

An abstract painting featuring a vibrant yellow background with swirling, expressive brushstrokes in deep blue and white. The composition is dynamic, with the colors blending and contrasting to create a sense of movement and depth. The text is overlaid on the right side of the painting.

EXPERIMENTS IN SILENCE

THE JOURNAL OF
THE CALL-OF-THE-TIME
DIALOGUES

A MIND THAT IS QUALIFIED TO SERVE

Acknowledgments

CO-EDITORS

Gayatri Naraine
Judy Rodgers

EDITORIAL TEAM

Carol Gill
Julia Grindon-Welch
Bea Mah Holland

THINKING PARTNERS

Deepak Bhookun
Tom Callanan
Rita Cleary
Berma Klein Goldewijk
Jayanti Kirpalani
Veronica McHugh
P. C. Shivadas
Vivian Paes Barretto Smith

DESIGN AND PRINTING

Ruder Finn, Inc.

PARTNERS

Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University
Fetzer Institute

The Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University (BKWSU) serves at all levels of society working with individuals and organizations, and is known for its role as a convener of international projects and dialogues dealing with the issues of world transformation and change. The University offers a range of educational programs in moral and spiritual values. The programs foster a greater understanding of the self, its inner resources and strengths; and they develop attributes of leadership at the highest level of personal integrity. The University teaches a practical method of meditation which helps individuals connect to God. The BKWSU is a non-governmental organization in general consultative status to the Economic and Social Council of the United Nations. The University has more than 5,400 centers in 83 countries.

The Fetzer Institute pursues its purpose in three ways. First, it supports scientific research into subtle energy, consciousness, spirituality, and the mind-body connection. Second, it supports research and exploration into certain individual

spiritual practices such as meditation and centering prayer, and certain group practices such as dialogue and Appreciative Inquiry. Finally, it convenes small interdisciplinary, multi-cultural, inter-generational gatherings of leaders from around the world in a variety of disciplines including law, education, health care, science, governance, and social action.

The articles presented in this journal reflect the personal experiences of individuals who have participated in the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues. The views and opinions expressed are strictly personal and are not necessarily those of the Fetzer Institute or the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University.

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For more information on the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues: Email: info@callofthetime.com

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The Pool of Life

MIKE ELDON

Standing over the pool
close to noon.
The high sun
casts my puny shadow
onto an insignificant corner.

I am but a flimsy swaying observer
on the vast surface of the water.

Can I make the slightest impact?
Do I dare try?

Confident, bold,
I plunge in
swiftly reaching the far end.

Everywhere my motion is felt.
All around the water comes alive,
is energized.

I turn and swim more slowly, calmly.
And now my calmness
also spreads.



IN THIS ISSUE

THROUGHOUT 2002 OVER 200 PEOPLE took a seat in a circle of a Call-of-the-Time Dialogue. There were seven dialogues in all, and each one took up the subject of *mansa seva*, which means serving through the mind. At the first 2002 international dialogue in Oxford, England, a question emerged: "What does it mean to have a mind that is qualified to serve?" This seemingly simple question took us into deep waters throughout the year. This issue of the *Experiments in Silence* journal collects some of the experiences and insights of the dialogues of 2002, in hopes of shedding light on this subject.

The first article, "Setting the Context," offers a framework for the dialogue season and captures some of the distinct voices that made this season of dialogues so rich.

Dadi Janki is the host and spiritual resource for the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues. She addresses the foundation question of the dialogue season with her article, "A Qualified Mind." In doing this,

she speaks about the remarkable age in which we are living, a time she refers to as the Confluence Age, and which carries special blessings.

In "Reflections," Tom Callanan of the Fetzer Institute creates a bridge between the previous year's consideration of the practice of *drishti* (the vision of love and good wishes one soul has for another) and this year's look at the way that we serve the world with our elevated thoughts and pure feelings. He explores the active and transformative effect of seeing.

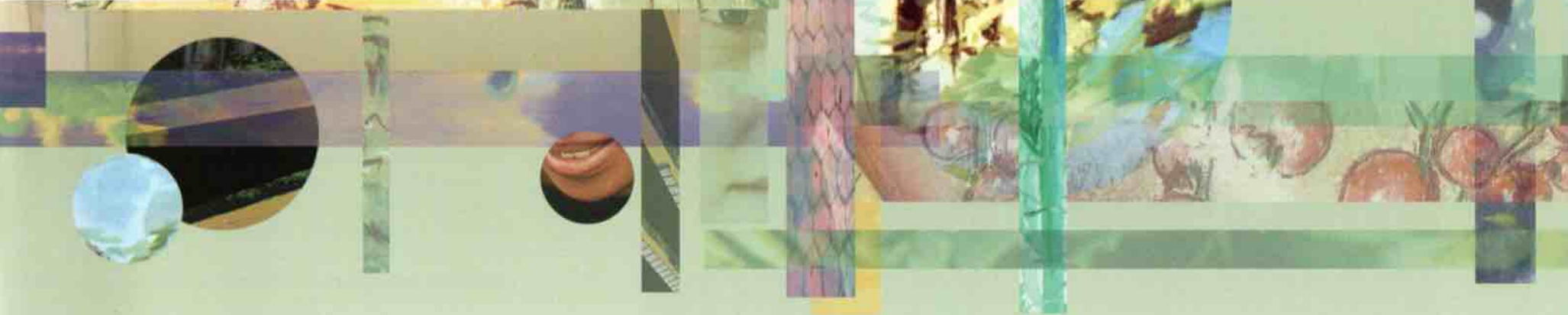
Olivia Saunders was educated as an economist, grounded in theories about limitation in supply. In "Tomato Economics," using a metaphor as simple as a tomato, Olivia explains how time spent in silence can show us a deeper truth.

The mood of a dialogue can shift from one of reverie to intense focus when the spiritual concepts we are working with prove to have immediate relevance for those present. In "Forgiveness and the African Renaissance," Thomas Odhiambo

describes an epiphany he had at the African dialogue in Mauritius when he came to understand that there could be no real progress on the African Renaissance without Africans forgiving those who participated in slavery.

