Well, you fill up whatever needs to be filled up in terms of your religious convictions'. says Ms. Shahani. "This is the thrust of the Moral Recovery Programme."

"So the moral refines the material, and the material has to make the spiritual more relevant. I hope that with the adoption of the President of the MRP, we can have a greater understanding of the interrelationship of the ethical dimension, moral development, material development and the linkage of economics and religion. For instance, can the Moral

Nicanor Tiongson, it never had a concept of nationhood because in the pre-colonial times there were just pockets of kingdoms all over the archipelago. It never had a court culture unlike its neighbours which symbolised cohesion and defined a nation's identity. The Spaniards named the islands they conquered after King Felipe, thus establishing a geographical identity, but the introduction of Christianisation and Western life was apt to bring culture clashes.

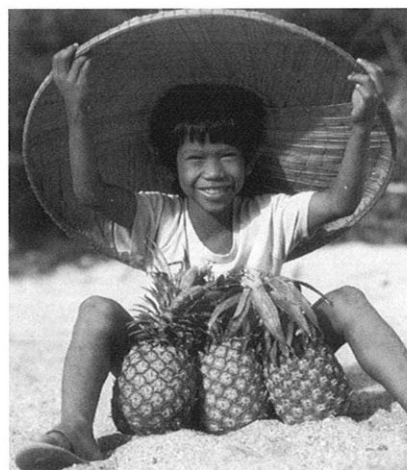
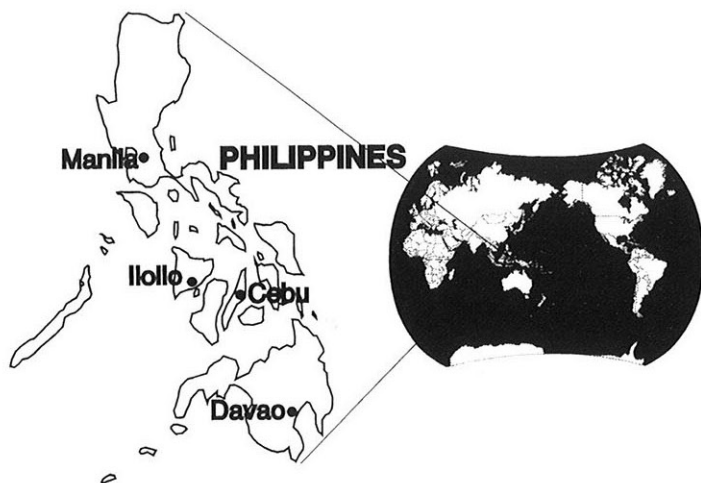
The pre-colonial societies may not be ideal in the sense that they often fostered slavery and oppression but the people maintained pride and unity within their tribe. Although the Spaniards

orientated," said Senator Shahani at the launch of the National Renewal Programme.

This new movement aims to build necessary pressure so that people can at last have the chance to publish a constitution based on the country's experience. Hopefully, the Moral Recovery Programme will have created ideal conditions where the Filipinos can exercise their rights in a meaningful way.

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Marge Enriquez is a freelance lifestyle writer and dancer. She has been a student and teacher with the Brahma Kumaris for 12 years.



Recovery Programme help to increase the capacity of the country to use its loans properly? Will it give the country a greater sense of confidence? I'm linking it to nationalism," said the Senator.

A spin-off of the MRP is the National Renewal Programme launched last September. Internal change on a personal level can be intangible. It takes a significant collective to make it more apparent. While MRP focuses on individual transformation, the latter is a patriotic movement which calls for Filipinos to work as a whole in being responsible, disciplined, austere, self-effacing, self-reliant and proud of their heritage.

The Philippines situation is unique. According to cultural historian

and Americans introduced religion, education, technology and literacy, the political and bureaucratic systems brought about fear and suspicion of the government, feelings of inferiority and a shift of duty from national to family. The repercussions were a warped consciousness, low national self-esteem, dependency on foreign aid and corruption.

"These are very deep-seated problems which can be remedied only by a people's movement which will foster in our country the politics, economics, culture, institutions, jurisprudence as well as the moral, spiritual and intellectual qualities that befit a country free from foreign intervention yet globally

WOMEN AND SPIRITUALITY

Sudesh Didi describes the unique role which women play within the Brahma Kumaris



In a world where women have been seen traditionally as someone's wife, mother, daughter, or sister, why would a woman choose to follow a spiritual path?

Perhaps because deep inside, every woman has a longing to “be” someone in her own right - fully aware of herself, confident and in control. When we talk of spiritual power, we are in fact referring to the original power of the self to be whole and independent - free from the web of domination and suppression, free from the need to exist for someone else’s sake.

For the last two thousand years or more, women have not fully utilised their spiritual power. Instead, aspects of the “feminine” have taken mainly symbolic forms from the Virgin Mary to the vestal virgins, from Earth Goddesses to the Shakti Devis. On the one hand, women have been put on pedestals and worshipped on account of their purity or femininity. At the same time, they have been excluded from religious practices and barred, even until now, from entering some places of worship.

Elevated or chastised, exonerated or condemned, the main problem facing women is that they have never been treated as equal to men - either as spiritual leaders or spiritual seekers. This lack of equality finds its roots not only in sociological and cultural systems, but more particularly within levels of consciousness, upon which spirituality and attitudes are ultimately based.

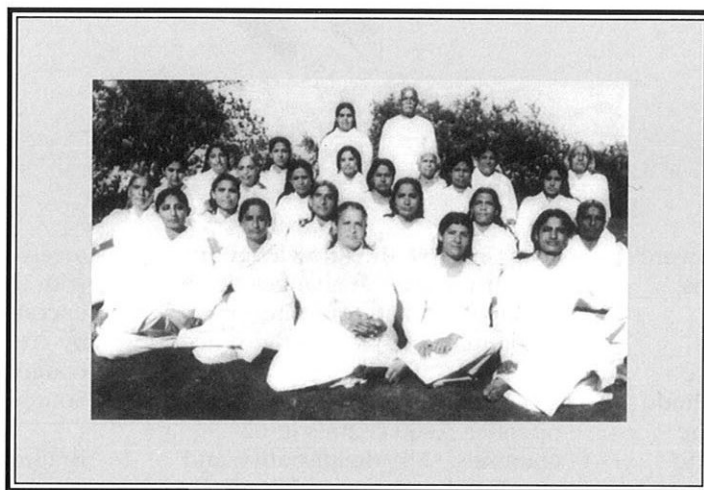
Women as Spiritual Leaders

Women become spiritual leaders when they themselves acknowledge they have the capacity and necessary attributes to play such a role. The change of consciousness needed is to move away from unworthy feelings and attitudes and to see the greatness contained within the self. Feminine qualities such as love, tolerance, compassion, understanding and humility are qualities of leadership. They are also needed for spiritual progress, for without them it would be impossible to come close to God and attain self-realisation. Every human being possesses those

qualities but women are more easily and naturally able to tap them, for feelings of love and devotion are often more natural to women, combined with a profound sense of discipline and order. A true leader leads through example.

