



Change your thinking...  
Change your life...

## Editorial

### Join Me in a Spiritual Shower...

In this issue we feature some reflective and moving articles on the nature of Purity. I am particularly indebted to Dr Wayne Dyer for his article *Wishes Fulfilled* which echoes the text from the Gospel of Mark (11.24). *'Therefore I tell you, whatsoever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it, and it will be yours.'* I am also grateful to Graham Sergeant for sharing with me his documentary about the life of the dancer and painter, Elizabeth Twistington Higgins and for the lovely cover photo.

Many years ago a soap manufacturer employed market researchers to go into schools in Kent to test a new kind of skincare. The children were asked a variety of questions and subsequently a soap was launched on the mass market, which contrary to the fashion of the time for highly coloured and fragrant soap, was devoid of colour and perfume. This followed in the footsteps of the original *Simple soap*, which was the first of its type to be launched. One of the main attractions of these products is that they are pure and therefore free of irritants. Throughout history the ideal of Purity has always had a deep and universal appeal. This is undoubtedly because it is of the very nature of the soul ~ pristine, unsullied, free from adulteration. Ideas too are pristine and pure, and to symbolise this Jacob Boehme, the 16<sup>th</sup> Century mystic, rightly called them *beautiful virgins*.

As souls we always have choice, either to honour our precious, pristine nature by operating, as Jesus said, *'In the world but not of it'*, or to immerse

ourselves in states of mind and actions which obscure our radiant beauty. It is rather like living in a house with dirty windows where it is impossible to see out or to see in. This inevitably has a depressing effect both upon ourselves and others. If we choose to wallow in a muddy bath, our light will undoubtedly be veiled, but once it is washed off our authentic nature can shine through again.

It is important to remember that no matter how ingrained the darkness obscuring the light of the soul, it cannot penetrate her simple, essential essence because that is pure spirit. This simple essence will always urge the soul to generate Herculean strength enough to free herself from the dark night of ignorance so that, once more, she can see the Light of Truth. To reveal herself to herself she must, metaphorically speaking, take a 'spiritual shower'. This consists of prayer, meditation, contemplation, worship and ritual which are cleansing agents washing her clean. However, paradoxically, this cleansing must be done without touching the dirt. This is beautifully symbolised in one of the *Twelve Labours of Hercules* where Hercules (symbolising our souls) is asked to cleanse the Augean Stables, which have not been cleansed for thirty years. Instead of doing this himself Hercules diverts two rivers – Alpheus and Peneus – so that they flow through the stables and the work is accomplished. The secret of cleansing the dirt without touching it, is encapsulated in those famous words of Jesus about being *in* the world but not *of* it. This points to keeping ourselves pure by finding our Centre – where we are aligned to the Divine – and *staying there*, whilst *at the same time* being fully

present to each circumstance as it arises. We acknowledge our darkness and cleanse ourselves of it *without identifying with it*. If we do not do this, we are lost because we then lose our perspective. In this sense Hercules is like the Director of a film set. There may be lots of 'parts' but the Director must retain his overview. Thus, staying firmly in his chair, he remains sensitive to all the 'parts' but refrains from identifying with any one of them. Only then is he able to do his job effectively. The Director is firmly aligned to his own centre and cannot be moved from it by any of the actors which, if you like, can be seen as aspects of ourselves.

The *Twelve Labours of Hercules* explores the Path of the hero soul and the universal challenges which appear to us all on our Journey from the many to the One and from the finite to the Infinite. Throughout our lives, the gauntlet is repeatedly thrown down. As each challenge arises, do we turn away or embrace it? In the face of these challenges, can we practise to remain perfectly centred? If we can do this, we can, figuratively speaking, 'keep our head when all about us are losing theirs'. We retain our essential purity by refusing to be persuaded or cajoled against our own better judgement.

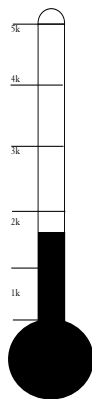
I would like to thank all our writers for writing so cogently about the spirit of Purity and raising important points. My wish is that this celebration of Purity will help us all to focus more on the essential purity of our own souls and the importance of purity in thought and in action. Finally, I hope that this issue will be your spiritual shower and that you will come out of it cleansed, refreshed and ready to go! ☒

# BOSHAM HOUSE NEWS

## Wildlife Pond and Bog Garden Project ~ we are getting there!



Thanks to your generosity our *Wildlife and Bog Garden Project* is growing by the minute. We would like to thank you for your thoughtful donations to this exciting development in the grounds of Bosham House. In our mind's eye we already see the pond and bog garden as a reality ~ all manner of creatures will come to refresh themselves from it and the 'prayer meeting' HT Hamblin saw will gather strength: *'Have I told you of how at one time when coming down a road through the woods a gorgeous cock pheasant walked slowly across in front of me and disappeared in a little copse. I went quietly into the copse and there he was not far from my feet. There he stood and there I stood. Soon a half grown rabbit came along and crouched down close at our feet. This is surely a meeting of angels, I thought. So we held a little prayer meeting together.'* The fund currently stands at £1,965.04.

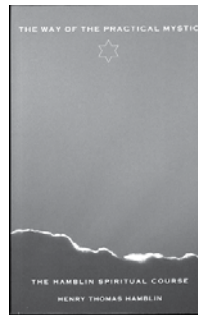


## Bees thriving at Bosham House and a visit from Chidham Primary School



We are delighted to report that our bees are growing in number. On Tuesday 8 May many of our winged friends took flight and clung in great swarms to an apple tree near the hive and a mulberry tree to the east of the grounds. This was a really exciting event and Jan Jenkins writes more about it on page 22 of this issue. We were also delighted to welcome children from Chidham Primary School and you can read more about this in Sue's *Gardening Matters* on page 11.

## Special Offer ~ make a gift membership and receive *The Way of the Practical Mystic*



For this issue only... make a gift membership and we will offer you, or a friend, that jewel in the crown of Hamblin's books, *The Way of the Practical Mystic*, for the special price of £7 to include p&p. This offer ends on 31 August, so please place your order now whilst stocks last. *The Way of the Practical Mystic* is a twenty six lesson course in awareness and gives the reader detailed help in developing affirmations designed to realize abundance and harmony in his or her life. Hamblin also gives the reader pointers as to how universal brotherhood may grow among people, through the inner work they do.

## Please support Elizabeth's fund-raising event for tigers

Saturday 21 July 2012, 7pm,  
Hamblin Hall, Bosham House,  
Main Road, Bosham,  
West Sussex PO18 8PJ,  
01243 572109




*'Only 3,200 tigers left on Earth...' Together, we can make a difference ...*

During the evening we will hear an up-to-date report about the fight to save the last wild tigers from John Berry and Fiona Rose, International Fund for Animal Welfare (IFAW).

Russell Stone will be treating us to inspired music, there will be wine, juice and pizza and free goody bags!

We are aiming to raise a good sum so please be as generous as you can.

We suggest £10 per head, £15 for a couple and £5 for children.

All profits will go to the tigers through IFAW (a registered charity). 

**If you would like to make a credit card donation, please call Angela Williams at IFAW on 0207 587 6700.**

# THE HAMBLIN SPIRITUAL COURSE

## Divine Purity

By thinking of chastity and continence, and so on, we produce in the mind a feeling of repression. 'Thou shalt not' is the idea generated. By meditating, however, upon *Purity* there is no repression: there is no idea of crushing out, or smothering anything. There is perfect freedom and harmony, but on a higher plane.

Through meditating upon *Purity* we become changed. Old harmful repressions are dissolved away, lower desires are transmuted and certain emotions are transformed into pure, universal love.

Just what *Purity* is cannot be described; it is something far more transcendently beautiful than we can imagine, but the Divine Mind knows our desire to be cleansed of every vestige of carnal desire, from all that belongs to the lower nature, from all love that is selfish. And the Holy Spirit, whose glorious function it is to pray for us (pleads for us in yearnings that can find no words), interprets our desires aright,

so that our prayer, or meditation, is in harmony with the Divine Will. Through this 'intercession', or Divine prayer, on our behalf, we become changed into the image of that which we desire. In other words, we grow into the likeness of our Lord.

'But', you will say, '*all my loves are as pure as a mountain stream, and they*



*are not selfish either, for I would do without anything for the sake of my loved ones*'. Yes. Human love can be pure and lovely, a holy thing. There is a tremendous difference



between passion and true love, but even the latter falls short of the Divine Idea of Purity. The more we meditate upon this theme, the more we realise how imperfect our best emotions are and how they need transmuting and purifying by the Divine Flame.

So then, we hold the thought of *Purity* in the top part of our mind, and just rest in the Divine Presence with our face turned towards the Light, with this idea uppermost. As we do this the dross and earthly desire are purged away, the lower is transmuted into the higher, and we become changed from glory unto glory. ☒

## SUBTLE ENERGY HEALING

An introduction to a profound and practical approach to Spiritual Healing.

Saturday 7 July 2.30pm at The Hayloft, Palmers Road, Emsworth. A free talk about this form of healing, with details about the next two-year course, commencing in September for one weekend each month with experienced teacher Dinah Lawson, INEH.

Just turn up, but if you want more details, phone Dinah on 02392-412499 or email her via [dinah.lawson@btinternet.com](mailto:dinah.lawson@btinternet.com). See also [www.ineh.org](http://www.ineh.org) and [thehayloft-emsworth.org.uk](http://thehayloft-emsworth.org.uk).

*"I found the course fascinating, informative, thought provoking, and a major step in my life's journey." DT.*



## 27th July 2012

*At the moment when the Olympic Flame is lit ...*

*Please focus your thoughts on supporting WORLD PEACE.*

*Thank you. Please network.*



# Honesty and Purity of Expression

by Harriet Lang

When it comes to pure openness and honesty, most of us balk at really clearly expressing what is in our hearts and true for us. We limit, we censor, we shave at least a little off the truth and tell others only what we deem is most acceptable or tolerable to them or what shows us in a more favourable light. We rarely rate clear and honest expression as the most important element in our communication with others.

And yet, if we deny this to ourselves and others, we must necessarily put a bar on the amount of intimacy we can experience with others. A first step must be a willingness to own what is in our hearts and minds and admit to ourselves how we truly feel. I would argue that such honesty is perhaps the greatest gift we can give ourselves. If I don't make a commitment of energy and time to knowing myself what chance is there of genuine happiness and satisfaction? If I can't admit to what resides in my heart and mind, how can I ever learn to accept and love myself? And, if I can admit to my deepest longings and fears and queries about life, surely a willingness to share such feelings with others gives them licence, at least to some degree, to do the same?

We fear that we may hurt or offend others with our honesty but whilst one might argue that truth can easily be used as a weapon to hurt or maim others, it seems that such

truth must be limited and only focusing on negative aspects. At a superficial level, all sorts of negative thoughts and interpretations pass through our minds and we can easily pass these on to others and cause suffering. But, a deeper commitment to honesty must reveal a deeper truth than these kinds of negative interpretations of our lives and other people.