Another dialogue that produced truly new spaces of meaning was the last one of the season in Chile, where Dadi Janki, serving as the spiritual resource, joined Dr. Humberto Maturana, who attended as the science resource. "Generating the World with Pure Intentions" offers two views of the role of intention in generating the world, in both the natural world and the spiritual world.

What are the spaces that produce minds that are qualified to serve? Peter Senge tells the story of Mieko Nishimizu, who is often involved in designing meetings that bring world leaders together around subjects of global significance. The results of these meetings among decision-makers are often flawed, she suggests, because the meetings that produce



decisions do not provide safe and reflective spaces. In “Meeting in Safe Spaces,” Peter Senge predicts that “safe spaces” for leaders to meet for good conversation may well affect the quality of decisions those leaders make.

Ragnar Ångeby has spent much of the last three years looking at the subject of conflict prevention. This work has caused him to conclude that there is a certain quality of mind, or quality of vision, that is conducive to resolving complex challenges. He refers to this quality of mind as feminine, although it isn’t merely the province of women. While the comparison of “masculine” and “feminine” approaches to challenges is familiar territory to many, in this interview with Ragnar on “The Feminine Quality of Mind,” he offers a close-up look at the feminine quality of mind – applied.

In the last issue of *Experiments in Silence*, we explored the use of silence in public spaces, in particular the use of silence to open and close the

UN General Assembly sessions. Julia Grindon-Welch from our editorial team spends much of her time at the UN, where there is a meditation room on the ground floor, which is open to everyone. Julia visits the space regularly. Former Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld personally supervised the creation of this room. Hammarskjöld wrote about the room and his hopes for how it might help in the creation of world peace.

For those who haven’t had the pleasure of meeting Dr. Humberto Maturana, “Open Spaces of Reflection” conveys some of the rich context he offered as science resource for the Call-of-the-Time Dialogue in Chile. We are each, he tells us, a center of the universe. How we learn to cooperate with one another affects the kind of world we create.

A key element of each dialogue is an extended period in silence. Over the years, we have discovered that many who are experimenting with extended periods of silence for the first time find that quieting the voice does not neces-

sarily quiet the mind. “Silence with an Aim” is a field guide to the territory of silence, suggesting what to do with the racing thoughts in the mind and how to recognize the markers of the deeper recesses of the territory of silence.

In the article, “Experiments in Silence” (Pages 34-37), several people share the experiences they had in silence during the dialogue. Two dialogue participants – Nadya Zhexembayeva from the North American dialogue and Mike Eldon from the African dialogue – were moved to write poems as reflections on their experiences in these dialogues. Mike’s poem is on the Contents page. Nadya’s poem is on Page 44.

The actual practice of *mansa seva* is very subtle, having to do with the sending and receiving of subtle, benevolent thoughts. In “Practicing *Mansa Seva*,” Dadi Janki talks about how she supports others with elevated thoughts. Steve Naraine describes his experience in receiving this support. ■

CONTRIBUTORS



Ragnar Ångeby



Tom Callanan



Mike Eldon



Dag Hammarskjöld



Mónica Herrera



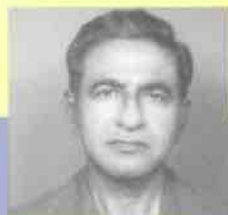
Dadi Janki



Rod McGrew



Gayatri Naraine



Steve Naraine



Thomas R. Odhiambo



Patrick Georges
Pillay



Judy Rodgers



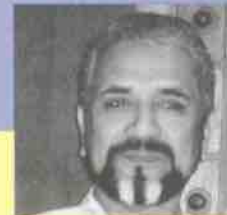
Humberto Maturana
Romesin



Olivia Saunders



Peter Senge



Cassam Uteem



Mohamad Vayid



Nadya Zhexembayeva

Mohamad Reaz Abdullah has had a long and distinguished career with the civil service, where his last posting was at the Economic Planning Unit, Prime Minister's Department, Malaysia. He subsequently joined the Asian Institute for Development Communication based in Kuala Lumpur as Deputy Executive Director. *(Photo not available)*

Ragnar Ångeby is Head of the Secretariat for Conflict Prevention in the Department for Global Security in the Swedish Ministry for Foreign Affairs. Ambassador Ångeby's professional career includes diplomatic and policymaking activities in the fields of commerce, development assistance, and politics including security policy in different geographical areas.

Tom Callanan has been a program officer at the Fetzer Institute for nine years. His current efforts involve helping to envision a world council/global network that will help to accomplish the Institute's mission of fostering awareness of the power of love and forgiveness in the emerging global community. He attended his first Call-of-the-Time Dialogue in India in 1998 and has attended four dialogues since.

Mike Eldon is Executive Director of the Symphony Group of Companies in Nairobi, Kenya.

Berma Klein Goldewijk is Director for the Center for Dignity and Rights and for the International Forum for the Implementation of Economic, Social and Cultural Rights in The Netherlands. *(Photo not available)*

Jody Grossman has been a professional harpist for over twenty years. She has produced shows co-written with students at the Peace Child Foundation, dealing with social issues such as racial relations, drugs, and teen pregnancy. Jody is currently teaching kindergarten at Waldorf School in Northern Virginia, USA. *(Photo not available)*

Dag Hammarskjöld, Swedish by birth, was elected Secretary-General of the United Nations in 1953 for a five-year term and re-elected in 1957. In a brief piece written for a radio program, he spoke of the influence of his parents: "... from my father's side I inherited a belief that no life was more satisfactory than one of selfless service to your country – or humanity. From my mother's side, I inherited a belief that ... all men were equals as children of God ..."

Mónica Herrera is a journalist with a Ph.D. in Communications and a Doctorate in Education. She is the Founder and Dean of the Communication Schools of Mónica Herrera in Chile, Ecuador, El Salvador, and Argentina. Mónica currently holds the position of Dean of the Faculty of Communication at the Universidad Mayor in Santiago, Chile.

Dadi Janki is the Co-Administrative Head of the Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University and has over 60 years of spiritual practice in Raja Yoga. Dadi was designated a Wisdom Keeper at two United Nations conferences: The Earth Summit in Brazil (1992) and Habitat II in Turkey (1996). As the spiritual resource and host of the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues, Dadi Janki's profound and extensive spiritual experience ploughs the minds of the participants to plant seeds of a whole new way of thinking and being.