Women know how to serve and how to give. Often the notion of service or of putting others in front has been seen as a sign of weakness or lack of power. Quite the opposite is true. The ability to bow before others, with true humility, is the sign of the greatness of a soul who has conquered ego.

However this quality of giving to others must also be balanced with qualities of courage, determination, clear thinking and self-respect. Too often, women have a tendency to give to others and neglect their own spiritual needs.



Some of the founding members of the Brahma Kumaris in the early 1940's

It is one of the major reasons women find themselves depleted and lacking in spiritual power. The foundation for assuming spiritual leadership is thus a change of consciousness. Overcoming the huge physical, religious and sociological barriers which have prevented women becoming spiritual leaders can only be done through the development of self-respect. The quality of self-respect comes from the knowledge and experience of the eternal self which is beyond social, cultural or physical identity. The eternal self or soul is pure, peaceful and complete with divine

and spiritual qualities. When women touch this inner, eternal core, they gain the courage to play the part they are capable of.

Spiritual power is an expression of the inherent qualities of the spirit and has nothing to do with gender or physical limitations. Feelings of domination or suppression occur when there is the awareness of superiority or inferiority. Feelings of equality, however, manifest when there is the consciousness of spirit or soul. These feelings and attitudes can be expressed in actions with positive results.

Women are still a long way from enjoying positions of spiritual leadership, and society still doesn't fully concur with the notion that women make good spiritual leaders. Yet, society won't necessarily change until someone, whether an individual or a group

of individuals, breaks the tradition and sets a new role model. This, in part, was the thinking behind the work of Brahma Baba, founder of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

Historical Context of Brahma Kumaris

In 1936, at the age of 60, Dada Lekhraj, a wealthy diamond merchant from the province of Sind (now Pakistan) experienced a series of powerful visions. He had always been religious-minded and had also held a

highly reputable position in the community. Yet the visions changed his life completely, revealing striking images of the world passing through a period of immense unrest, as well as images of the change required to usher in a new world for the future. Within a year or so, Dada Lekhraj, later known as Brahma Baba, had sold his business and established a spiritual university. He nominated a group of 12 young women to assume all administrative responsibilities for the group of almost 400 people which met regularly to study spiritual knowledge and meditate.



At that time in India, women were treated as second class citizens, perceived as little more than chattels belonging to their husbands. Such attitudes have their roots in the traditional Hindu scriptures. For example, in the Ramayan there is a reference to four things being equal:

a drum (that you beat), an animal (that you push), a senseless fool and a woman.

For Brahma Baba to place women in charge of a spiritual university at a time when they were still hidden by the veil - literally and figuratively - caused a huge uproar. But he was determined to carry out this gentle social and spiritual 'revolution'. He believed that the balance of spiritual and social power wouldn't change unless the inequalities were redressed, and women, both young girls and mothers, were given the right to serve the community as spiritual teachers.

By the time Brahma Baba passed

away in 1969, the knowledge he was given and the changes he championed had found receptive and fertile soil. Within the space of 54 years, the University has grown considerably and now operates 3,000 centres in 62 countries. All administrative and spiritual duties are carried out by Dadi Prakashmani and Dadi Janki, the two most senior women teachers who have been students since the University's establishment.

Student not Disciple

Today, from an organisational perspective, both men and women assume responsibility for teaching and running centres. By and large, however, men follow the founder's example and willingly put women "in front".

For the Brahma Kumaris the concept of discipleship does not exist. Brahma Baba never positioned himself as a guru. He taught through example, by putting into practice the spiritual knowledge and principles he had

received in his communion (yoga) with the Supreme Soul. He encouraged others to do the same by creating their own communication directly with the Source.

Brahma Baba encouraged women to understand and explore their potential, and inspired them with a vision of the valuable contribution women can make as spiritual leaders. He found that women have the serenity and gentleness to understand and accept spiritual ideas easily without the barrier of arrogance which is so often present in men. So, by putting women forward, he sought to create a situation of equality and mutual respect and regard between men and women, and indeed within all relationships regardless of gender.



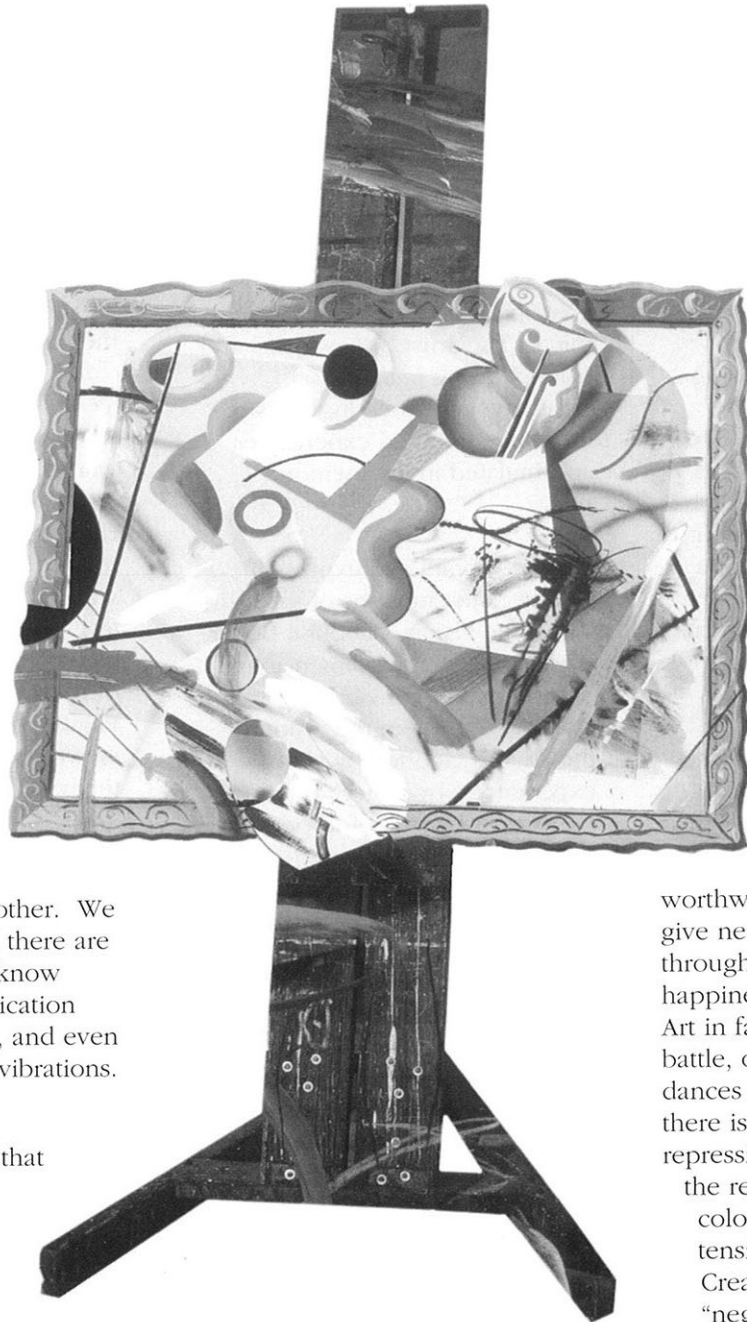
Sudesh Didi is Director of the Brahma Kumaris Centres in the United Kingdom and Ireland. She has been a student and teacher with the Brahma Kumaris University for 36 years.