We all have plenty of flaws and emotions that are difficult to deal with, potentially destructive and painful. Staying with all of these feelings and thoughts without trying to control or change or judge them – accepting them just as they are – can lead to a profound sense of the beauty and love and goodness



*Reveal what is in your heart, and you cannot help but touch the soul of another with this energy.*

in all things. The overall pattern is beautiful simply because of its creative interplay of dark and light. If we suppress or censor too much of what might appear negative, we risk severing our connection with vital parts of ourselves and I use the term 'vital' in both its meanings – 'vital' as in crucially important but also 'vital' as in essential for our vitality. Our lives can become half lives as we choose which parts of us are allowed voice or expression in the world or even in our own minds. This isn't about giving free rein to cycles and spirals of negative feelings and thoughts that amplify all our fears, but about accepting that such feelings are present and

aiming to see the truth that lies beneath them.

If we sever and suppress what we consider negative we become shadows and limited versions of who we really are. It is possible to look at a stream of negative thoughts and ask what is beautiful in it and to ask that it show us the truth our soul wants to communicate to our conscious selves. We might find needs and desires and creative urges that demand our attention and have to be heard and acted upon, without which we can never truly be happy. This article began with a wish to speak in praise of speaking our innermost truth to others and needs to return to that particular point. Honesty has a life of its

own and an energy. It vibrates with a purity and this in itself has a positive impact on other people. Reveal what is in your heart, and you cannot help but touch the soul of another with this energy. But, before doing so, ask whether you are really being honest because if truth is being used as a weapon to hurt others, I might argue it is unlikely to be honest at a deep soul level. If you are being true to the energy and feeling and meaning you find in your own soul, it cannot be abusive but only healing. Another's feelings might be hurt or you might receive disapproval, but their soul will also recognise the purity of truth that is present and be grateful for it.

Many of us hide so much and limit ourselves accordingly, myself included. It takes a great deal of courage to communicate from the heart and to choose honesty over what may feel like much safer half truths that don't offend or trouble others. For our outer lives to reflect the nature of our souls, we need to make the braver choice and be as truthful as possible. ☒

# Wishes Fulfilled

by Dr Wayne Dyer, Ph.D

*He has written several books, including 'Wishes Fulfilled', the one from which this article takes its title. Wayne will be appearing at the I Can Do It conference in London in September. Further details of this can be found by logging onto [www.hayhouse.co.uk](http://www.hayhouse.co.uk)*

I have a quotation on the wall near my bed that's from a recording that metaphysics teacher Neville Goddard made in 1944. It reads: *'Make your future dream a present fact, by assuming the feeling of the wish fulfilled.'* This is what I read and practise each night before I sleep. These are the words that eventually prompted me to write my new book *Wishes Fulfilled*.

Your imagination and your concept of yourself are formless thoughts that you can change. Re-create your thoughts—making your imagination your own private inner territory—and ultimately you will act based on how you've used this amazing power that you possess. Furthermore, allowing your highest Self to rule means all things are possible.

But the most important part of this quotation is the word *feeling*; the *feeling* of the wish fulfilled. Become aware of the importance of feelings and their crucial role in advancing you from someone who merely *has* wishes to *experiencing* your wishes in your present life. So many people remain unaware of the importance of feeling that it's almost as if it were a secret ingredient in creating a wish-fulfilled life.

To put it as plain and simple as I know how to make it: if there's no assumption of the feeling of the wish fulfilled, there's no fulfilment of your wishes. In other words, it is absolutely imperative to learn how to assume, in your imagination, the feeling of already having and being what you desire. Your thoughts are without

form. If we could find a location in space for these thoughts, they would be in your head—but your head has boundaries, and your thoughts do not have boundaries, so they could reside anywhere or nowhere.

You choose the thought that you prefer from the trillions of thoughts that continuously flow through your mind on that never-ending conveyor belt. You can pick one that suits you, put it back, and take another at any time. Your imagination is the repository of thoughts that you opt to keep. Your *feelings*, on the other hand, are experienced in your body—the place where you do all of your living in this corporeal material world. Your feelings play more of a role in your life than you realize.

You may have placed a picture in your imagination of who you'd like to be, but if you can't assume the feeling of that wish fulfilled, you'll find it impossible to make your future dream a present fact. Yet you do have this wondrous power to take a thought that is in your imagination, live from that place in your daily life, and then experience in your body exactly how that feels and stay with this feeling.

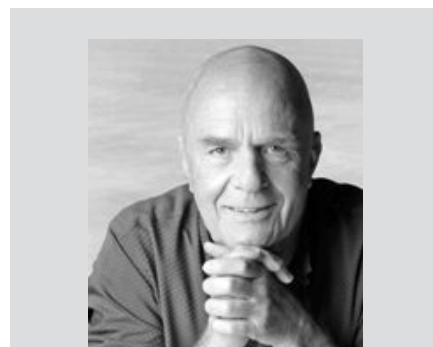
These words are among the most important you will read in my book, and perhaps in your entire lifetime. Your feelings are where you *live*. If you have been able to assume the feeling within your heart and genuinely feel the love that this activity brings to you, you will, as Neville states, be in a place where your wish *must be realized*—such is the power of your feelings.

When I wrote *Wishes Fulfilled*, I placed a thought in my imagination concerning the completion of this book and having it published and available to large numbers of people, including you. I had a picture of the completed book sitting in front of me, even when I was only halfway into the first draft. Yet these ideas and pictures were not the driving force that would allow my future dream to be the obvious present fact that it is.

I assumed the feeling of the wish fulfilled, feeling the love in my body as I imagined millions of people learning these lessons that have so impacted my life. I looked at the book jacket, I saw the book as completed, and most important, I felt love in action. My subconscious mind had been programmed to act automatically on the desire I had placed in my imagination.

But the actual fulfilment of that desire came about because, and only because, I have assumed the feeling of the wish fulfilled within me as I was writing my new book, even though it appeared that it had not yet materialized. To impress my subconscious mind with this desirable loving state I was experiencing, I assumed the feeling that would have been mine had I already realized my wish. This is really an exercise in discovering just how powerful a role our feeling state sensations play in the process of mastering the art of manifestation.

When you seek your *wishes to be fulfilled*, remember you are not engaging in an intellectual exercise. You are learning about your Divine spiritual nature and how God works as you. You can look at anything that you have declared in your imagination as *I am* and access the feeling of love in every cell of your body. You will in time impress your subconscious mind with all that it needs in order to match your desires with your reality. ☒



*It is imperative to learn how to assume, in your imagination, the feeling of already having and being what you desire.*

# An Exceptional Life...

**The Life of Elizabeth Twistington Higgins ('Twizzy')**

**6 November 1923 –  
12 September 1990**

**by Elizabeth Medler**

*If ever proof were needed that individuals are capable of making something of their lives in spite of the most adverse conditions, the story of Elizabeth Twistington Higgins provides it.*

*HRH Prince Philip*

*What does it mean to be a remarkable person? Of course we could say that born with the Divine spark within, each and every one of us is inherently remarkable, but how many of us have really actualised even a small proportion of our innate potential... As many of us recognise, it is invariably the 'grit' of life which allows that potential to unfold in sometimes spectacular ways. This was certainly the case for Elizabeth Twistington Higgins. I am indebted to Graham Sergeant for bringing this beautiful soul to my attention. Graham, with his then wife Jacquie, was responsible for the photographs accompanying the book about Elizabeth's life, 'The Dance Goes On', by Marc Alexander. Graham has made a fascinating documentary audio-visual presentation about her life.*

In 1935 Elizabeth was taken by an elder brother to the ballet. The ballet in question was *Les Sylphides*. Later she was to remark: 'It appealed

to the very depths of my being, it touched a hidden chord...I think in a way it went right through to my soul.' Early on in life 'Twizzy' – as Elizabeth came to be called by close friends – took dancing classes, and it became apparent that there was a gift in that direction. However, she did not warm to the idea and neither did her parents. Aside from a normal childhood, it was also noted that Elizabeth had a marked phobia about illness and went out of her way to avoid coming into contact with it. As a teenager she was taken to Sadler's Wells one night, which proved to be a turning point in her life. Subsequently, she attended a dancing academy in Highgate and later went to the Sadler's Wells School. However, Twizzy lacked

stage and still felt that, by working hard, my ambition could be achieved.'

Elizabeth did indeed become a professional dancer, giving eight performances a week plus her dancing classes. She appeared in a production by Ivor Novello and an opera (*Song of Norway*) based on the life of Edvard Grieg. As time moved on, she began to feel that the dancing was for herself and that she would also like to do something for others. So, whilst continuing to dance full-time, she started to work with different groups of children, some of whom were handicapped. She said: 'I always had a horror of illness and disfigurement and I had to steel myself to face these little people.' Little did she know that she was about to join them...



experience and despite a three month trial, she was declared physically unsuited for the Company. At 5'3" to 5'4" she was apparently too tall. Moreover, she was deemed to have a weight problem. But, as proved to be typical of her attitude, she remarked: 'I would not accept my physical limitations. I had set my heart on the

## **A bolt from the blue**

In 1953 Elizabeth was on the way to take her usual class in Queen Square, London when she felt unwell. It transpired that her temperature was 102° and continued to rise. Her hands, which were normally so graceful, were becoming claw-like. She lost control of her left arm and was only able to inhale half-breaths. Sadly, she was diagnosed with polio. Elizabeth began to live much of her life in an iron lung. (This enables people to breathe when normal muscle control has been lost or a person has serious difficulty breathing.) At first she thought the illness was only temporary, but she did not recover and despite some small movement in her right hand, remained paralysed for the rest of her life. The routine of being constantly examined, given enemas, catheterisation and physiotherapy was endless. However, whilst in the lung she was sometimes able to dance ballet in her mind. The vicissitudes she underwent all those years – moving from one hospital

to another, encountering wonderful people and a few not-so-wonderful, are recounted in Marc Alexander's book *'The Dance Goes On'*. Mark was a journalist but for a short time worked as a hospital orderly and met Elizabeth.

With a great deal of trial and error, she learned to breathe through her neck muscles. This means breathing had to become a conscious effort. In 1957 someone at the British Polio Fellowship Hostel suggested: *'Why not try painting'*? From the outset, Elizabeth had a good sense of colour, but it took her nine months to load paint onto her brush. As the years went by it became obvious that she had real talent for painting ~ the sort of talent of which most able-bodied people would be envious. Predictably, perhaps, Elizabeth particularly enjoyed painting dancers and she was very good at it. Reflecting on this, I

the world. She signed a contract with the *Association of Mouth and Foot Painting Artists*, which meant that she received a regular income and this enabled her to become more able to lead an independent life. After some twelve years of living in different hospitals, she was able to move into a flat of her own. This gave her real joy. However, a great light went out of her life when her father died. As a result of this Elizabeth fell behind with her painting. Eager to catch up (there were many orders) she over-taxed her neck muscles and as a result lost control of the brush. The problem persisted and she was obliged to leave off painting. But her creative urge could not be stemmed and with great alacrity she began to write. With the help of a secretary she published a book, *Still Life*, which was translated into seven languages.