Rod McGrew created KJLH (Kindness, Joy, Love and Happiness) FM in Los Angeles, where he was a radio personality, program director, and ultimately Vice-President/General Manager. After KJLH, Rod became a CBS Records label president, and subsequently superstar manager to Stevie Wonder and Barry White. His community service includes Special Senior Advisor to the Chairman of the Board for Operation Hope.

Gayatri Naraine serves as the Brahma Kumaris' Representative to the United Nations in New York. As part of the design team for the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues, she has spent the last five years exploring the transformational

depth of silent reflection and the impact this has on the actions we take for world benefit.

Shiv S. Naraine a.k.a. Steve Naraine served Guyana in a number of capacities ranging from public service, political service, diplomatic service, and the private sector. Highlights of some of the positions held are: Director, Ministry of Works and Hydraulics; Vice President of Guyana; and Guyana High Commissioner to India, Sri Lanka, and Bangladesh. Mr. Naraine is presently Chairman of SRKngineering in Guyana and Chairman of Lamaha Holdings Ltd. in Canada.

Thomas R. Odhiambo was the Honorary President of the African Academy of Sciences. Recognized as one of the most distinguished scientists of Africa, Professor Odhiambo received a number of important awards including the Albert Einstein Medal from UNESCO, the Gold Mercury International Award, and the Hunger Prize for the Sustainable End of Hunger.

Patrick Georges Pillay serves as Minister in the Ministries of Education and Culture, Youth and Culture, Industries and International Business and Health in the Seychelles. He resides at La Misere with his three children.

Judy Rodgers has been directing Images and Voices of Hope, an international dialogue with the media, since 1999, and she is now Executive Director of the Weatherhead Center for Business as an Agent for World Benefit at the Weatherhead School of Management at Case Western Reserve University. She has supported the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues since their inception in 1998.

Humberto Maturana Romesin is Founder and Professor of the Instituto de Formación Matriztica in Chile. He created the "Autopoiesis" notion and is currently working on the development of the "Biological Matrix of Human Existence." Dr. Maturana also created the field of the ontological understanding of the cognition phenomenon as a

biological phenomenon, which he calls biology of cognition and biology of love. He is the author of *Neurophysiology of Cognition* and *Biology of Language*.

Olivia Saunders is president of The Bahamas Vision 2020 Group and the founding president of The Bahamas Economics Association. Like Albert Einstein, Olivia wants "to know how God created the world ... not interested in this or that phenomenon ... (but) to know His thoughts (because) the rest are details." She is currently a Senior Lecturer at The College of The Bahamas.

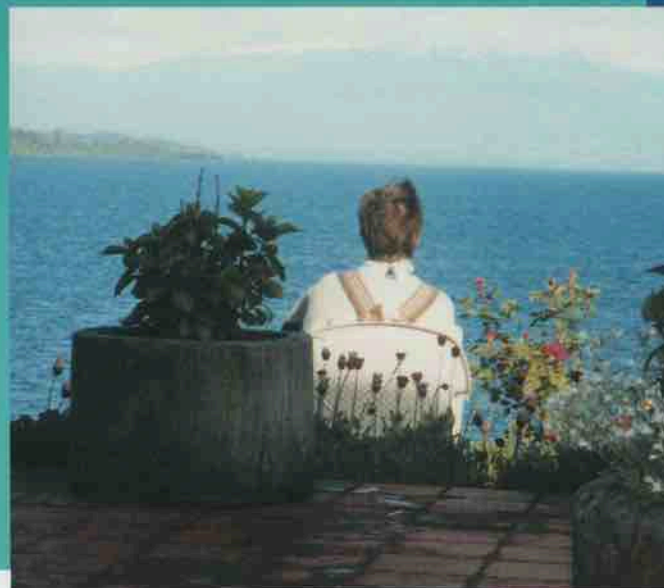
Peter Senge is a Senior Lecturer at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) and Founding Chair of the Society for Organizational Learning (SoL). His work articulates the cornerstone of human values in the workplace, namely, that vision, purpose, reflectiveness, and systems thinking are essential if organizations are to realize their potential to contribute to social, environmental, and economic well-being.

Cassam Uteem was President of the Republic of Mauritius from July 1, 1992 to February 15, 2002. He served Mauritius in a number of capacities including the following: Secretary-General, Mauritius National Youth Council; Lord Mayor, City of Port Louis; and Parliamentary Opposition Whip. Mr. Uteem is presently a member of the International Jury of the UNESCO Prize for Peace Education.

Mohamad Vayid is a management consultant specializing in corporate strategy. He is Chairman and Managing Director of Strategic Management Consultants Ltd., Mauritius. He also taught at the Royal College and was a senior executive with BAT Co. Ltd. in Mauritius and London.

Nadya Zhexembayeva serves as one of the Directors for the World Inquiry for Business as an Agent of World Benefit while working on her Ph.D. at Case Western Reserve University. A daughter of Kazakhstan, she and her husband continue to live between the endless mountains of Central Asia and the windy valleys of Northeast Ohio.

SETTING THE CONTEXT



by Gayatri Naraine and Judy Rodgers

THE FIRST CALL-OF-THE-TIME DIALOGUE IN THE 2002 SEASON TOOK PLACE IN OXFORD, UK, JUST EIGHT MONTHS after the events of September 11, 2001. We were a group that had been meeting for five years. This time we had come together to talk about “serving through the mind,” or *mansa seva*.

As participants began to speak, they brought into the room their awareness of a global climate of rising mistrust and a clear need to calm their inner sense of growing uncertainty. Each participant was approaching service in his or her own unique way. This scene repeated itself in different settings and with different faces and voices seven times during the year – in the United States, in Malaysia, in Mauritius, in Chile, and three times in England. Each group opened its dialogue by considering again the over-arching question of these dialogues: “What is the call of the time for me?”

The Call-of-the-Time Dialogues always allow for an exchange from a space of trust and acceptance, knowing that there is the freedom to give expression to what is most profound and essential to each one. Such in-depth exchange allows our minds and our hearts to become clear and focused – something we often cannot do when we are sitting alone trying to understand something that is very complicated.