COLOURS ON CANVAS

Mira Subirana examines the internal canvas of the artist

As an artist I always searched for new ways of expression to share a vision full of deep feelings which I could not share through words. Communication is essential to have a clear understanding of ourselves and to have good relationships. Good communication eliminates the feelings of loneliness which generate sorrow and depression. Despite living in the age of mass media, we still don't know how to communicate with each other. We use many words and still there are misunderstandings. We know even less about communication through colour and form, and even less through silence and vibrations.

Colour on canvas is an expression of a message that remains over the years. The painting hanging on the wall, in silence, shares the feelings that the artist once felt. At times, though, these colours create a strong sound because they come from the inner sufferings and battles of the artist. The sound can be full of harmony, like birds playing on the grass and flowers opening towards the sun, or waves caressing the seashore, but at other times the sound is of strong, dark brush strokes mixed with paint and splashed as if thrown on the canvas with an



aggressive impulse. Often we see anger in people, because when one does not like the world as it is, the environment in which one has grown up, the education one has received, the unfulfilled expectations, then anger comes out as an appeal for a better world in which there is justice and where one can be satisfied and content. This is what happened to me before I learned how to transform

anger. I needed a way to let it out. My paintings conveyed my lack of satisfaction; the tears within, the anger surrounding me. But the more the artist lets the anger out, the more the anger increases.

ART AT PLAY

As I progressed on my spiritual path I learned how art can be a way to express the most elevated feelings and motives of the spirit. Then you share something worthwhile with the world, you give neither anger nor sorrow through your art, but life, colour, happiness, peace and calmness. Art in fact, can be taken as a battle, or a game in which one dances in harmony. As a battle, there is resistance, one uses force, repressing and suppressing, and the result is an outburst of colours in disharmony, full of tension and hidden fears. Creativity then becomes "negative".

When art is taken as a game, as play, the artist accepts and adapts himself to transform this forceful energy into a positive potential to grow, guided by spiritual intuition and positive creativity. This generates happiness, peaceful and joyful feelings, and very often a universal love through the harmony of the colours. To both the artist and the viewer this

produces a message that takes them beyond any limitation, even the limitations of words.

When the artist is in harmony with himself the art he creates flows with such flexibility that there is no stagnation. The positive vision of the creator expresses the energetic potential in a positive way and gives hope to his audience.

QUALITY OUT OF SILENCE

The white canvas to me expresses the silence there is between thoughts. I have all the tools, colours, brushes, paint and information ready. I just need to start the creation. In silence I can meditate and control my impulsive reactions so that what comes out is not an emotional outburst, but a deep and light energy full of peace and significance. It expresses the highest potential of the self, the most elevated being within. Controlling the impulsive emotional reactions or outbursts does not mean repressing them, but sublimating that energy so that I care both about the message that comes through, and also about the quality of art.

When there are blockages in the expression of inner visions and feelings, the quality of the art is affected. The greater the honesty, the easier the flow; the greater the openness and inner peace, the easier the message is expressed with quality. Otherwise, the expression may come out forceful, but lacking quality. When there is unity within, when my thoughts, feelings, words and actions are aligned, I am at peace with myself and the world. Then my expression in art is "transparent"; my inner being comes through as creative energy and there are no blocks. Then my concentration is easily focused on the quality of expression.

CREATING THE VISION

The artistic creation is no doubt the result of both the state of consciousness and vision of its creator. To enhance the quality of art, the creator must develop his spiritual quality, his consciousness and vision.

Vision is the capacity of human beings to perceive forms and colours through the eyes and even more important, through the inner eye. Vision is also the capacity one has to bring images and concepts onto the screen of the mind. The artist brings forms and colours, using imagination, creativity, and assessing the stock of information and experiences accumulated in the memory.

Colours vibrate and express the feelings and emotions of the artist. When the vision is about a better world or a spiritual dimension, the colours expressed vibrate with life and joy. But often the vision of the artist is clouded by past experiences, by anger rooted in the past or by lack of hope in the future. Then the expression of the art he creates is also clouded, it does not come out with full clarity because the seed - the vision itself - is clouded. I see how in the process of creating I must constantly return to the seed, the original vision that moves me to create a painting. When the seed is not clear then no matter how many colours I put on the canvas I won't be satisfied with the outcome because it will express the confusion within. Of course to talk about not being satisfied with what one creates is common, because the artist generally is self-demanding and wants to improve his creative expression. But when the inner vision is clear then the creation emerges easily, flowing without anger or resistance. The result is better, more satisfactory. This is my experience.

I used to be more concerned in

expressing all my feelings without caring so much about the quality nor the viewer. Through my own spiritual development I became more careful to give the best of myself through art, and not use art as a therapy to cure all my anger and deception, but to transform all that through meditation and understanding so that when I paint, only the best positive energy from within would emerge. The art created becomes a mirror to see the self; the creator. Often I think paintings are a self portrait of the artist because in them he expresses his perception, feelings and concepts about himself and the world.

At one point I asked myself what I wanted to give the world. When I realised I was using art as therapy I started meditating regularly. My motivation changed. I decided I wanted to give the best of myself to the world. Paintings that would give colour, life and joy to a home or to the people observing them. Paintings that would take the viewer beyond suffering and give them light and spiritual insight.

And so going back to the seed, the vision, I see how I must constantly keep it clear and elevated so that the art I create flows easily and gives light to the world.