*is quite incredible.'* Throughout Elizabeth's life equipment was developed by all sorts of wonderful people to enable her to function at her optimum. But still she returned



### **Elizabeth returns to the ballet**

Later in life miraculously she returned to ballet, giving lessons first to her niece, Penny, and then to girls at the Chelmsford Ballet

Company, auditioning and schooling them for performances. She said: *'I teach verbally. What I'm really doing is to put movements into words, trying to make people understand and do what I want...'* The founder of the Company wrote: *'Since I founded the Chelmsford Ballet Company there has been nothing to compare with the advent of Elizabeth. Her extraordinary ability and dedication under extreme handicap*

to the iron lung each night. Even so she said: *'This is a time when I am most creative because I do not have to concentrate on breathing.'*

In 1971 she was invited to arrange a dance for Holy Communion at Chelmsford Cathedral. At first she was cautious, but then it came to her: *'I knew that in the past dance had been used as a form of worship and later when I researched the subject, I realised it was Man's first way of expressing veneration'*. She was thrilled by the performance and this led to her following more of her bliss in the form of the development of liturgical ballet. Such was the volume of invitations to appear in cathedrals and churches, that she was obliged to form her own group (*The Chelmsford Dancers*) specialising in liturgical ballet and this continued until her death in 1990. Not only did she choreograph, but she designed her own costumes, painting them as they came into her



think it was because she and the dance were one. In his book *'The Dance Goes On'* Marc Alexander writes: *'...Obviously inside herself she was dancing with those figures. When they were poised on one foot she was somehow part of them; it was her arms that were extended and she was on the stage...'* Her paintings went from strength to strength. Her first exhibition was at the Royal Festival Hall; they were purchased by Cunard and by people all over

mind. The dancers performed all over, including prisons. One of the prisoners said: *'I came here really to have a laugh and a joke and more or less throw abuse around, but I was stunned, really stunned by the whole performance.'*

On January 1 1977 she was appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

Asked later in life what she missed most, she said, it was the sense of touch. Her body was numb but as polio does not attack sensory nerves, she could still feel. *'My sister has a most gorgeous puppy who cannot understand why I am the*



This is a brief snapshot of the life of Elizabeth Twistington-Higgins – an exceptional life! ☒

*Photos: Graham Sergeant, FRPS.*

*'I was privileged to work with Elizabeth, photographing her life and work for her biography, 'The Dance Goes On' by Marc Alexander. These photos and many others formed the substance of a successful Fellowship Panel of the Royal Photographic Society in 2008.'*

only one who doesn't pick him up...I would like to shake hands with people and cuddle babies.' She believed that much had been taken from her but much had been given in return. When asked, *'What do you think of as your ultimate goal?'* she replied, *'I should think a nice little dance in heaven.'*



### Photo captions

- 1 Entombed for a good night's sleep in the iron lung.
- 2 Elizabeth mouth painting her favourite subject – Ballet Dancers.
- 3 Elizabeth was totally dependent, unable even to feed herself.
- 4 Tea break for the Company – a welcome break from rehearsals.
- 5 Another picture of dependence...
- 6 Sharing a joke with one of her volunteer drivers.
- 7 The 'Working Party' preparing costumes for a new liturgical ballet.



# In This World but not of This World

by Florrie Collins

*'Heaven is pure, earth is turbid.'*  
~ *The Classic of Purity*

*Florrie lives in Northern California and is a student of the Perennial Philosophy. She has contributed many articles to New Vision and is an ardent supporter of the work of The Hamblin Trust.*

In my youth, I was a fervent vegetarian. Then I read an article by a man who had given up vegetarianism. He had been going through some difficulties, and kind neighbours brought him food which had meat in it. He had the realization that, for him, it would be a greater sin to refuse these gifts than it would be to eat the meat. He saw that his vegetarianism was causing a separation between himself and non-vegetarians.

My mother-in-law liked vegetarianism, but also expressed qualms about it. *'Not that which goeth into the mouth defileth a man; but that which cometh out of the mouth, this defileth a man'*, she quoted. In this story from the New Testament, the disciples were criticized for eating with unwashed hands. Jesus tells the critics that purity or impurity comes from the heart, not from externalities.

It was eye-opening for me to ponder this. My point of view changed, and I began to see that a practice such as vegetarianism could be a form of external purification that might be a distraction from the work of inner purification. How does that which *'cometh out'* of the mouth cause defilement? It must refer to unkind words, and to unkind thoughts as well. The New Testament shows the way to inner purification: practising the Golden Rule, forgiving, and sharing. This means watching thoughts

of resentment, brooding, self-pity, selfishness, superiority, and other indications of ill will and replacing them with an attitude of love and service and good will towards all.

In the long run, I think this inner purification will make us stronger than perfecting practices for external purification, and allows us to remain comfortably in the presence of people with very different beliefs and customs.

*To be able to remain in our troubled world while maintaining pure ideals within is to perform a great service.*

## Life will purify us if we co-operate

Our lives are really a series of lessons. Life will go smoothly for a while, but inevitably problems of some kind will crop up. This is when we need to be on alert that there is a lesson to be learned! We have outgrown some aspect of ourselves and need to redeem some behaviour in favour of a more mature one. We may be unsure exactly what it is we need to do to change and grow. But it has been my experience that when I am open to whatever lesson is attempting to teach itself to me and cooperate with it, instead of protesting and struggling against it, the process is much quicker and smoother!

## Purity is a fruit of spiritual life

According to William James, purity is a fruit of religious life. He writes, *'The shifting of the emotional centre brings with it, first, increase of purity. The sensitiveness to spiritual discords is enhanced, and the cleansing of existence from brutal and sensual elements becomes imperative. Occasions of contact with such elements are avoided: the saintly life must deepen its spiritual consistency and keep unspotted from the world. In some temperaments this need of purity of spirit takes an ascetic*

*turn, and weaknesses of the flesh are treated with relentless severity.'*

Purity can be defined as the absence of defilement. For a person who has purified himself as a result of religious life, the ordinary world might seem shockingly or painfully defiled. Some who have had this experience will be able to live only by separating themselves from the world and its ways.

## In this world but not of it

How can we purify ourselves, and yet not judge or shun others who seem comparatively more impure? How can we avoid separating ourselves from others? It seems to me this type of separation can appear as discrimination, superiority, or exclusiveness, and is a cause of a lot of the friction between various religions we see in the world today. Is it possible to remain in this world and maintain inner purity?

*'Be transformed by the renewing of your mind.'* Transformation through spiritual practice gives us the vision and strength to remain mentally above the impurities of the world, even while immersed in it, like the lotus flower blooming in the mud.

A saint such as Mother Teresa must see each person as a pure and beautiful soul, rather than as a collection of faults and failures.

To be able to remain in our troubled world while maintaining pure ideals within is to perform a great service.

People of pure ideals set a powerful example for others. We learn best by example; being in the presence of those who truly practise goodness and compassion is to experience a great and persuasive teaching. Those with true inner purity uplift and inspire others and bring hope to the discouraged. They are candles in the dark. ☸

# Cycling Across the World for Cancer Research

by Chris Gruar

*I met Chris when cycling along the A259 in Bosham one Sunday morning. He had a board on the back of his bicycle to the effect that he was cycling from the UK to Sydney to raise money for a cancer charity – AICR – the Association for International Cancer Research. Sadly, Chris lost his mother to breast cancer when he was just a child. Now in his 20s, and having become a fully fledged teacher, he is cycling a mammoth 30,000 miles to raise funds. Chris and I stopped off at Fishbourne Roman Palace for a cup of tea and a chat. This article is the result. We think that what Chris is doing is astounding and it would be nice if we could all give him as much support as possible.*

I'm struggling up yet another steep Scandinavian fjord. Sweat is rolling down my face, sourly mixing with the pelting rain. I hear yet another heavy truck approach from behind, and hope that the driver will give me a wide berth. It passes, but the gust of wind sweeps me from side to side on the road. At the top I catch my breath and take in the spectacular scenery, before dashing down an exhilarating descent for my next climb. In the next hour I will push my bike into some deep foliage to wild camp, and cook up yet another cheap pasta meal with my petrol stove.

I'm all alone, pushing onwards each day towards the Arctic Circle.



A glance at my odometer shows over 3000km, just a fraction of my trip target of 30,000. I tell myself that if I can make the next town I will be just a little closer to home. With about two years of my charity expedition to go, it can be hard to keep the mental focus.

I began my journey back in March from Yorkshire, and already my ride has taken in the countryside of England and Wales, the tragic battles of the First World War from Ypres to Verdun, and the extensive cycle paths through Northern Europe. Once I reach the Arctic, I will finally be cycling south towards my destination of Sydney.



Top: Cycling along the canals of The Netherlands.

Below: Taking a moment off the bike in Luxembourg City.

After teaching in England for a couple of years I decided to take a rather unconventional route home to Australia. I'm riding to raise money for the Association for International Cancer Research (AICR) as they fund the best research across the world. As a child, I lost my mother to breast cancer, and many family and friends have subsequently been affected by the disease. Sadly, cancer seems to impose itself on everybody in some way or another.

AICR claim that 'cancer knows no boundaries', and it's with this in mind that I have battled through the snow of Wales, the headwind of southern England and the tough ascents through Luxembourg and Norway. The long days of loneliness and tough conditions are made easier by the kind donations from people around the world.

To follow my charity event please visit my website at [www.cycling4cancer.com](http://www.cycling4cancer.com).

You can also help raise money to eradicate cancer by donating online at <http://www.justgiving.com/chris cycling4cancer>. If you are unable to log on, you may wish to send a donation to The Hamblin Trust at Bosham House and we will ensure that Chris receives it. ☑

# Gardening Matters

by Sue Attridge



Writing in early May, after the wettest April on record, I am beset by ambivalence. On the one hand, our long-parched Earth and depleted reservoirs needed the rain; on the other, the clay soil here is now too boggy to dig or mow. Docks and nettles are seizing their opportunity and growing at a frantic pace, knowing that I have to mow to keep them shorn, in the absence of the unlimited time I would need to dig them out or even trim them.

I am ambivalent about mowing, too. My relaxed mowing regime last year has contributed to a tripling in the number of flowering stems of *Green Winged Orchids* this year and to an explosion of primroses, violets and forget-me-nots. Infrequent mowing allowed these cherished flowers to set seed and/or feed their roots. Unfortunately, it offered the same latitude to the less well-behaved members of the floral community (i.e. those with the most tenacious roots). Whilst I admire their feisty persistence, I can't let them get the upper hand because, although this is predominantly a 'natural' garden, it has to be a managed, natural garden, not a free-for-all wilderness.