There is very little structure given to the design of the dialogues, and this is intentional. Even though the theme of each may be the

same, it is important for each dialogue to develop and mould to the collective wisdom of the participants in the room. This collective wisdom emerges from different perspectives that are unique to every participant. Because of the synthesizing nature of the dialogue process, the collective wisdom of the whole always seems to embrace a truth and understanding that is bigger and deeper than the sum of the individual expressions.

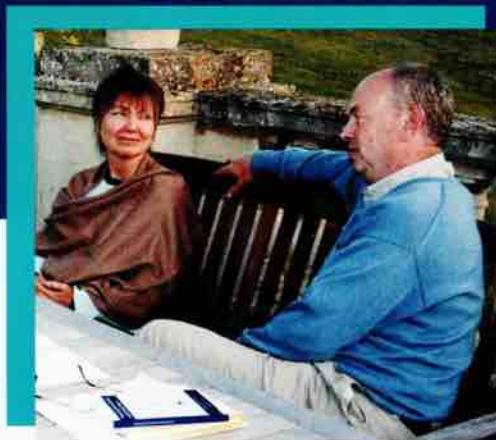
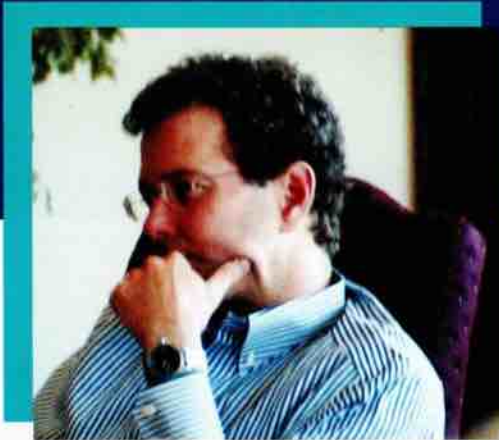
There are times in our reflections when we need to consider things in solitude, and then to come back together to share those ideas and hear the responses from others. Intrinsic to every Call-of-the-Time Dialogue is the instrument of silence – sometimes a few minutes, sometimes many hours. These times of silence allow for participants to tap the unexplored potential within and to discover a hidden resource there, their innate virtues and spiritual powers. For many of us, the time in silence amplifies the question, “How can I be of better service to the world?” The ebb and flow between times of silence and times of dialogue allow for a different understanding to emerge, to anchor

us in new methods and new solutions.

Silence in the context of the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues is an invitation to turn within – not to achieve an empty mind and not merely to connect to nature as a source of strength. Silence is offered as an instrument for fundamental transformation, and this requires the individual to explore his or her connection with God, to begin to glimpse the enormous potential of the mind to serve the world.

At the first international dialogue in England in May, Alfredo Sfeir-Younis posed what became the pivotal question for the season: “What does it mean to have a mind that is qualified to serve?” The question went to the heart of the subject of “serving through the mind” and moved participants into the deeper ideas behind *mansa seva* – serving with elevated thoughts, pure feelings, and benevolent actions.

It is, of course, impossible to truly capture the feeling of sitting in a circle for three days with people from different continents – the contours of the conversation, the coming together of ideas. Below are excerpts taken from some of the seven dialogues held on five continents, with



specific examples of applying *mansa seva* to the work of participants and to the real-world issues with which they have to grapple.

Mansa seva and forgiveness

Berma Klein Goldewijk, an international human rights expert from The Hague, The Netherlands, spoke of the difficulty of balancing forgiveness with justice.

"I am profoundly touched by what has been said about forgiveness. Love has to do with forgiveness and forgiveness with forgetting: If I can't forgive, it means I can't forget. I am working in many countries with people who find it difficult to forgive and therefore to forget. We need to consider how to do what is right for people who cannot forgive the wrongs and who cannot forget

how they have been humiliated and hurt. Forgiveness and truth are related to love and justice. I find myself wondering how the hearts of those who have been hurt and humiliated can open to love to such a degree that they can truly forgive and forget. It calls me to a search for new forms of justice to be realized."

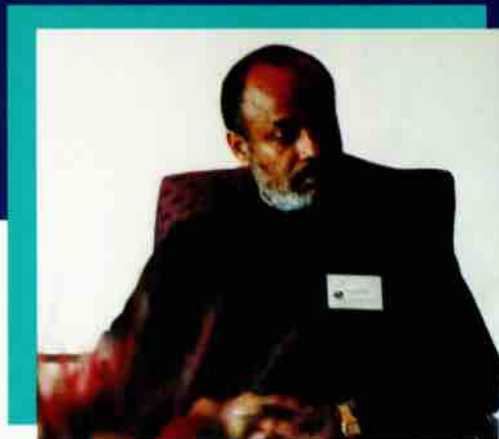
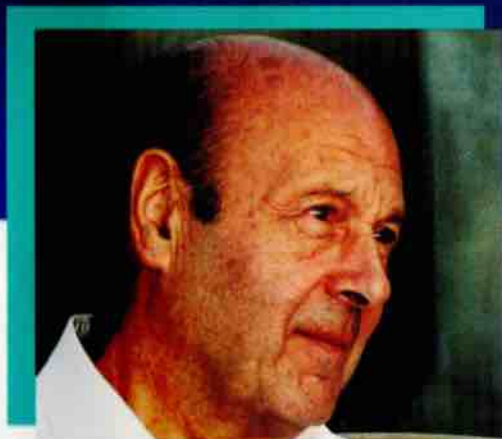
Mansa seva and decision-making

Mr. Cassam Uteem, Former President of Mauritius, shared a once-in-a-lifetime decision he made that would distinguish him from all other Presidents in Mauritius. He described a personal journey and the heavy burden on public figures who must balance personal conscience with public responsibility.

"Silence has contributed to bringing sereni-

ty in my decision-making. Last year I returned from India where, as President of Mauritius, I was the guest of honor at the Indian Republic Day celebrations. On returning, I was informed that a controversial bill on anti-terrorism was going to be presented to the National Assembly. I was not against the bill as such, but I had very strong objections to some of the clauses it contained and which I considered to be anti-democratic. The word 'terrorist' must be used with great care. Remember there was a time when Nelson Mandela was considered a terrorist.