THE INFINITE OCEAN

Although my paintings are more abstract than realistic, often I use the image of the ocean in them. To paint water is fascinating. Water in the ocean has a dimension of greatness and inner strength. The cyclic movements of the waves, the light and reflections of water, the horizon lost in the infinite space, the relation of the ocean with the sun, the water with fire. The ocean reflects the colours of the sky which come also from the condition of light. When one observes the ocean there is a feeling of infinite vastness and the

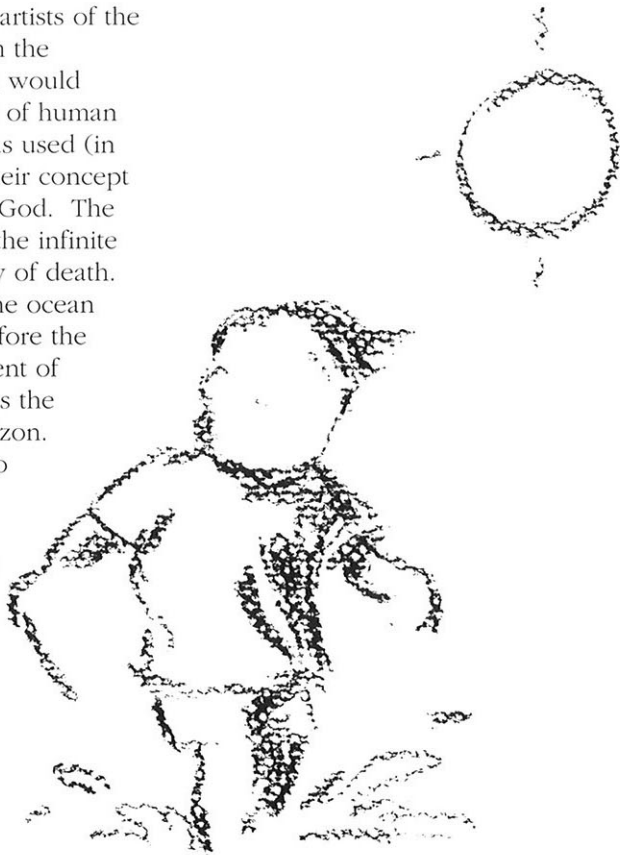
little problems of current life
become meaningless.

Painting the ocean gives a lot of freedom to the artist because it has no rigid form or colours. It is a mutable flexible element which reflects the light of the sun and the skies. The ocean has also been used as a symbol, as under the heat of the sun the water evaporates and forms part of the sky, it symbolises the transformation of matter into spirit: salvation. It becomes then a spiritual subject. We see this in the work of Romantic artists of the XIX century. For them the greatness of the ocean would question the greatness of human beings. The ocean was used (in painting) to express their concept of the sublime and of God. The ocean would express the infinite and also the possibility of death. The voyage through the ocean would express fear before the greatness of this element of water, but also hope as the sun rises over the horizon. The ocean was used to question our destiny and the obstacles we encounter in reaching it.

As my vision becomes wider, unlimited, and the seed of this vision is more and more clear, then the outcome - the creation of my art - becomes a beautiful expression. In contemporary art the quality of beauty seems left behind. As we awaken our spiritual consciousness we value beauty as an expression of harmony and unity within ourselves, within nature and in relationship with others.



Mira Subirana is an artist based in Barcelona. She is the Director of the University's centres throughout Spain.



THE POLITICS OF ECSTASY

*The row of windows
Shining with muted light.
Shaft their gentle rays
On the eyes of my vision
And I feel a cool gaze
Fall over mine.
And someone else I love
Murmurs "everything shows
in a face"*

*And I must have listened for
hours
As they said you couldn't
teach love,
As they said you couldn't
purity,
As they argued endless
That people don't change.*

*And all the while my mind
Drifted through the golden
memories
Of the shining house of light
Where so many souls
Were made over anew
Filled by the silence
Of their peace and bliss*

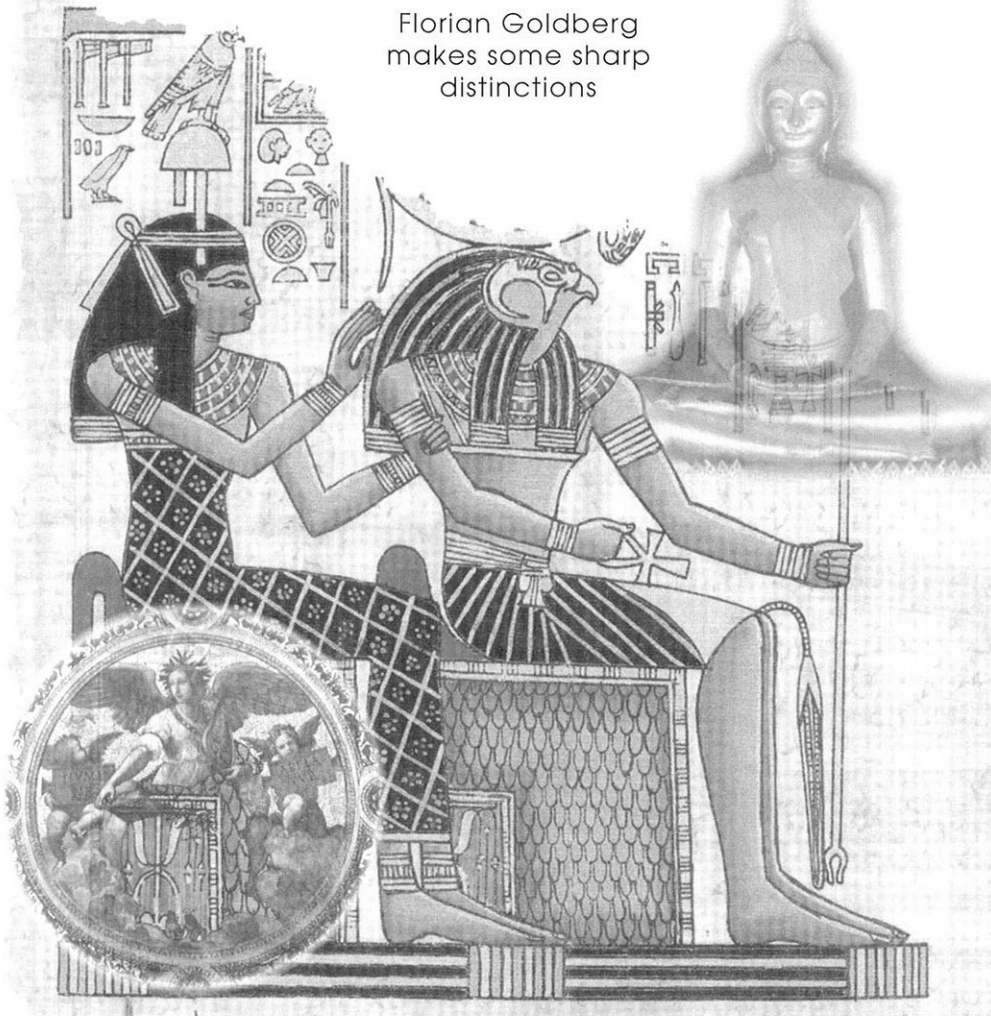
*And I knew it wasn't so
And I knew it wasn't so.*

Paul Desmond

PHILOSOPHY, KNOWLEDGE & SPIRITUALITY

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE?

Florian Goldberg makes some sharp distinctions



Schopenhauer, the nineteenth century German philosopher who repeatedly professed to be a Buddhist, once remarked that it was no more necessary for a philosopher to be a saint than for a sculptor to be a beautiful human being. It was therefore quite acceptable for a philosopher very calmly to give advice which he himself had no intention of following.