Squelching through the grounds, pondering this dichotomy, I have been reminded of a poem I wrote over forty years ago as an angst-ridden teenager, which I now find oddly resonant:

*There have been strange seconds of perception  
When, before my careless glance, all earthly  
Things and beings fell clearly manifest,  
Bearing no complexities,  
Demanding no shades of pity.  
Everything simply existed and was,  
Unequivocal, inviolable, perfect in itself.*



One afternoon this week, we welcomed a class of delightful young children from Chidham Primary School, who came with their teacher and helpers for a nature exploration. Undismayed by the rain, they spotted a few brave bumblebees, found baby earwigs scurrying in a long curl of eucalyptus bark, spotted the plant with the longest leaves, examined orchids, primroses and bluebells through their magnifying glasses and learnt a lot about honey bees and how the beehive works. They were lively, curious and interested – and very refreshing. We all hope they will come again soon, when the weather's better, so that they – and children from other local schools – can enjoy the plants and 'minibeasts' that thrive here. ☒

## Fun'raising for Hamblin Hall



*I have always enjoyed working with The Hamblin Trust and thought that it would be fun to come up with a way of raising funds whilst practising abstinence – rather like giving up chocolate for Lent.*

*I am asking friends of Hamblin to sponsor my abstinence from buying any clothes or shoes for one year. To support my challenge you can either: send me a cheque payable to The Hamblin Trust, make a credit card payment or complete the sponsorship form in reception.*

*Thank you – I shall need plenty of encouragement!!!*

*Jenny*



# ‘Doing So Best As We Can’

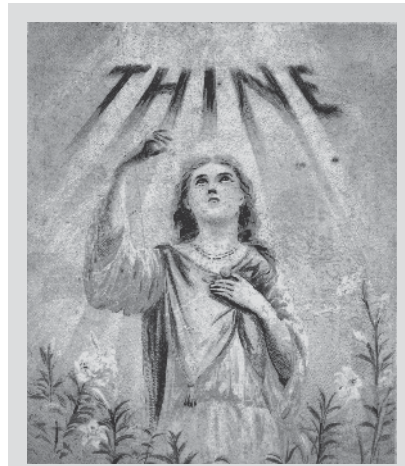
by Julia Cousins

*Julia can remember her mother looking forward to receiving the small blue-covered magazine – then called The Science of Thought Review – so writing for New Vision is a way of continuing a family tradition.*

A dear German friend of mine, who despite many years of living in England never quite mastered the language, used to say when things got difficult: *‘Ah well, we do so best as we can.’* As a reformed, or attempting to reform, perfectionist, I have taken that phrase to heart! For most of us there is an interplay between the demands of the material and the spiritual, between the best and what we can manage to achieve. We compromise, we make muddles, we get it wrong – it is part of the human condition, part of how we learn to manage life. We will go on making mistakes, because we do not fully understand ourselves, and because we interpret the world and other people through the lens of our own experience, not recognising our inability to see things as they really are in themselves. At one level, we have to learn to accept that this is how life is and all any of us can do is ‘so best as we can’. But renouncing perfectionism does not mean giving up on ideals.

When I was taken to ‘Swan Lake’ as a small child, I remember coming out of the theatre and being hit by the contrast between the beautiful, magical world I had glimpsed in the ballet and noisy, dirty Streatham High Road. I wept

bitterly for the vanished illusion – I wanted it to be different. And that longing is in all of us. Indeed, like children, we can still feel that someone should wave the magic wand and make everything all right. That of course is an illusion. However, Plato would tell us that this longing is innate in the human soul. Our souls know that goodness, truth and beauty are absolute spiritual realities; it knows there is something pure, untouched and unadulterated which is its own native air. But, and this is the rub, we have to decide to take action and do something



*Renouncing perfectionism does not mean giving up on ideals.*

about bringing goodness, truth and beauty into our ordinary everyday thinking and lives. And, be warned, this is dangerous stuff, to be handled with care. Once we consciously start thinking about such ideals and how we can live up to them, they seem to develop a life and demands of their own and that will inevitably change us. As our minds and hearts and wills open more and more to the possibility of the ideal, we will also become more aware of love and beauty and truth shining through all the muddle and imperfection of ordinary life. In fact once we

have let them in, there is really no going back, because we see that life without them is not true life – it is not a life in which we can dedicate ourselves to something greater and more important than our own petty concerns, not a life in which we exercise our freedom to make choices about how we live.

One effect of this is that it simplifies things. TS Eliot wrote of *‘a condition of complete simplicity, costing not less than everything’*. The ideal is very simple because it is uncompromisingly itself – it can only be what it is. When we really believe that we can find that integrity, that purity, in the depths of all our souls, we will trust in its transforming power. And as we trust in that inner power, we will accept this ‘bundle of life’ and all its shortcomings with greater equanimity and find the compassion to stop being judgemental and forgive ourselves and others for what we do not as yet get right. And what is ‘getting it right’? We can be sure that we will go on making mistakes, yet if we consciously align our intentions with Divine Providence, we are also secure in the knowledge that our efforts will be turned to greater good than we can possibly achieve alone.

This is the beginning of growing in wisdom and understanding – to see the vision and yet accept the flow of life as it is – to learn to be rooted in the deepest truest part of our own natures – to love without making demands – to choose consciously to seek the best we know. In the end everything has to fall away before that singleness of heart which implies the search for the singleness of unity itself. As Meister Eckhart says: *‘a man must first learn to fix his heart on God and then everything else will follow’*. ☒

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by H T Hamblin

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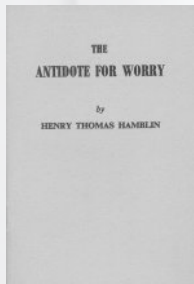
\* Suggested donation for p&p on this book: UK £4.00 Europe & rest of the world £5.60 (surface mail) Europe (Airmail) £4.00 Rest of the world (Airmail) £7.50.



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**H T Hamblin**



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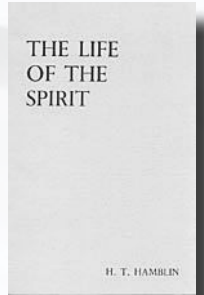
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# READERS' LETTERS

Dear Elizabeth

Thank you for your January/February issue of New Vision which I enjoyed immensely. It was good to read Sue's progress with the garden. The Bog Garden sounds a lovely idea and I am enclosing a little gift to help boost funds. It would be nice if you ever had time to include a little sketch just to imagine the layout. Thank you again for New Vision. HTH would be very proud of you all. Please thank Sue for the gardening report and all the hard work she must put in.

Maureen Miles, West Midlands

Dear Elizabeth

I enclose renewal membership form and cheque and a little extra. Thank you all for such a delightful, beautifully produced, magazine of the highest quality. I love the 'double' cover of the Prosperity issue. Thank you also for your prayers at noon. I do hope you and the team are all well and enjoying the beautiful gardens at Bosham House. I also enclose a separate donation for the Tiger Appeal. It would be a tragedy for them to no longer be with us.

Lynda Holland, Oxfordshire

Dear Friends

It was so lovely to see New Vision come through the letterbox. It was so uplifting this month with one or two laughs.

I have enclosed my membership renewal together with a donation and extra towards postage. I do not want to stop writing letters though as it's a wonderful way of keeping in touch with everyone. So keep up the good work all of you and tell your gardener that she is doing a wonderful job. God bless you all.

Mrs RT Horley, Horsham

Dear Elizabeth,

The latest New Vision with the theme of Prayer was excellent, and I enjoyed very much the thoughts of the varied contributors. The subject of prayer has always been of interest to me; in fact I could say my life has been built around it with its many applications, and certainly I feel I have benefited from it. The May/June cover was beautiful too. Well done!

With best wishes to you and all the team at Bosham House.

Eileen Williams, Pembrokeshire

Dear Elizabeth

I especially admired Margaret Bentley's article which had an inspiring effect on me. I met Margaret a couple of times at New Lands White Eagle Lodge, a very long time ago, and had no idea of the depth of her gifts at the time.

With many blessings to you Elizabeth, and good wishes for continued inspiration in all your hard work, the results of which give us all a great deal to be thankful for.

Brenda Bencini, Florence

Dear Elizabeth and Office Angels

I am enclosing my subscription with a little extra. When the Prayer edition arrived I thought, 'oh no', but what delight when I read it. The articles really pulled at my heart strings. Thank you and everyone involved – it gave me a sense of spiritual peace.

Phyllis Grant, Dorset

Dear Elizabeth

It is with pleasure that I renew my subscription to New Vision. I absolutely love the themes of the magazine. It is a wonderful idea giving your writers a subject to think about and adds to the

interest of the reader. You asked us what we thought of the new size of the magazine. I loved the 'little blue book', the austerity and simplicity of it. I accepted the new glossy magazine and realised it would appeal to a wider audience. The new size magazine does not fit on my shelf unfortunately and I find it harder to handle. I no longer save them to read again later and as they are bigger they bend and wouldn't keep so well. The content is excellent though and I always love the editorial.

Elaine Rule, Cornwall

Dear Friends

Thank you for your beautiful magazine and the words of wisdom within each copy. I find it a guiding light on my spiritual journey.

Sandra Nicholls, Lancashire

Dear Friends

Please find the enclosed cheque to cover my subscription plus a donation towards your funds. My heart-felt gratitude to all for producing such a helpful and wonderful magazine. Your efforts are much appreciated. I trust you will be able to continue with the good work.

Nancy Rees, West Glamorgan

Dear Elizabeth and the team

I enclose a cheque for the renewal of my subscription together with a donation towards the valued and much appreciated work you all undertake with such dedication. Again, my grateful thanks for your beautiful and thought-provoking magazine, New Vision. Even though it is difficult for me to get to Bosham to attend events, as I do not drive, I always feel that when reading New Vision I am amongst friends.

Moya Harrison, Buckinghamshire

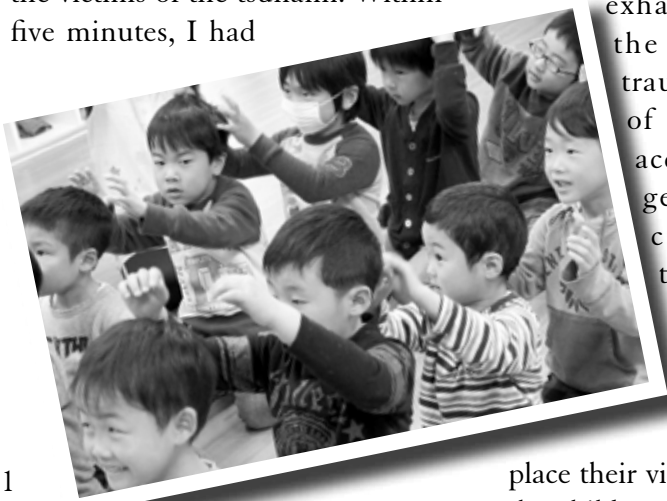
# Positive Touch for Children of the Tsunami

by Mary Atkinson

*Mary is a Chichester-based complementary therapist, tutor and author of 'Healing Touch for Children'. (www.maryatkinson.com). She has just returned from working with the children affected by last year's tsunami in Japan.*

We were all so shocked by the pictures of the devastating tsunami that hit the North East coast of Japan in March 2011. Like most of us, I remember feeling helpless in the face of this natural disaster.

However, I hadn't realized the intensity of my feelings until a chance meeting with Japanese aromatherapist, Takiko Ando, who runs *Cocoro*, a small charity set-up to bring the comfort of touch to the victims of the tsunami. Within five minutes, I had



1

accepted Takiko's invitation to join a team of four volunteer complementary therapists on their next visit to Rikuzentakata in April 2012.