"I believe we have to find means to prevent a recurrence of terrorist acts, but not at the expense of the sovereignty of my country, or at the expense of the principles we uphold. I refused to sign the bill and sent it back to the National Assembly with amendments for recon-



sideration. The Prime Minister subsequently told me the Government was not prepared to accept any of my amendments. The following day the bill was on my desk for my signature. I took some time to think. Silencing my mind brought a degree of serenity to my decision-making. I decided to resign. When I told the Prime Minister of my decision, he insisted that I should sign the bill before I left and said that I was going against the Constitution. I resigned nevertheless without giving my assent to the bill. I was sad when I left, thinking, 'Why should it end this way, especially when all those in government are my friends?' But they seemed not to know me at all, and I realized that there is no friendship in politics, only interests. I think that such noble sentiments are rarely found in the realm of politics. Politics is all about power."

Mansa seva and purity of intent

Rod McGrew, U.S. music industry executive, described the mind's capacity.

"The essence of life is learning to think, to have the ability to cultivate high quality thoughts. It is like being a farmer of thoughts. You not only identify, as farmers do, the highest quality seeds that you find to plant your crops, but, in addition to that, you look for the most fertile soil in which to plant them, the soil that will cause them to bear the sweetest fruits and the bumper crop. It requires you to check your thoughts. The mind has to direct its thoughts in ways that are most meaningful."

By the end of the dialogue season, all of us had become even more aware that these are not ordinary times – that as the call of these times

becomes louder and more urgent, our first response must be to see our times with new eyes, to look beneath the field of action to the spiritual disconnections and discontent that are bringing such sorrow to the world. When we see the world with these eyes, we understand that we have to strengthen our minds so we can serve the world.

Mansa seva is a spiritual approach to world service and transformation. It works in the same way that one might magnetize a bar of iron. You don't need to magnetize every cell of that bar for the bar to become a magnet; you only need the square root of one percent. In the same way, what is needed with this kind of subtle service through the mind is that enough people begin to serve with elevated thoughts, pure feelings, and benevolent actions to set in motion a sweeping transformation of the world. ■

A QUALIFIED MIND

BY DADI JANKI

“This is the **time** when that **realization** that
I am a child of **God** becomes awake within me,
allowing me to connect with *God*,
to take **strength** from God.”

AT THIS TIME WHEN WE SEE THE condition of the world, many of us want to serve the world. But when our own minds are affected by the conditions of the world, we cannot really serve the world. A mind that is filled with anger or sadness cannot serve.

I often have used the analogy of the boat moving through the water. For the boat to reach its destination, the water must remain outside the boat. For our minds to be able to serve, the atmosphere of the world must remain outside of our minds. It is not that the outside atmosphere leaks into the boat of our mind, but rather that the vibrations of a powerful and clean mind affect the atmosphere outside, bringing strength to those who are living in the world.

So, how do we create a mind that is filled with spiritual power? How do we cultivate a mind that is qualified to serve? There are three understandings that we must have in order to cultivate such a powerful mind. First is the recognition that my innate nature is intrinsically good. We may have forgotten that this is our original nature, but we have not lost that innate goodness. This goodness embodies love, peace, happiness, truth, and purity. When I am in touch with this goodness, I become aware that I am a spiritual being, a soul. It is this link back to my original qualities that gives me the further realization that I am a child of God.

Second, to whom do I belong? As a soul, I am the child of God. I, too, am nonviolent. I, too, am peaceful. I, too, am loving. I am pure and powerful in the way that God is pure and powerful. My inherent nature is like God's nature. These are God's gifts to me – these powers, these virtues, these qualities. God is a bestower. In the same way that a child will often take up his father's business, our business, too, is as donors, those who give our pure thoughts, our good wishes, our virtues and powers to others.

Third, what is special about this time? This is the Confluence Age, the most elevated time in which the old world meets the new world. It is a time when the boat has lifted its anchor and left the shores of darkness, drawn by a new and brighter future. The Confluence Age is the era that dawns in the darkest time of humankind, bringing the first rays of light from the pure and peaceful future world that lies ahead. In this time we can gain the power of discernment. This is the time when that realization that I am a child of God becomes awake within me, allowing me to connect with God, to take strength from God. I am able to feel how weary I have become. I am able to see how weary the world has become under the influence of greed for power, anger at injustice, and fear of violence and ignorance. I begin to understand that the way to heal the world is to heal myself. I

cultivate the healing powers of hope, harmony, compassion, commitment, tolerance, and respect. I see how these qualities light the way to the new shore. It is a time in which we can know our true selves, we can know God, and we can know the future. We begin to make out the contours of the brighter future world. Seeing that emerging world, we feel inspired. We use our pure feelings and elevated thoughts to fill the world with that which is life-giving, and, in so doing, sustain ourselves on this journey.