In this remark, which at first glance appears to be quite harmless, there lies a problem central to western philosophy. It orientates itself according to the logical consistency of its theories and abstractions rather than by

reference to the practical implications of life. The academic philosopher can spend a lifetime producing grand theories without feeling compelled to include within them an explanation of himself, let alone allowing the validity of his philosophy to be tested in the light of his personal life. He is primarily an intellectual and therefore measures his progress by the yardstick of the expansion of his capacity to think.

If we give philosophy the meaning it has acquired in Europe since Socrates, then it is essentially an intellectual, deductively progressing collection of knowledge. The western

philosopher has to dismiss as mere sentimentality any form of knowledge which does not fit within this framework: "One should remain silent about that which cannot be put into words!" wrote Wittgenstein in his *Tractatus* to indicate that anything that does not conform to the laws of logic is not a proper object of philosophical study.

This has contributed to the approach of our academic philosophy which is still at pains to give equal regard to the philosophies of other cultures such as those of India; it relegates them to the back seat of mysticism, religion and faith, and despite the

evident shortcomings of its own structure, still silently clings to the conviction that its own apparatus is more advanced.

Nevertheless, the experience of the First World War prompted certain groups of European intellectuals to question the validity of this approach. Catastrophic consequences had ensued from this war despite the enormous philosophical and scientific achievements of the younger western culture. Obviously all these achievements had left the very core of the human persona untouched and untransformed! Thinkers such as C.G. Jung and Hermann Hesse in Germany, Romain Rolland in France and Aldous Huxley in England initiated a reorientation in European thought which rigid mainstream academics had so far shunned.

The main thrust of this reorientation has been, and still is, to break free from western christian paradigms and to absorb the spirit of other cultures such as those from India and China. The attraction is not so much the theories and hypotheses as the fact that in-built, and an indispensable part of every Asian philosophy is the practice of meditation and an understanding of the self.

It is not that this approach is totally alien to western thought, but the tentative steps along this path taken by the Neo-Platonics or the medieval mystics were not firm enough to leave much of an imprint.

If we speak of spirituality today, in most cases we think of the meditative practice of a philosophical system which has emerged from an eastern background. The intermingling of things religious and mystical within philosophical thinking, which of course horrifies the classical western philosopher is, in this context, an absolute necessity for

the inner progress of the meditator. One's interest is no longer the accumulation of objective knowledge, in which a world separated from the perceiver finds description but the longing to make the knowledge a part of oneself. Thus *spirituality* deals with a different form of knowledge. Knowledge acquired through meditation is not the stuff of which debates and discussions are made. One who possesses such knowledge is freed from having to prove himself since the integrity of his being speaks its own language, a language which cannot be misunderstood.

Therefore, a fundamental distinction must be made between philosophical and spiritual knowledge. Philosophical knowledge is derived from the correct use of the laws of thought and its validity must be subject to assessment by the proper application of these laws. Spiritual knowledge does not make such a claim. It is not founded on logic but rather seeks to further the inner transformation of those using it. Its validity begins when it triggers a transformation and that validity can only be discerned by whomsoever possesses it, although others may validate it as a positive influence.

If, therefore, together with Schopenhauer, we would allow a philosopher to teach on the basis of his abstract insight, then the opposite criteria must be applied to a spiritual practitioner. If his words do not stem from his immediate inner experience, they carry no weight! Only that which has left an impact on his life is worthy of our attention, and even if he were to develop a high quality rational system we cannot grant *him* an audience, since that which has not changed *him* cannot help us! And at this point of time, after thousands of years of fruitless philosophising, it is the proof of transformation that is

needed in order to pull us out of the lethargy engendered by our overbred intellects.



Florian Goldberg is a student and teacher based in the University's Cologne Centre.

THE WISE MAN

*The chimes at the skylight
Speaking to the wind
Echo the distance of the
thoughts
That wander through his
mind.*

*The almost fragile lines upon
his face,
Reflect an inner radiance
As he climbs ever higher
Over fresh levels of
experience.*

*Silhouetted against this world
He seems to shine brighter
As he quietly sits
So detached and sublime.*

*In this world
But not of it -
Eternal child
Of another more golden time*

MEDITATION

*Silence dawns
Vibrant with experience
We sit humbled
By our depths of feeling
Gazing into
The skies of our thoughts
And time and space softly
fade*

Into being.
Paul Desmond

CELEBRATING 100 YEARS

Sister Pratima reports on last year's major interreligious dialogue in Chicago

One hundred years ago, Chicago brought the people of 'religion' together for the first time in human history. Since that time there have been many interreligious gatherings around the world. Organisations such as the World Conference on Religion and Peace (WCRP), International Association for Religious Freedom (IARF), the World Congress of Faiths (WCF) and the Temple of Understanding have continued to serve as international organisations based on the principles of interfaith work.

Although the city of Chicago hosted the

first Parliament of the World's Religions in 1893, it really did not have any active interfaith organisation. In 1988, a small group of committed and willing hearts came together to begin a process of interfaith dialogue and to celebrate a centennial of the first Parliament. A board of 52 trustees, 250 national and international co-sponsoring organisations and 14 local host committees co-operated to organise the event.

Why Interfaith Understanding and Co-operation?

We no longer live in a singular society. Our societies have become pluralistic. As a result our problems are much more complex and critical. And we so often hear that religion is the cause. As a community we are challenged to find ways in which we can enjoy sustainable and peaceful lives in harmony with ourselves and nature.

Religions provide the wisdom to see and the strength to practise the

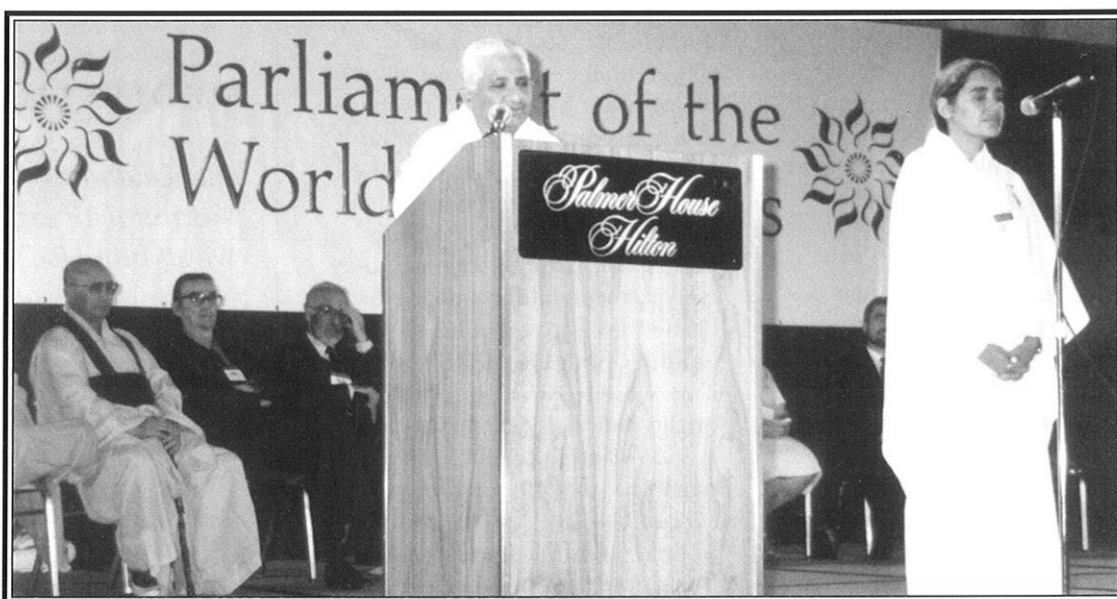
values which are needed to help resolve our problems in the making of a better world.