The next morning, reality struck home. My family were concerned about my safety while my husband, Richard, stated the obvious –

we couldn't afford it. When friends asked my reasons there was no rational explanation except that it felt like a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to make a real difference.

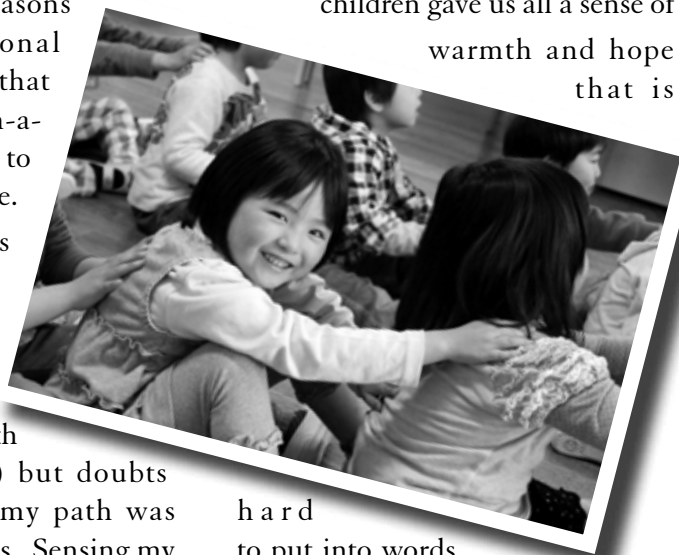
There were times when I questioned the strength of my passion to work with Cocoro (the Japanese word for both 'mind' and 'heart') but doubts were dismissed as my path was cleared of all obstacles. Sensing my enthusiasm, friends and family began to help with raising funds. Inspired by my commitment, Richard offered his support by joining me on the trip. After six months of preparation, Richard and I arrived in Rikuzentakata totally unprepared for the scale of destruction. With the help of Takiko, who speaks excellent English, we listened with increasing sadness to the stories of families who had lost loved ones, homes and

livelihood. Yet, despite the exhaustion of coping in the aftermath of such trauma and frustrations of living in temporary accommodation, these gentle people do not complain. Instead, they feel grateful to be alive and determined to rebuild their community.

The older generation place their vision of the future with the children and so we spent three days working in the kindergartens. We introduced a simple story about the healing power of nature accompanied by basic massage moves for children to try on each other. An image of the sun rising in the sky, for example, goes with a circular movement on the back.

The spontaneous smiling faces

and happy exclamations from the children gave us all a sense of warmth and hope that is



2

hard to put into words.

Teachers and parents told us that the children's smiles raised their morale and gave them energy to cope with the daily challenges. The children said the massage made them feel so special that they wanted to share the good feeling with their families. We felt confident that our project would continue and develop within the kindergartens and schools.

Above all, we felt humbled and hugely privileged. The very fact that we cared enough to travel from the UK brought tears of emotion through their smiles of welcome. We soon realized that the greatest gift we can give these strong and courageous people is to believe in them and to remember them in our thoughts. We *hope* that our visit made a difference to their lives but we *know* that we learnt far more from their generosity and strength of spirit than we could ever offer in return.

We are very grateful to everyone in the UK who offered the practical, emotional and financial support that enabled us to introduce our *'Positive Touch for Children of the Tsunami'* project in Rikuzentakata. ☺

1 Children enjoying playtime.

2 Smiling girl - children feel supported by the Cocoro Project.



# The Diary of a Vet

## Lost in Translation

by **Suzannah Stacey, BSc, BVM&S, MRCVS, Cert.Vet.Acu (ABVA)**

*In this issue vet, Suzannah Stacey, turns another page of her Diary. This time Suzannah explores the theme of communication. If you have a question or comments about your own pet(s), do write to Suzannah with an sae c/o Bosham House or contact her through her website: [www.PetLoversDigest.co.uk](http://www.PetLoversDigest.co.uk)*

This month, I have noticed a theme developing in my working life, namely one of communication. A concept much discussed amongst human lifestyle gurus, I have been guilty of not giving the subject sufficient thought with regard to my animal patients, taking much for granted in my understanding of animal communications. My recent awakening began at the dog training club; on the first evening, the class was instructed that the word 'no' was not appropriate in a training setting. The trainer explained; if your dog is doing something that you would prefer it not to do, give him or her something better to do rather than endlessly shouting 'no' at the hapless creature. Needless to say I then spent the next half an hour uttering 'no' half a dozen times as a kind of nervous reflex, followed by a hasty apology to the trainer whilst I tried to get the hang of this seemingly complex new approach to dog communication. The theme of communicating continued when I signed up for a short course aimed at helping vets create a stress free practice environment for their canine patients. Most of the four hours focused on

reading dog body language, and it quickly became apparent that, despite being in a room full of people who worked with animals day and night, communication at this level was not our forte, and we all made a bit of a dog's breakfast of interpreting the slides of various dogs' facial



*Star was trying to communicate, but I wasn't listening.*

expressions and body positioning. Just to emphasise the shortfall in relating to my own patients' communications, the following day I visited a horse that I have been treating for several years for an earlier injury and subsequent arthritis in a hind leg. It was obvious as soon as I arrived that the horse was not in the best of moods, and he fidgeted and scraped the ground with his foot repeatedly. 'Shall I move him to where he can see his field buddy?' his owner asked, slightly embarrassed

by her horse's display of unsettled behaviour. 'Don't worry' I replied, confident to trust in the horse's training and experience of people that he would do me no harm. Indeed, he didn't, and as always let me insert my needles without so much as a flicker, still shuffling his feet in between times. Just as I relaxed after placing a dozen needles into him, he turned his head and quick as a flash pulled out the nearest needle from his shoulder! Instantly, his owner and I reacted, checking his mouth and the ground nearby for the giveaway red needle handle. After a few minutes of focused searching, it was discovered some distance away from the treatment area. I breathed a sigh of relief, and as I journeyed home that evening, I recalled how persistently this horse had tried to communicate with me and how little attention I had paid to his signals. With so many simple things to try to put him more at ease, such as moving him nearer to the company of another horse, my listening skills had definitely taken a holiday that day. So instead, he became the only horse I have ever known during my career to have removed a needle during a treatment. Point taken! The time has come for me to start really hearing the voice of my animal friends. ☒



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*On this page of Michael's Journal, he writes cogently about our need to seek constant awareness in the unfolding of each and every precious moment. Find out more about Michael's 'writing from the heart' on his website: [www.michaellewin.org](http://www.michaellewin.org)*

## A Zen Story

*Every cherished moment presents us with an opportunity to grow in our practice.*



Recently I was present in a friend's kitchen when, with an air of obvious relief, he wiped his hands dry after a long bout of washing up and exclaimed: *'Oh well, let's get on with life'*. Immediately I retorted: *'John, that was life'*. Then (as the Zen stories say) I was instantly enlightened there and then in that kitchen! My response was meant to be a humorous one. However, on reflection, it did seem to have quite serious undertones. So

often we are unavailable to enjoy the present moment because we are mentally rushing off elsewhere, to the next moment and the next too, infrequently staying mindfully with the work in hand.

If we have to undertake a particular task, then we should bring to it a positive, focused concentration and complete it in the best possible way we can, mindfully 'celebrating' every expression of our actions. Anything less and we sell ourselves short. Unfortunately, in our busy, everyday lives we can all too easily allow this present-centred grounding to be swept away on a tide of forgetfulness. I find my exploration into Buddhism so enriching because it teaches me many things, including the need to seek constant *awareness* in the unfolding of each and every precious moment.

If this is where we are now (wherever that happens to be, whether at the kitchen sink, writing a magazine article or in deep meditation on the side of a remote mountain), if this is the place and time of our existence, right here, right now, and we are working in responsible,

skillfully engaging ways then this is the affirmation of our spiritual life. Every cherished moment presented to us is an opportunity to grow in our practice. Our 'spiritual home' can be located anywhere – in the mountains or the shopping mall, in the church or curled up on a living room sofa. Our awakening in life – to the beauty and sanctity of everything that surrounds us – happens in moments that are not restricted to any particular chosen time or geographical location. They simply surface in the living Now when we bring awareness to this vibrant life we have been given ... ☒

*'Master, how do you put enlightenment into action? How do you practise it in everyday life?'*

*'By eating and sleeping' replied the Master.*

*'But Master, everybody sleeps and everybody eats.'*

*'Yes, but not everybody eats when they eat, and not everybody sleeps when they sleep.'*

*Zen source*

## Raising Our Consciousness

by Fif Hugenholtz

The challenges of this three-dimensional material existence which we as humans experience, are there to lead us out of our ignorance in order to become conscious again of our divine spiritual reality. Problems are opportunities given to us by our Higher Self to wake-up. If we want to bring harmony into our life, we have to change the level of our consciousness, by changing our thoughts. This is because changing our thoughts changes our reality. As all the answers to our problems lie within, we do this by practising going within, and listening to the intuitive guidance of our own Higher Self, then by acting upon this guidance. Every thought has a vibrational resonance which when initiated will be reflected in all aspects of our life.

*'Bringing health and harmony into our experience is not getting rid of, or even changing, a mortal material universe, but rather by correcting the finite concept of our existence... Spiritual*

*sense does not remove us from our normal surroundings, nor does it deprive us of the love and companionship necessary to a full life. It merely places it on a higher level where it is no longer at the mercy of chance, change, or loss, and where the spiritual value of the so-called human scene is made manifest'. (The Infinite Way)*

The journey is about becoming what we already are. That which I am seeking, I already am. As our spiritual awareness grows, our perspective changes continuously, which means we have to adjust the balance constantly between the two worlds we live in.

We are a work in progress, which means the level of our consciousness is changing all the time, so we have to keep adjusting our values, re-evaluating our priorities, our boundaries, our aims, our views and our attitudes, in order to maintain this balance.

As we progress on this journey, the gap between these two 'selves', the little self and the divine one, will become smaller and our lives and our relationships with one another will increasingly show forth more harmony. ☒

# Things Are Not What They Seem

Robin Hayfield

*The Aconite or monkshood is one of the deadliest plants known, but one of the most important homeopathic remedies we have.*

**Robin is a healer, homeopath and writer who lives mainly in Cornwall near the sea but often visits London and Chichester where he is the Co-Principal of the South Downs School of Homeopathy.**

A couple of winters ago, in the middle of the night, a badger dug a large hole a few yards from my kitchen door. My immediate reaction was that it was beginning to build a new set, though it could have been merely digging for grubs. Much as I like badgers, I have my cat to think of and the hole was just a little bit too close to the house. So, with apologies to the badger, I filled up the burrow with large stones and no doubt he found other places to dig. I like to think that my intentions were honourable. I am sure the cat thought so!