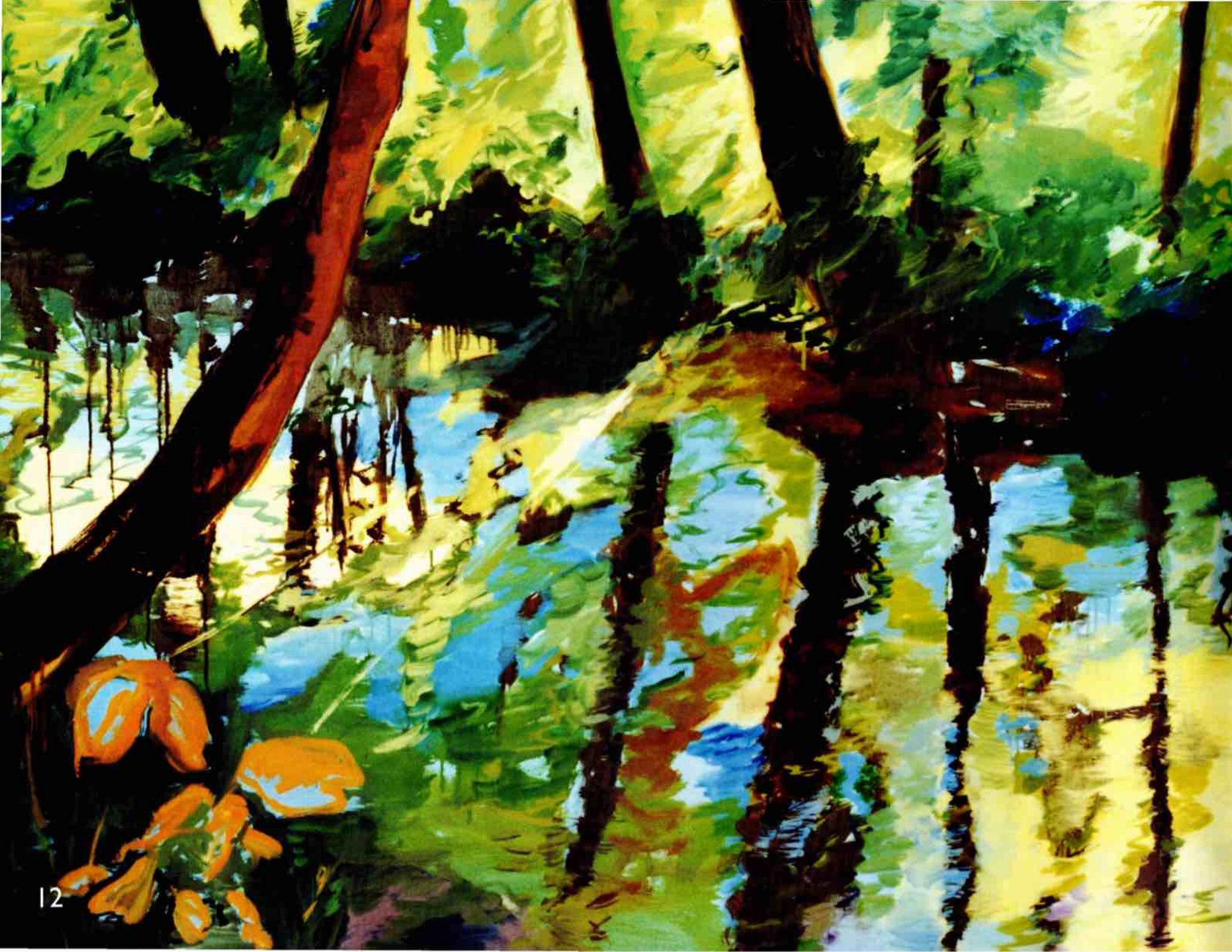
This time carries with it special blessings. When we recognize the unique call of this time, when we realize that the door on our intellects has been unlocked, our minds open in a new way to receive spiritual gifts. These spiritual gifts, such as inner peace, spiritual love, and power, allow us to use the treasures of this time in a worthwhile way. We find we can share our growing strength with others. We could not give to others when we ourselves were weak from the heaviness of the atmosphere of a tired world. We can only give to others when we have reclaimed our spiritual power. This happens in the Confluence Age.

Once we begin to gain spiritual power, what is it that we must do? We must use everything we have in a worthwhile way. We must use time, breath, resources, thoughts, words, and actions for benefit. We must elevate our relationships with

others. It is not that we connect with others for efficiencies in the physical world, but that we meet them as our spiritual brothers and sisters, as souls who are as weary as we were and who are thirsty for peace, for spiritual love, for compassion, and for understanding.

No one who comes in front of us should leave empty-handed. Everyone who comes in front of me should receive something – a virtue, a power, sweet words of encouragement, *drishti*. I am a soul, a child of the One who brings life to the world. So I, too, must understand myself to be a donor. At the end of the day, we should take the time to reflect on the day to see if each moment, each breath, each thought, word, and deed were imbued with purity and goodness. We should check to remember whether each one who came in front of us left lighter, easier, and filled with hope.

This is the true meaning of serving through the mind. It is not only that when someone needs special support we send our good wishes. We, of course, would do that anyway. It is something more. We become so filled with the pure power of spirituality that we continuously emanate that. We become those who are filled with light and with goodness, making each thought and each feeling we have beneficial. When the world accumulates enough souls of this quality, then a new golden age naturally follows, bringing peace and light to the world. ■



Reflections

by Tom Callanan

I WAS IN A CROWDED NEW YORK CITY ballroom when I first experienced *drishti*, a unique form of spiritual blessing practiced by the Brahma Kumaris. I was attending a luncheon conversation with almost 200 journalists hosted by a program called “Images and Voices of Hope.”

I anticipated disaster as almost half the guests were talking on cell phones as if they were still at their newsroom desks. Then Dadi Prakashmani, one of the senior sisters of the Brahma Kumaris, stepped forward to offer grace. Instead of saying a prayer, Dadi began to make personal eye contact with every single person. The atmosphere in the room shifted immediately. You could have heard a pin drop. A number of people, myself included, were moved to tears without quite knowing why. After five minutes, Dadi sat down and the luncheon conversation began, this time without the cell phones.

A year later, attending a Call-of-the-Time Dialogue in India, I again experienced *drishti* – this time in the dinner line. Each food server looked at