There is an urgent need to see that we are still interdependent. When we forget this we become the cause of problems. This has consequences for us as individuals and for the world around us. When we acknowledge our interdependence we are inspired to perform wise actions which can lead to benefits for ourselves and the world.

When we identify ourselves as spiritual beings we are aware of our shared world of ideas, cultures, traditions, beliefs and values. We are able to experience the close connection of being brothers and sisters in one family and, and at the same time, cherish our unique diversity.

The 1993 Parliament of the World's Religions illustrated this dimension of interfaith work. The thousands of people that became part of this Parliament represented almost every faith tradition. The 1893 Parliament had 45 religions, the 1993 Parliament brought together 125 religions. This large religious mosaic was one of a kind, different from any other religious gathering held in the past century.

For 9 days, cultures of the world



Dadi Prakashmani speaking at the Parliament of the World's Religions, Chicago, September 1993

assembled in Chicago. It promised a future of interreligious dialogue and its implications. The 700 programmes included plenary sessions, major presentations, workshops, panel discussions and interfaith celebrations. This gave the multiplicity of faiths the opportunity to address communally such critical issues as environment, population, violence and women's issues.

The Parliament was a spiritual journey for those who planned it and the pilgrimage of a lifetime for those who came to it. Chicago presented to the world a model for a community finding its global reality in its spiritual diversity. The powerful presence of the Native Americans, unlike the 1983 Parliament, was a highlight for the event.

The outcome was an interfaith commitment to the promotion of spiritual values. The growing concern to balance dialogue with silence, and the understanding that words coming from silence could be more profound, was obvious. There was widespread consensus that the interfaith movement should interface with the secular world so that religion may influence decision-making in politics, business, and science.

The Brahma Kumaris continue to share in these efforts. Brahma Kumari Prakashmani was chosen as one of the 24 Presidents to play a symbolic and honorific role for the support of interfaith work. Others include His Holiness the Dalai Lama, Rev. Marcus Braybrooke, Father Theodore Hesburgh, Rev. Wesley Ariarajah and Sri Singh Sahib Jathedar Manjit Singh.

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Sister Pratima is one of the organising committee for the celebration. She is the Director of the University's centre in Chicago.

MEANWHILE ... IN BANGALORE

Sister Maureen reports from India

"People do not know enough about their own religion; if they did, there would be no question of conflict between religions". These words, spoken by the Prime Minister of India took the audience at the FICCI auditorium in Delhi into a thoughtful silence. "Religion is only skin deep," he went on. "If you ask someone why they follow a particular religion, they will answer, because my father followed it as did my father before him." We are in a situation where because of our superficial practice of religion, we are not able to develop the power of spirituality that is needed to take us beyond conflict.

Perhaps part of the aim of the Sarvo Dharma Sammelan, held in the beautiful garden city of Bangalore was to get 'behind the skin' of religion. Sarvo Dharma Sammelan literally means 'A Gathering of all Religions' and gather they did. About 500 representatives from 30 countries, colourfully garbed and in a spirit of 'togetherness' spent four days in workshops, discussions, prayer and worship.

Prebendary Marcus Braybrooke, Chairman of the Conference, during the traditional lamp-lighting inauguration, set the tone: "The greatest impact that this gathering can make is by the quality of our life together, our willingness to listen to each other, the depth of our sharing and caring for each

other." Other lamp-lighters, the Catholic Archbishop of Karnataka, His Excellency the Governor of Karnataka and Dadi Prakashmani, Head of the Brahma Kumaris, throughout the Conference, echoed his sentiments. The Governor staked human survival on our ability to establish and sustain humanism and a spirit of compassion and tolerance.

Three imaginative programmes continued over the next four days. Programme One - Shared Visions for Interreligious Dialogue: Planning for the Next Century, took a group of about 70 through a process of vision-building with its practical application.

Participants in Programme Two visited local religious communities experiencing the wealth of multi-faith India. Programme Three - Religious Resources for Understanding and Co-operation, split up into a series of workshops looking at the role of religion in conflict situations, education and ecology.

In the evenings we were delighted by traditional Indian dance and a performance by Robin Ramsay and Christine Mahoney of 'The Frog from the Sea', a humorous dramatisation of the 1893 Parliament .

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Sister Maureen is Programmes Co-ordinator at the University's International Centre in London.



Representatives of the interfaith organisations and religious leaders on a visit to Taralabalu Kendra during the Sarvo Dharma Sammelan in Bangalore.

LAUNCH OF VISIONS OF A BETTER WORLD

Chris Drake at the bedside

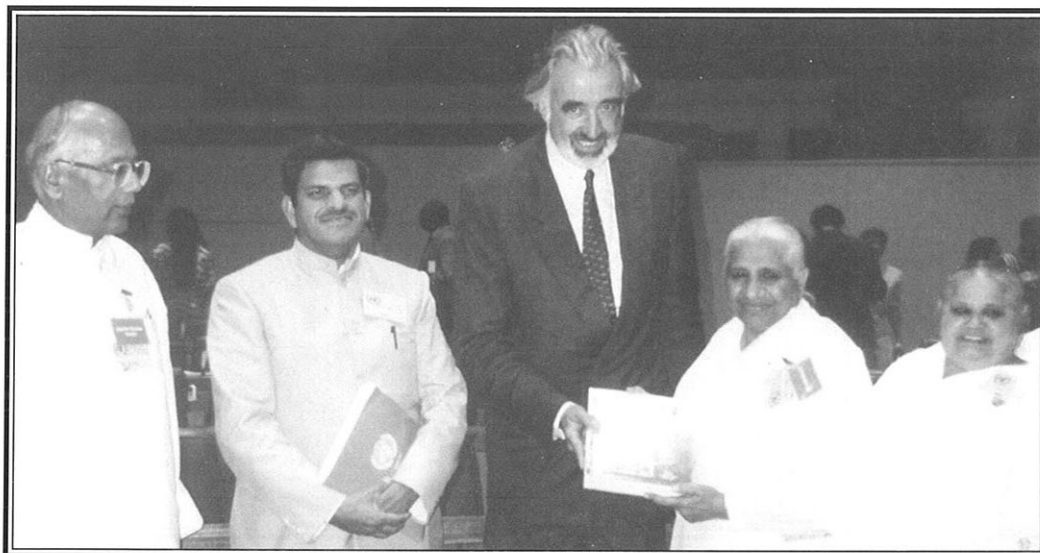
At long last, after three years of inception and two years in the womb, it was born. The book, *VISIONS OF A BETTER WORLD*, based on the "Global Co-operation for a Better World" project, finally arrived. Well nearly! At the launch at the United Nations on 8th September 1993 only four pristine hand-bound versions were the tangible evidence of a large print run still rolling off the press in Hong Kong and being stitched and bound in China.