Then last summer I noticed that other creatures had moved into the cracks amidst the stones. They had yellow and black stripes, buzzed as they flew, and were of course a colony of nesting wasps. Visiting friends were naturally alarmed especially as the nest was right by the side of the path leading to the house. I was urged to destroy the colony with poisonous chemicals or boiling water. I took a different view and remembering the ancient law of first *doing no harm* and resolving not to act through blind panic, I let the wasps be. I was rewarded. They never came into the kitchen despite the door being largely left open during the day. They never

stung the cat that sensibly kept a safe distance. They ignored the clothes drying on the line above their heads. Above all they didn't attack or sting me – even though I often stood very close by, watching in fascination their comings and goings. True, they sometimes flew brief reconnaissance expeditions around my head but they soon realised that I had no cruel intentions of attacking them and learned to ignore me. Perhaps the wasps also unconsciously believed in first not doing any harm unless they felt threatened.

Man and insects lived in harmony all summer until the workers died off in the cooler weather and the queen found a quiet dry place to hibernate over the winter. We both had the power to harm the other but chose not to, drawn by the purity of our intentions. Isn't that what we call compassion – the desire to identify with another's suffering and treating



*Only we can make a finer Earth through the power of our heart and purity of our thoughts.*

them as we would like to be treated. In another part of the garden is a small plant that I remember digging in about eight years ago. It is a perennial, disappearing in the winter and flowering in high summer with dramatic purple flowers shaped like a monk's cowl. As I write, it is still bright and green, only six inches high with delicate serrated leaves that delight the eye. It has thrived well in the wet April that we have just had and produced some daughter seedlings for the first

time. When it blooms in a month or so it will be one of the most beautiful flowers in the garden.

But beware, the Aconite or *monkshood* is one of the deadliest plants known. It is extremely poisonous and, just like the wasps, needs to be treated with great respect. Although called a herb, and recognised as such for thousands of years, it is far too toxic for modern herbalists to use. If you eat it, the plant will quickly and suddenly bring on a high fever, copious sweat and convulsions leading to terrifying hallucinations, coma and even death. Yet it is one of the most important homeopathic remedies that we have, especially valuable in treating children, curing the very symptoms that are caused by its poisoning.

The homeopathic way of healing is based on *the law of similars* often described as *like curing like*. Different rules apply in homeopathy compared to those of the physical world with which we are familiar. Nothing material remains in homeopathic remedies. We enter the world of pure energy, the realm of quantum physics where the seemingly impossible becomes possible. Here the discordant patterns of disease are rearranged and harmony is restored to the suffering patient. The poisonous Aconite plant cannot heal as it is – it has the power to do you great harm. But in miniscule doses, its pure essence can heal. Within every female tiger is a loving mother. Every weapon can be beaten into ploughshares. All of us, however badly we think or act, have a pure soul within, our higher Self. The connection is always there even during the most terrible suffering.

Animals and plants, wonderful as they are, cannot change the world. Only humans have the power to create or destroy. We always have that choice. Only we can make a finer Earth through the power of our heart and purity of our thoughts. ☒

# Single Mindedness

Rosalind Smith

*'The light of the body is the eye: if therefore thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be full of light.'*

Matthew 6:22

***Rosalind is a Quaker, and strongly believes that we should all learn to be aware of the Inner Voice and its promptings. This leads her to feel that if we can learn to listen to the 'Still Small Voice' we will be guided into the life that is meant for each of us.***

The quality of single mindedness – if quality it is – is one which few of us can do without. In itself it is a really positive trait, but if pushed to extremes it can result in obstinacy and inflexibility. Without single-mindedness little can be achieved. We can think of people who, without this aspect to their character, and their life-long dedication, would never have produced the great music, art, literature and scientific and medical discoveries of past and present centuries.

It strikes me that single-mindedness is best coupled with purity of intention, for when purity of intention is present, all our acts are likely to be not only single-minded but honest and true.

If, as I believe, everyone is born with their own pure intention, chosen before birth when our eyes are said to be open, then the sooner we can realise this intention the sooner we can fulfil the life work we are meant to do, the reason for our own especial existence. In her



*When we listen to the Still Small Voice we are guided to fulfil our glorious potential.*

book, *Sacred Contracts*, Carolyn Myss explores this idea further.

Fortunate are those who, being aware of their own life's pattern at an early age, can then hold fast to it. With purity of intention they can follow their path without getting side-tracked. Most of us do not find the reason for our existence until later on – perhaps through a mid-life crisis or other challenges on life's journey. And even then, how very easy it is to let other, possibly trivial pursuits, sideline us into wasting our energy. Possibly, we may find ourselves labouring under a sort of guilt complex which dictates that we should not spend our lives doing what *feels* right because we should be doing what we think others *think* we should be doing! When we look forward to completing our work, when we go out in the morning with a feeling of anticipation that the day will be rewarding

and fulfilling, then we may well be doing what we are patterned or programmed to do. But when we face each day with dread, boredom or fear, then we need to start asking what we should be about! Obviously there are many things we can be involved in which are very worthy in themselves, but they may well not be what we are really 'called upon' to fulfil.

Keeping that essential purity of intention is only possible if one resolutely keeps it in the forefront of one's mind and learns to listen to the essential leadings of the Inner Voice – the 'Still Small Voice' – which guides us to the life which is meant for each one of us. Only then can we really fulfil our glorious potential, do that which we were meant to do, and *be* that which we were meant to *be*... sons and daughters of the Divine.

In the words of St Teresa of Avila – *God has no body on earth but yours,*

*No hands but yours, no feet but yours...* ☒

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# A Night to Remember

Michael Donnelly

Innovations in modern technology have brought many marvels into our lives but also a host of dangers, including the violence and pornography to which our youngsters are exposed, and which are a source of grave concern to every thoughtful adult.

Of course, this is not an altogether new problem, and I am reminded of an incident that occurred over sixty years ago when I was librarian-in-charge of the largest of the public library branches in Blackpool. I had given one of my three male assistants a day off and relief was supplied in the person of a lovely young girl called Doreen. She soon settled into our routine and the day was going well until the telephone rang late in the afternoon and she stepped over to answer it.

## An unwelcome intrusion

I could see that this was no ordinary call; when she replaced the receiver she was pale and trembling visibly. Close to tears, she asked if she could speak to me in my office, and it was there that I learned that the caller was a man who had threatened to do horrible things to her. I told her that she should not have listened to him but put the phone down at once. I then offered a little advice from my knowledge of Right Thinking. She should remain calm and try to understand that this poor fellow was a lonely victim of his sexual obsession and quite harmless – someone to be pitied rather than condemned.

Doreen was in no mood to listen to this, for which I could not blame her. Indeed, my own attitude hardened when she went on to say that he had told her that he knew where she was and would be waiting to

get her when she left the library at eight that evening. Hearing this I offered to take her home in my car, which she gratefully accepted. I then phoned the police. It was not easy, but for the rest of the day I did my best to keep my thoughts on the side of the angels!

## What happened next

My car was parked in the narrow alley behind the library as we left by a rear exit. It was a twenty-year-old Austin Seven, already an antique and rarely seen on the roads, but it was all I could afford and on the night in question a welcome haven of security. It was with a sigh of relief that Doreen settled down beside me. It was pitch dark and raining heavily as we turned into Highfield Road. Visibility was poor, but I could see that the street was deserted as we drove past the steam laundry and several shops before I was obliged to stop as the traffic lights ahead turned against us.

It was then that a man in a long black overcoat stepped off the pavement and grasped the handle of the passenger door. Finding it locked, he began to tug at it in a kind of frenzy. He was very strong and the tiny vehicle rocked from side to side, causing Doreen to give a wail of terror. Then, inevitably, my homemade safety catch snapped under the strain, the door burst open and he thrust himself into the car, almost lying on top of the girl, his face only inches from mine.

*'What on earth do you think you are doing?'* I shouted, and at the sound of my voice a sudden change came over him. *'I say – I'm most awfully sorry – I was waiting for my friend who has a car just like yours. Look! There he is now!'* I glanced in the rear view mirror and saw that an identical Austin Seven had pulled up behind us, its driver waving frantically. Still apologising, our intruder

withdrew and scrambled into the car behind just as the lights turned green and we both drove away. Doreen was weeping quietly as we left the scene and I know that wherever she is now, this was a night she is sure to remember.

## Words for Today

*'So dear to Heaven is saintly chastity, That when a soul is found sincerely so, A thousand liveried angels lackey her, Driving far off each thing of sin and guilt'*

John Milton - Comus

Virtue, they say, is its own reward, but the poet knew that its possession means very much more than that. As we read these lines, having made allowances for their old fashioned language, we may find ourselves closer to believing that Doreen's experience was more than just a weird coincidence. With growing spiritual perception we shall find it easier to accept the likelihood that she had fulfilled the divine conditions and so had received the promised protection.

It is four hundred years since Milton wrote his sublime poetry and the word 'chastity' is no longer in common use. A good dictionary however, gives us broader definitions including freedom from obscenity, decency, innocence, modesty, temperance and purity. Today, when such qualities are increasingly flouted and derided, they remain sterling virtues we can recommend to our children, secure in the knowledge that they have all the hosts of Heaven behind them. ☒



*'He shall give His angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways'.  
Psalm 91*

# Bosham House Bee Bulletin

May 2012 ~ by Jan Jenkins

During the first week of May the bees were beginning to show a variation in their usual behaviour and instead of the steady, rhythmic flow of their normal flight patterns they appeared to be intermittently agitated. I interpreted this activity, either the orientation flights of young adult bees or, more likely, pre-swarm behaviour.

Sue Attridge kindly telephoned on Tuesday 8 May to inform me that there were two, separate, large swarms, one clustered on the apple tree next to the hive, the other on the mulberry tree.

The swarm in the apple tree was already preparing to depart; I could see this by the behaviour of the scout bees on the surface of the cluster. Within a few minutes they left, filling the air with sound and moved slowly in a rolling cloud towards the railway line.

The cluster on the mulberry tree gave no indication that they were ready to take flight, so therefore, Caroline Whitehurst and I had time to assemble all the necessary equipment to collect the swarm.

Caroline has been part of a community project at *The Clock Trust*, Funtington, building their own bee hives, and it was one of their body boxes that we used to receive the

bees as I encouraged them, gently, to leave the branch.

As soon as the first bees fell into this box, it was turned over and positioned on top of a second box that had already been placed on

a large sheet on top of the grass. A small block of wood was inserted under one corner of the lower box to ensure an adequate supply of air.