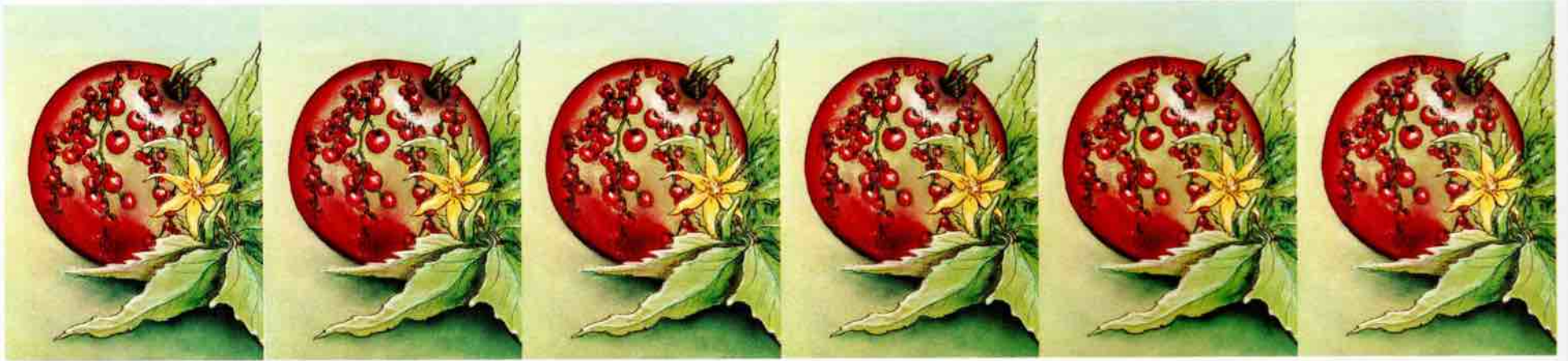
me with such depth, warmth, and love that by the time I received the final of eight dishes, I felt totally disoriented. What was going on? Was *drishti* a blessing bestowed only by 80-year-old mystics as I had first imagined, or was it something practiced by an entire community?

Now, years later, I’ve come to understand that *drishti* is a very simple yet powerful way of affirming another’s essential and highest self. And it’s something that everyone can practice. No one even needs to know you’re doing it. I began first to practice with my children whose natural sweetness and generosity rushed forward when I gave just a hint of my undivided attention and intention to them.

Now, I practice *drishti* every chance I get. As a program officer at the Fetzer Institute, my job is to help identify and fund projects aimed at personal and social transformation. Practicing *drishti* in this setting means, even if I’m on the telephone, that I’m calling forward a person’s highest potential. When I do this, I’ve noticed that people relax

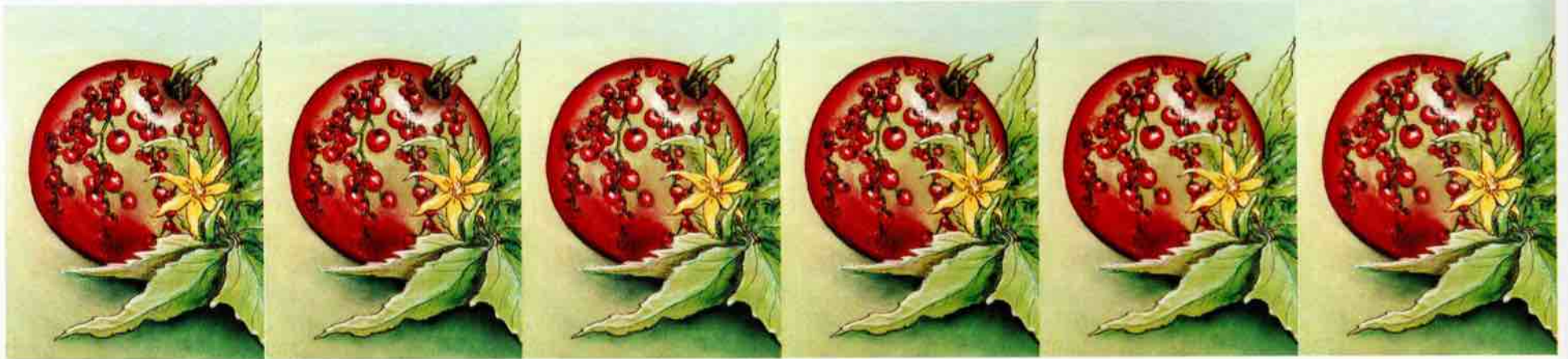
and become more open and authentic. Another Call-of-the-Time participant, Karen Wesolowski, refers to this practice as “seeing someone up.” You affirm the best in them. I’ve discovered that when you do this, people usually deliver. They begin to shine. And sometimes they return the favor and “see you up.” And then you begin to shine.

Science teaches us that the mere act of observing an experiment can influence its outcome. That’s why “double-blindedness” is an essential element in certain scientific studies. From this we understand that “seeing” is not just a neutral physical phenomenon, but an “act” that can positively or negatively affect the world. This, I believe, is what we’re doing with *drishti*. It isn’t just window dressing. We actually see each other into being with our positive intention. I wonder what our world would look like if we began to practice this way of seeing with our children, spouses, clients, friends, bosses, the grocery clerk, the bank teller – everyone we meet and talk to, even on our cell phones. ■



TOMATO ECONOMICS

by Olivia Saunders



E DUCATED AS AN ECONOMIST, my understanding of how the world works has been founded on the premise of scarcity. The “science” of economics will tell you that there is limitation, that humankind can never be satisfied, and because of this there is an inevitability of the differentiation of people by their possessions – those who have plenty, those with some, and those with none.

It is obvious from observing the simple things of nature, like the tomato growing in the garden, that scarcity is antithetical to God. One tomato seed produces many tomatoes. Each fruit when it falls to the ground releases scores of seeds, and these seeds from this one fruit have the power to produce an entire garden of tomato plants! What more is produced when humankind applies its knowledge to enhance the growth of these tomatoes? There is no limit!