September 8th was a full day, and a team of ushers and helpers began taking their places inside the UN building in New York well before 9.00am to greet and receive a distinguished gathering of 60 visionaries who had come especially for the launch from as far afield as Australia, Poland, Bolivia, and, of course, Mt Abu. The morning saw a high-powered dialogue on the internal dynamics of co-operation and its underlying values, skilfully interwoven with a very profound sharing of personal experiences and yearnings for a better world. Participants included two representatives from Vice-President Gore's office, the

President of the Stock Exchange of Bolivia, the Head of a major publishing company in Brazil, representatives from major corporations of the USA such as IBM and LL Bean, international civil servants, senior diplomats and representatives of Non-Governmental Organisations.



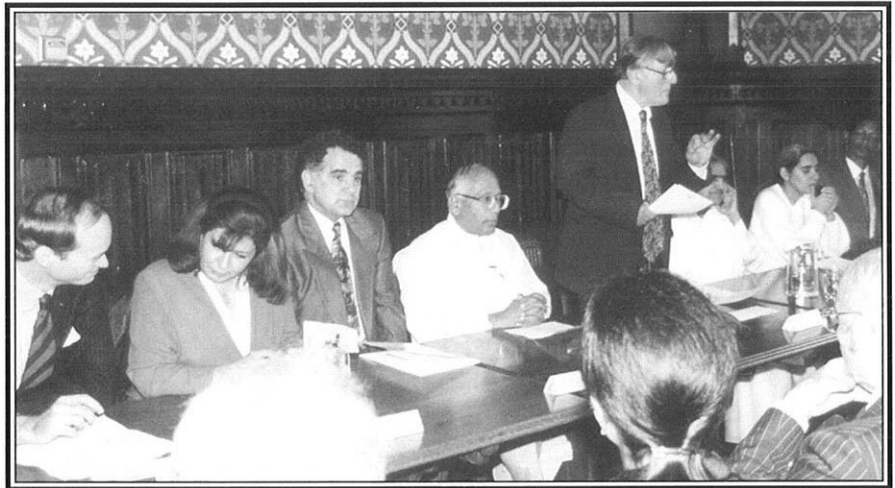
The event was hosted by the Ambassador to the United Nations of Benin and co-ordinated by Lord Ennals with Canon Lloyd Casson and Michele Hunt (Director, Federal Quality Institute, USA) as moderators and held in an intimate but official setting in the wood-panelled conference room of the United Nations. UN interpreters enabled the dialogue to take place in various languages. The enthusiasm of the gathering was such that an additional, unscheduled, session following lunch was quickly convened to further the discussions and develop practical proposals for action that could be implemented over the coming months. Attention was focused on four specific areas:



Marcos Vianello-Chiodo, Asst Sec Gen of the Dept of Public Affairs at the United Nations in New York receives Visions of a Better World from Dadi Prakashmani

- a) Learning as a continuing lifelong experience.
- b) The use of television, radio and print media to disseminate wisdom rather than just information.
- c) The establishment of a network of dedicated visionaries and persons concerned with a better world.
- d) The formation of national associations, and ultimately an international organisation, to develop and implement appropriate recommendations to help improve the world.

Many were enthusiastic for the dialogue to become an annual event to review the progress of the previous year. Almost all agreed that the discussion could have continued for much longer, but 5.45pm was the time scheduled for the official presentation of VISIONS OF A BETTER WORLD to the United Nations. The host for the occasion was again the Ambassador of Benin, and the gathering of some 300 guests included members of the diplomatic corps, UN officials and NGO representatives. The speakers included participants from the morning dialogue as well as Ambassador Samuel Insanally of Guyana, the President of this year's General Assembly, Under-Secretary General James Jonah and Marcos Vianello-Chiodo, Assistant Secretary-General of the Department of Public Information who received the book from Dadi Prakashmani on behalf of the United Nations. The celebrations



The Launch of Visions of a Better World at The House of Commons in London. L. to R. Chris Drake, compiler of the Book, Mrs Abla Abu Nowar, Dr Ral Antic, Jagdish Chander Hassija, Lord Ennals, Dadi Janki, Sister Jayanti and Ken Butcher.

continued at a reception on the west terrace of the UN building with some 2,500 hors d'oeuvres, a Jazz band, a well-known singer from Lebanon and his band, as well as an enormous cake in the shape of the book, iced: "A gift to the world from the people of the world".

Thousands of miles away, but shortly afterwards, our host at the Houses of Parliament in London was Lord Ennals, Co-Chair Global Co-operation International Advisory Committee. At twelve noon on 21st September he welcomed about 100 distinguished guests including High Commissioners, Ambassadors, religious leaders, scientists, lawyers, journalists, educationalists and other professionals, gathered together to launch the book further on its journey around the world. It was five and a half years ago

that the project Global Co-operation for a Better World was launched from the Houses of Parliament, full of hope and inspiration that together with the ethic of co-operation, we can build a better world. Some of the practical results of the project were shared by Dr Ral Antic, Chairman of the National Asthma Campaign, born out of Global Co-operation in Australia. As a direct result of the campaign deaths from asthma have decreased by 20%. Mrs Abla Abu Nowar, Director of the Boy Scouts and Girl Guides in Jordan, brought greetings from HRH Princess Basma and read a vision of one of her girl guides included in the book.

In the evening at Global Co-operation House, the International Centre of the Brahma Kumaris, an event to celebrate the launch took place for an audience of 500. Lord Ennals commented on The Global Vision statement; the final synthesis of many tens of thousands of visions that had been given to the project from 129 countries and said: "Perhaps five years ago people would have felt that these ideas of a better world would be too idealistic. Well, today we see some of these becoming a reality in different parts of the world."



Chris Drake is one of the writers and compilers of Visions of a Better World



Participants at the Global Vision Seminar, Global Retreat Centre Oxford, September 1993



Carol Rickard reports
on the first
International Forum
for the Arts

Artists cooling off during a break from the symposium in Sardinia

CREATIVE SPARKS IN SARDINIA

Carol Rickard reports

What better place to hold an International Forum of the Arts than in the glorious natural theatre of Sardinia. In an atmosphere of security and comfort, actors and painters, designers and directors, sculptors and musicians came to share their deepest and newest insights into creativity, knowing that among other artists the spirit would be understood.