We knew that we had collected the queen bee because the worker bees began to fan, releasing a pheromone to call all the remaining bees to the box. The bees were then left to settle. At this point the bees had a choice to remain or to abscond. We were thrilled that they chose to adopt this box as their new home. Later that evening, Caroline returned with Paul Strickland, who organised the community project, *Funtington Bee Conservation*, to wrap the sheet around the boxes and carefully transfer the bees to their new site in Funtington. These bees will continue to be cared for using the same principles as the bees at Bosham – minimal stress and maximum loving care. ☒



## Ruby

In the November/December issue of *New Vision*, we included a short piece about Ruby, the sweet dog with

only three legs owned by member, Jacqui Upton. Ruby is a remarkable character and is able to cope very well despite the loss of one of her legs. Last week Jacqui wrote to tell us that she continues to be amazed by Ruby's intelligence. She says, 'Ruby never ceases to astound me with her perseverance, nothing daunts her. Only recently she demonstrated this wonderfully. The Sun comes through our sitting room about midday, the other side of where Ruby's bed is. As the radiator was not on at the time, I watched Ruby drag her bed across the floor until she reached the sunny spot where she promptly got back in the bed and went to sleep, bathed in warm sunshine!' Above is a photo of Ruby engaged in her favourite summer activity of running up and down Jacqui's lawn with a hosepipe. (before anyone



comments ... this was of course taken before the ban!) ☒

# Whatever You Are Longing for is Longing for You...

by Stephanie Sorrèll

*It was when I was happiest that I longed the most ...*

*The sweetest thing in all my life has been the longing ...*

*to find the place where all the beauty came from... C.S Lewis*

The title of this article has been a comfort to me in times of great need. The idea that whatever we're longing for, within reason, is longing for us too thus creating a resonance, a path of attraction, a magnetism which transcends time and space, is both comforting and sustaining. Once we have created a longing manifested in a form of prayer, what we long for is already there. Longing, as 13<sup>th</sup> Century Persian poet Rumi intimated in his work, underlies the mystery of the human condition. And, because we do not know this, we translate this longing into passion and greed for material things that leave us ever more hungry and spiritually impoverished. St John of the Cross writes: *'Yearning needs to hurt in order to be worthy of the world. Otherwise, it is just wanting'*. Having spent many months studying St John of the Cross' treatise on Dark Night of the Soul and Dark Night of the Spirit, I understand that this longing for the Beloved creates its own pathway, from voluntary giving-up our sensual longings and spiritual pride (the most subtle temptation), to a longing for the Beloved. This longing, revealed so well in mystics, creates a direct line to the Beloved. Spiritual longing, unlike emotional and material longing, is a fire that burns away at the dross of desire which can render us blind.

A number of years after first encountering this concept, I came

across a book called *The Physics of Angels* which I reviewed. Co-written by mystic, Matthew Fox, and scientist, Rupert Sheldrake, I was drawn to a section on angels and how when they hear your prayer, they are already on their way to you. They may take several days to arrive but once evoked they fulfil that contract. The only stumbling block for us is the time factor. Living in an instant gratification culture, we lose faith if our need isn't fulfilled straight away, so that we erase the pathway from our end, making it harder for the angel to reach us. It is only when we renew that contract of the heart and spirit and enter into that longing, that we restore that link which transcends time and space.

Although thought and need is instant, for something to come into form through the lens of our time-bound reality, a waiting period is usually required. Apart from matter meeting matter, as we understand through encountering the rough edges of something hard, there is the importance of timing. We understand this when we think of the forces that guide migration. Migrating birds, for instance, have to arrive at their destination for the peak period of insect propagation so that they have enough food to feed their newly hatched young. In fact, the timing has to be impeccable or else a whole generation of breeding birds will lose their young. And as climate is rapidly changing, the migrating birds have to be finely tuned to these fluctuations. The same is true for marine creatures and mammals, like whales, dependent on krill and tiny crustaceans which are an important part of the food chain. Like Russian dolls, the food chain is embedded one inside the other.

Through sustained scientific and experiential observation our belief in the migrating forces has been honed to perfection. We know that the swallows, arctic terns, waxwings and Canada geese are going to return at a

certain time each year. In fact we *wait* for them and if you're like me, you *long* for their return. In many ways songbirds remind me of angels with their wings, flight, and the pure joy which manifests like running water through their song. By September I experience a sadness, a longing to travel with these migratory birds as they return home.

It is this rhythmic manifestation of migration that hones our belief and faith in the long and often hazardous pilgrimages these birds make across the globe. If someone told me that they sensed an angel would be on its way to me as soon as I put out a call for it, if I didn't have spiritually exercised faculties I would find it hard to believe.

As Hamblin so fervently intimates, thoughts are real as are prayers. Having an avid interest in the etymology, I have to say I love that little 'ray' shining in the centre of *prayer*.

Living in an age of information technology, we can be overwhelmed with concepts manifesting through the medium of games, images and sounds. Instead of infusing us with energy and lifting our spirits, we become bogged down by them; slaves to the very forces which profess to make our lives easier! We literally become de-formed by form! In contrast, nature is alive and therefore nutritious. I think of the bees that are burdened with mites so that they lose their ability to fly.

... So back to this longing which is ever waiting to come into form and the prayers we have sent forth. How do we utilize that time between the longing and the fulfilment of that longing?

We reaffirm that longing by connecting with our heart on a regular, daily basis. And we prepare for the arrival of that which we long for. An image of pregnancy comes to mind here. The waiting, the knowing that what we have longed for will come into form – even though we may have forgotten that we longed for it in the first place. ☐

# Salacious Backgammon

by Stephen Russell-Lacy

*Stephen Russell-Lacy lives with his wife Carole on a woodland path next to a canal in South Staffordshire. He edits an internet magazine [www.spiritualquestions.org.uk](http://www.spiritualquestions.org.uk) and his book *Heart, Head and Hands* deals with personal issues in the light of the spiritual philosophy of Christian mystic Emanuel Swedenborg.*

A letter in *The Times* newspaper from a woman in North Yorkshire explained that having loaded some software on her computer to protect the visiting grandchildren from porn, she found that as soon as she tried to buy undergarments on-line by typing the word 'knickers' a strong message appeared rebuking her for searching for salacious content!

This notion of a salacious content might be strange to those who do not agree about what can be unethical in sexual conduct. Clearly, a healthy appetite is not bad but arguably when we start to crave for bodily pleasure then we are subject to less than pure habits of thought. The binge eater as well as the sexual addict spring to mind.

I suspect people don't always recognise what I see as impure thoughts encountered in television video, film, and novels. But, are not greedy intentions, and craving for sexual gratification regardless of human relationship two examples of impure thinking?

Whenever anyone starts to lay down the law about what is 'right' and 'wrong', 'pure' and 'impure' then there is a natural human tendency to resist and rebel. When we have an ideal then we realise how far reality falls short. When we have a sense of

what is good then we notice what is bad. It seems that when we have a clear idea of what Purity is *in itself*, we are better equipped to know what impurity is when we meet it. But even without this conscious understanding, when we meet the blatantly impure, we are repelled. I believe this is because we each have some idea of what Purity is just as we each have some notion of the truth about what is good and sacred.



Writing in the *Daily Mirror* newspaper the journalist Fiona Phillips told the story of when her two boys then aged seven and five were mucking about on the computer. They typed in the word 'booby' into Google and what they then saw made them gasp out loud. It was a video nasty. It is of course a tragedy when young minds are exposed to the sexual fantasies involving physical intimacy divorced from real love – what many still call the actions of 'a dirty mind'.

Perhaps some adults need to be shocked by the extremes of what is impure before they realise the importance of pure motives. More decency instead of vileness, more caring rather than hurtfulness, more love rather than cruelty.

I would suggest that focusing on what is good makes resisting what is bad a lot clearer.

*'The more we reflect on the notion of purity, the more we realise how imperfect our best emotions are.'* (H.T.Hamblin)

But sometimes it seems easier to define the absence of pure thought than its presence. Most dictionaries

define purity in terms of absence of impurity eg uncontaminated, unmixed, unadulterated.

What we need also is a definition that focuses on its positive meaning. I suspect the dictionary writers had a problem in doing this for purity is a spiritual concept and as such is ineffable, i.e. difficult or impossible to put into words. Never mind, here goes! What about exemplary, complete, pristine, clean, virtuous, modest, wholesome, healthy? Are these the qualities purity implies?

Many readers know of the following saying:

*'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they will see God.'*

(*Matthew 5:8*)

Yet they might wonder is it really possible for anyone to become more pure? The religious answer is yes, there is a process of purification. It is symbolized in the ritual of baptism, which is washing to make us clean. Bathing in water may wash off the sweat and grime but Christ is saying what needs to be made clean is also the inside of the person.

Perhaps we all need to clean our impure thoughts within. This means being on the watch for those thoughts that seem to arise from out of the ether; thoughts of resentment, envy, immoral sexual desire, greed, and so on.

An academic researcher found the remains of a medieval backgammon set on the site of the first motte-and-bailey castle in Gloucester. It was made of red deer bone, decorated with pornography, drinking and feasting. He seemed to think that the former owner of the set smashed it up, threw it in a rubbish pit and then retired to become a monk in Wales.

I strongly believe that just as impure thoughts seem to come from nowhere, they can also leave – as long as we consciously turn our back on them. ☒



# Calling Forth our Divine Potential

by Dr Janine H Burns

It seems to me that fear is our ego's response to bumping up against the edge of what we know, of the familiar. Our ego is completely terrified of the unknown because the unknown might not be safe. Fear comes from the protective part of the mind and it will tell us anything to keep us from moving into potentially unsafe territory. Whenever we are thinking about moving out of our comfort zones we will invariably feel fear. This can stunt our growth and prevent us from calling forth more of our Divine potential.

So, the question is, 'Are we going to let fear paralyze us into stagnation?' It seems to me that if we do, we are cooked! On the other hand, if we can use the fear to help us grow, we will go forward. In reality, as we move closer to our spiritual Identity, we are released from fear and cannot so easily be knocked down by changes in life.

The Love, Wisdom and Power of the Divine are always with us, but in order to access these triple Aspects we have to tune into our divine nature. This is done by building a strong spiritual foundation. So, for instance, we take time to pray and meditate, to study spiritual literature and to sing or say affirmations. It is also helpful to monitor our thinking and keep it positive. Above all we need to remember the truth that we are spiritual beings. Only then will we fully see the synchronicities of life ... and find ourselves in the right place doing the right things, meeting the right people, living a life of opulence and joy and peace and love!

## The work of Dr Bruce Lipton – re-training our thinking

Let me tell you more about how science has confirmed the creative power of our thoughts. Dr. Bruce Lipton is a developmental biologist and research scientist. He has synthesized the latest research in cell biology and quantum physics. In his book, *The Biology of Belief*, he describes his work in the field of New Biology where he examines the processes by which cells receive information. His research shows that genes and DNA do not control our biology as was previously thought. Instead, DNA is controlled by signals from outside the cell, including the energetic messages emanating from our positive and negative thoughts. His work is being hailed as a major breakthrough showing



*Thoughts are creative and the point of power is in the choice of what we focus upon.*

that our bodies and our experiences can be changed as we re-train our thinking. In brief, when we repeat our thoughts, neuro-pathways are formed in the brain. These become like the grooves on a record, so as we think we tend *automatically* to follow these pathways. After a while, these trains of thought become dominant and therefore harder to change. These habitual thoughts generate feelings and, through the Law of Mind, will attract corresponding people, circumstances and events into our lives. Of course, thought creates and the point of power is in

the choice of what we focus upon.

There is a story about a young Indian brave who goes to the Indian chief and says. *'I have a problem; there are two wolves inside of me that are battling in my mind all the time: a white wolf and a black wolf. They constantly battle. Which one will live? The chief says the one that you feed.'*

The bottom line is that we may find it difficult to be able to eliminate fear fully, but we can rise above it by stepping out in faith. It is easier to have faith when we have taken the time to build our spiritual foundation.