It was, as one artist commented, "Amazing to find eight people with such an immediate rapport; where everyone understood the sense of what each other was saying and found complete consensus." And a director added, "At times in our discussion, I was overwhelmed with happiness and a sense of complete satisfaction. One of the members drew a portrait of another: it was such a happy face; the face of an artist in communion with other artists."

The participants were drawn from all four corners by two main convictions: an awareness that time is urging transformation in the arts and in the individual, and a desire to be instruments to inspire transformation in others.

All agreed that since the Age of Enlightenment, artists have taken on the responsibility of awakening the conscience of society. Through the implication of their work, they have preserved a sense of unity despite increasing diversity. Serious artists have always been the ones who refused to conform, and have continually pioneered steps into unknown territory in order to reach a point of relevant insight and expression. As such, they are innately aware of their charge to find a new set of values and uphold them through discovering the ethical and spiritual foundations of their artistic work. "Only when the seed of change takes root within us individuals will change take place in the world," said a musician.

It was strongly viewed that the life and character of the artist has itself to be an example; a paradigm for change. Recently, there has been a resurgence of art on fantasy, myth, legend and the hero. This is in recognition that we now need heroes; for people with the courage and conviction to leave symbolically the wasteland (of the mind) and venture into the unknown to find the panacea to restore life back into the kingdom (of the spirit). "Creativity is something you cannot learn. It is something that comes when you let go of fear," said a filmmaker. "Art allows a different aspect of the personality to develop: that of openness; an openness to the divine," said a painter.

The more an artist develops his own inner qualities and inner clarity, the more powerfully and clearly the meaning of his art is conveyed. It is time for artists to make a choice: to simply reflect the state of the world, or to change and uplift it. It is time for art to move away from the "Emperor's Clothes" syndrome, or from "bleeding" over people. All artists are now called upon to move in unity towards serving humanity with harmony, beauty and truth.

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FEBRUARY 1995

**INTERNATIONAL
MULTI-DISCIPLINARY
CONFERENCE**

In February 1995, the University will be the host to leaders from all areas of society around the world in an international conference entitled "The Spiritual Response to the Changing Times." The conference will discuss a variety of important issues within a global agenda, such as the family, education, interreligious harmony, the environment, health, population, women; media, science, politics, business and justice.



FEBRUARY 1994 - THE FIRST 'ABU DIALOGUE'

In February 1994, the University hosted the first 'Abu Dialogue' at the Headquarters in Mt. Abu. The theme of the Dialogue was "Exploring Uncharted Territory" and drew together leaders, change agents and professionals in key positions from around the world to work together in the first of an annual series of meetings. The 'Abu Dialogue' was followed by the annual International Retreat, 'The Meditation Experience'. Full report in Issue 3

**INTERNATIONAL
EVENTS**



**JANUARY 1994
FOURTH SCIENCE
SYMPOSIUM**



In January 1994, over 100 scientists from all over the world gathered at the ancient Mayan ruins at Uxmal in the State of Yucatan in Mexico. There they participated in the Fourth International Symposium on Science and Consciousness. During the following four days they focused on "The Nature of Consciousness and the Formation and Application of Values." Full report in Issue 3

For address details of over 3,000 Centres worldwide please contact one of the following: **INDIA:** WORLDWIDE HEADQUARTERS, PO BOX NO.2, **MT ABU**, RAJASTHAN 307501; **EUROPE:** INTERNATIONAL CENTRE, GLOBAL CO-OPERATION HOUSE, 65 POUND LANE, **LONDON** NW10 2HH (81) 459 1400; GLOBAL RETREAT CENTRE, NUNEHAM PARK, NUNEHAM COURTENAY, **OXFORD** OX44 9PG (86738) 551; **AFRICA:** PO BOX 12349, MAUA CLOSE, OFF PARKLANDS ROAD, **NAIROBI**, KENYA (2) 743 572; **ASIA AND FAR EAST:** 16B HUNG ON BUILDING, 3 TIN HAU TEMPLE ROAD, CAUSEWAY BAY, **HONG KONG** (852) 806 3008; 78 ALT STREET, ASHFIELD, **SYDNEY** NSW 2131 (2) 799 9880; **SOUTH AMERICA:** R. ESTEVAM DE ALMEIDA 53/69, **SAO PAULO** SP 05014-010 (11) 864 3694; **USA:** GLOBAL HARMONY HOUSE, 45 MIDDLE NECK ROAD, GREAT NECK, **NEW YORK**, NY 11021 (516) 773 0971

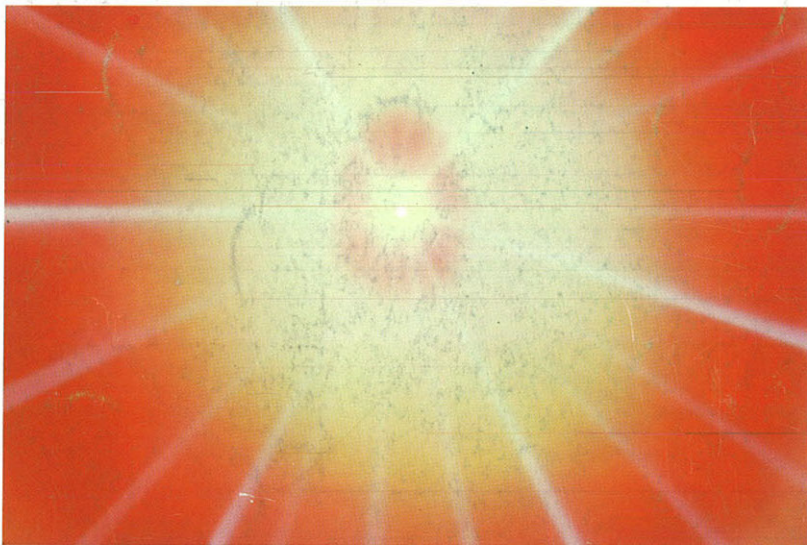


Stop for a moment.

Be aware of nothing else but the moment. Let your awareness capture everything around you exactly as it is. Don't add to it, don't consume it, don't

judge it, don't name it, don't even let it move you.

Now in the silence of the moment be aware of yourself. Let your thoughts melt back into your being. Be still, like a pond. Be calm. Be quiet, quiet...quiet.



Extend that moment of quietness into the utter silence at the heart of your being. Allow the silence to grow and fill your awareness. Stay at the centre of that silence as the movement and the noise of the world continues around you.

Watch through silent eyes, listen through silent ears and speak only from the silence in your mind.

Cultivate this silence and gradually the toys of science will cease to attract and distract you.

Return to this silence often and be refreshed and replenished.

Share the power of your silence to cool the fires in the minds of others.

And be ready to receive the presence of the silent One, the one you know as God.

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