In his *Science of Mind* textbook Ernest Holmes writes: *'Fear is nothing more or less than the negative use of faith ... it is faith that is misplaced – a belief in two powers instead of One; a belief that there can be a power opposed to God whose influence and ability may bring us evil.'*

The Bible says, *'Faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen.'* Ernest Holmes said: *'The thought of faith moulds the undifferentiated substance, and brings into manifestation the thing which was fashioned in the mind. This is how faith brings things to pass.'*

There is a fundamental spiritual principle that says: *All the help of the Universe that is necessary to solve any given problem or to meet any human need is right where the problem or need may be.*

Students of Truth: I call upon you today to rise up in the majesty of your divinity. Continually strengthen and deepen your connection to Spirit so that when the seemingly negative changes in life happen, you can rise above any fears. ❏

# The 'Vision Splendid'

by Elizabeth Griffiths

*Elizabeth lives near Midhurst with her family and other animals.*

Whenever I write something for *New Vision* I go full circle in my preparation but always come back to dwell on the transforming nature of perception. And, as the days of my life – *my life!* – go by, I realise more and more that *Being Here* is what matters. It is our peculiar privilege to witness and be fully present to each moment, and yet it is also ours to ask 'why'.

It is a *beautiful* morning. The dawn chorus is just beginning and it seems that yesterday's daylight faded into night only a few hours ago. Surely a strain of '... Eden garden...'?

And I can choose how to respond to it. I can be uplifted and thrilled, as moment by moment the early morning unfolds or I can reflect grimly on the transitory nature of human experience, and that disappointment ends all that is thrilling and beautiful. I can choose the view I take, and that will become my 'reality' for the day.

*'The tracks of cattle to a drinking place,*

*A green stone lying sideways in a ditch*

*Or any common sight the transfigured face*

*Of a beauty that the world did not touch.'*

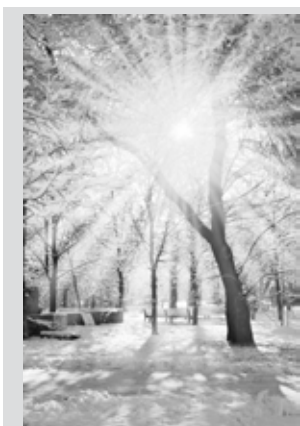
*Patrick Kavanagh*

The decision on how to interpret our experience, and thus what we 'see', will create a fulfilling life or a life grimly expecting and finding the worst. The openness of childhood, that receptivity to:

*'... the newness that was in every stale thing  
When we looked at it as children; the spirit-shocking  
Wonder in a black slanting  
Ulster hill ...'*

*Patrick Kavanagh*

is lauded at the same time as it is pronounced impossible that we, as adults, should ever regain it. Rilke states that '... Grown-up people, who have occupations and cares and worry themselves about mere trifles, gradually lose the eye for these riches, while children...quickly notice and love with their whole heart.'



*I stopped several times and looked at a single tree as I hadn't done for years.*

But, as children, we 'had the experience but missed the meaning...' We were not aware of the extraordinary gift that constitutes our life; it is for our second childhood to bring that wonder to our notice.

*'In a sense ... our whole task in life...is to recover the vision splendid, to break out of the prison-house of the ego into a second childhood, into childhood transfigured. For whereas the innocence of our first childhood is immature....unacquainted with sorrow and evil, in our second childhood innocence is transfigured*

*through responsibility and acquaintance with sorrow and evil ...'*

*Donald Nicholl*

We are called upon to combine both the experience and the wonder, to dwell in the paradox of '*...the heart-breaking brutality of the world and the equally heart-breaking beauty of the world*' (John Taylor) at the same time.

And that takes courage.

By way of illustration, here is an entry from Philip Toynbee's Journal. He was terminally ill.

*'12 November 1977 For years all visual beauty has been tangled up with nostalgia. 'Tears at the heart of things': poignancy: carried back by a tree to some half-memory of a childhood tree, so freshly seen so long ago ... But (today), on this walk, I stopped several times and looked at a single tree as I hadn't done for years. No; as I never have done in my life before. The tree was there and now, in its own immediate and peculiar right: that tree and no other. And I was acutely here and now as I stared at it, unhampered by past and future: freed from the corruption of the ever-present Me. Intense happiness.'*

And this prayer from a young soldier in the trenches of the First World War:

*'To have given me self-consciousness for an hour in a world so breathless with beauty would have been enough. But thou hast preserved it within me for twenty years now or more, thou hast crowned it with the joy of this summer of summers. And so, come what may, whether life or death, and if death, whether bliss*

unimaginable or nothingness, I thank thee and bless thy name.'

He was killed shortly after writing this.

In these two passages are humility, acceptance and wonder. In each, there is purity of vision.

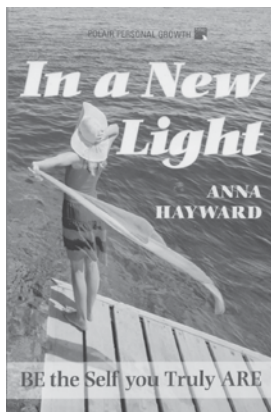
And, with that purity, the wonder of the world is revealed to us: 'Children, one earthly thing/Truly experienced, even once, is enough for a lifetime...' (Rilke).

Perhaps this is what is meant by, 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' ❏

## BOOK REVIEWS

**In a New Light ~ Be the Self you Truly ARE** by Anna Hayward published by Polair Publishing, PO Box 34886, London W8 6YR, price £8.99, ISBN 978-1-905398-25-6.

Anna is a rich person and this is a rich book! She has been a practising counsellor for over thirty years and explored various disciplines:



Transcendental Meditation, Hatha Yoga, Theravadan Buddhism and Christianity. For many decades Anna has been involved with the teachings of White Eagle and she particularly enjoys the healing element of those teachings. She brings all these things and more to her book.

Anna hopes this book will give the reader a new and positive light in which to view him or herself. For my own part, I found this to be true. The book is full of helpful tools to help peel away frustrating emotions like anxiety, guilt and anger which obstruct the Light and prevent us from standing in our own strength. This is not simply a 'feel good' book but a book which reveals a depth of understanding and kindness, born from many years of the author's practise of what she preaches. Each chapter is an exploration rather than a dogmatic statement. Anna covers a whole gamut of

life experience with chapters addressing depression, fear, the nature of the mind and mindsets, overcoming negative habit patterns through creating space and therefore choice, staying still, how we respond and self belief. There are also unexpected chapters, like *Liberating the Voice*, which I enjoyed. Anna shows us how reconnection with our voices is a powerful way of regaining our integrity, strength and confidence. There are many helpful exercises which can be identified easily because they appear in boxes throughout the book, eg. 'Focus on one positive thought, and see how, if you can keep the attention, that thought changes how you feel. The defensive self will be relaxing.'

At the end of the book Anna concludes that '*we are powerful beyond belief*' which dovetails nicely with the text by Marianne Williamson quoted at the beginning of the book: '*Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure.*'

There is a helpful checklist of useful skills and practices at the end of the book. These include searching questions, strategies for when we feel we have hurt someone and helpful pointers for facilitating groups.

It is clear that we are more than we think we are – we are spiritual beings with all that implies! This book has a worthy purpose in moving us closer to the Self we truly are. Anna believes we can be people 'without walls'. The book goes a long way towards

revealing some of those walls and finding a way through. Personally I feel that there could be a second book extending this psychological approach into the more spiritual – perhaps exploring how meditation, contemplation and ritual can reveal the nature of soul and allow the Light to shine through. ❏

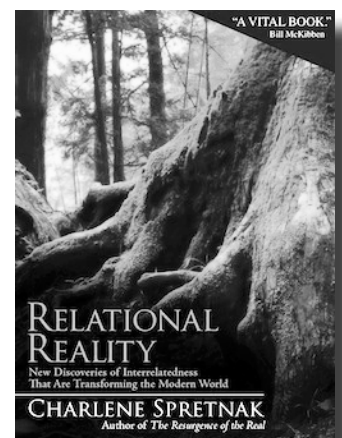
Elizabeth Medler

Postscript: Anna will be talking about *Being the Self you Truly Are* at Bosham House on Saturday 6 October between 2 and 4pm. You are most welcome.

**Relational Reality: New Discoveries of Interrelatedness That Are Transforming the Modern World** by Charlene Spretnak, published by Green Horizon Books and available from Amazon and most good book shops, price £9.04 ISBN: 978-0615461274

This is a creative and valuable work by one of America's leading ecological thinkers. Spretnak's thesis is that

the 'hypermodern', increasingly technocratic societies of the West are in a state of regression rather than progress. Through over-reliance on technology,



# BOOK REVIEWS

disconnection with (and fear of) nature and a narrow conception of personal autonomy at the expense of everyone and everything else, western humanity is losing its 'relational' ability. This is the capacity to sympathise and co-operate with fellow humans and the natural world, to recognise – in the words of the environmentalist pioneer John Muir – that everything in the universe is 'hitched to everything else'. By extension, it is a spiritual sensibility or awareness of the sacred within nature.

The ability to relate in this way is essential to being human, unlike the competitive, aggressive urges promoted by the reductionist view of 'human nature'. Spretnak finds the relational, intuitive power to be more strongly alive in Aboriginal or indigenous cultures that have retained a

holistic approach to society and the cosmos. The integrated world view has certainly existed in the West – Spretnak cites the pre-Socratic Greek philosophers. This has been swept aside over the centuries by a pseudo-rational concept of individual 'independence' from fellow humans, along with human 'independence' from the rest of nature. The result is a spectrum of personal and social problems, from neurosis through xenophobic and sexual violence to violence against the Earth itself.

In this very crisis, however, Spretnak sees seeds of hope. Beneath the conflicts that threaten us, she senses burgeoning and not fully articulated desires for more co-operative relationships at many levels. These include relationships between men and women, different cultures and regions of

the world and beyond that the relationship between humanity and the planet. The reawakening *relational consciousness* is being expressed through many thousands of widely varying initiatives throughout the world. These range from village-based co-operative enterprises and women's tree planting campaigns to experiments in holistic education, changing attitudes towards gender roles (men *can* be nurturers, for example), gay rights and the revival of interest in spirituality.

Such movements are disparate and sometimes seem to oppose each other. Yet together they point us towards a more balanced and fulfilling approach to human development. This book is an optimistic and exhilarating achievement. ☒

Aidan Rankin

## The Life of Trees

by Sherri-Rose Walker

*If the life of trees is without mistake,  
could they help me be green and silent?  
Could they help me sing,  
as they do, lifting their arms  
while God's breath animates their roots,  
and they open to that eternity?  
In the evening, might they show me  
how they kneel, while standing upright,  
and that the wings of passing birds  
whisper benediction in a thousand languages?  
If trees live in this blameless way,  
occasionally amused by the wind  
entangling feathers, scarves and messages  
in their branches,  
would it be odd to desire their embrace,  
so I, too, could drink deeply of darkness  
while lifting banners to the light?*

*One day, I will ask the trees  
To teach me their life of prayer. ☒*