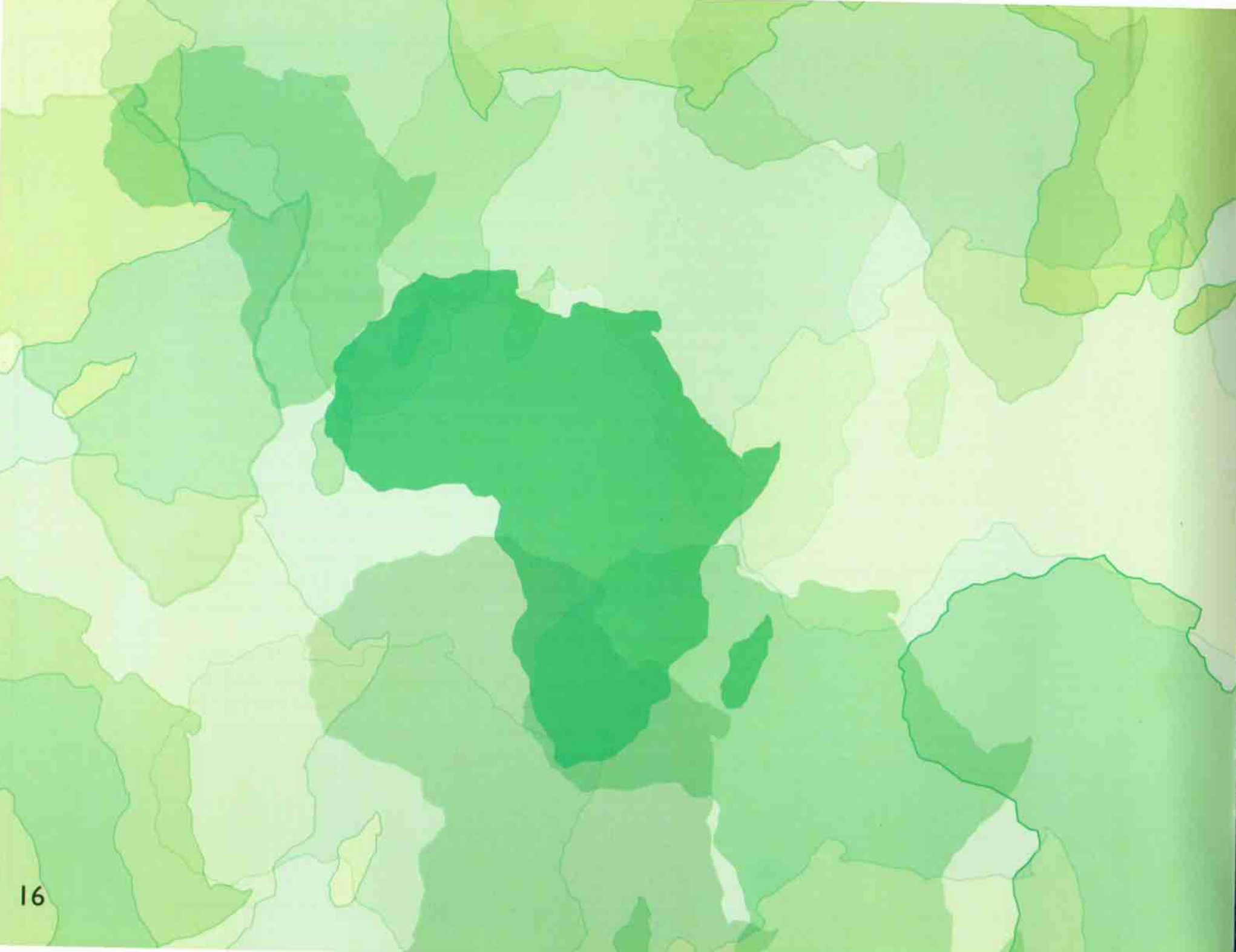
So long as the underpinnings of humankind’s existence rest on thoughts that there is only a little of this and a little of that, and that stature and power in the world arise from having more of these limited things than one’s neighbor, then envy, jealousy, conniving, and undermining inevitably prevail. An environment of

scarcity spawns avarice in the heart of humankind from whence self-destruction becomes unavoidable.

On the other hand, the more we rest in silence, concepts of scarcity are expunged from the mind. From silence, peace and love emerge. There blossoms the understanding that there is enough in the world to satisfy all the needs of humankind. There is no need to fight, to destroy others, or to damage the natural environment for the fulfillment of basic needs. In this recognition of great abundance, our inclination is to give rather than take, to love rather than begrudge, and to cherish rather than destroy.

Today the world cries for silence! The rich have more than they have ever had and can ever use. The poor are hungry. The rich want more. The poor need shelter. The rich have the power. The poor are trampled upon. In silence, there is no rich. In silence, there is no poor. In silence, there is God.

What is the time calling us to do? This profound question is an imperative that requires more and more moments of silence. The confusions and misunderstandings of the world are cleared away as we rest in silence. ■



FORGIVENESS AND THE AFRICAN RENAISSANCE

by Thomas Odhiambo

FOR HALF A CENTURY I HAVE BEEN in the science business, a world view that suggests that God is not very important. In fact, one well-known scientist, under rational circumstances, has explained that understanding the world and natural laws does not require God at all. It is, he suggests, an unnecessary hypothesis. So when I encountered the idea four years ago that I, Thomas, am really a soul and that the soul is immortal, I was extremely moved. It was simply wonderful news to me that I am immortal, a child of God, and therefore connected to all other souls.

As the idea settled in, I found myself mulling our situation in Africa in light of this new awareness. If we are all connected as souls and connected to God, then why are we not caring for one another? Why does poverty exist in the midst of the most revolutionary scientific discoveries and fantastic technological innovations in human history? Why is there so much revenge and retribution? Why is there so much aggressive competition?

About this time I began to work in a structured forum consisting of heads of state from different parts of Africa to look at this intensifying

issue of poverty. I realized that it is not a question of economics, but rather a question of the direction of the focus of the soul or spirit. What are our intentions? How do we apply our core values, our love, and our commitment to our present and future?

In the last two years, I have come to believe that the real blockage to positive transformation of Africa is something quite subtle: the sense of hurt that has been here since the slave trade and the colonial period. How can we remove this hurt that has been with us for so long? Do we have to avenge the wrongs of this period in order to move ahead?

As I have thought about *mansa seva* and the kind of mind we must have in order to serve the world, I have become convinced that we in Africa are putting too much energy into the past, that we need to use our powers for the present and the future. We need to forgive and forget.

This is a very lonely position. As I began to speak with my colleagues about it, they raised all kinds of questions: How can we miss this opportunity of the North paying for what they did? Isn't it right that they should contribute to our

development, especially that proposed by The New Partnership for Africa's Development (NEPAD)? Isn't it an accepted practice all over the world that if you do wrong, you pay a fine? Why shouldn't we follow that route? If we were to follow this route, humanity's well-trodden path of revenge and reparation, the African Renaissance, which the creative implementation of NEPAD presently promises, would likely not happen. What Africa needs, and indeed what the world as a whole needs, is a change from victim consciousness and a turning of the back to the practice of reparation. I have come to believe that asking the North to pay won't bring about any transformation for them or for us.

We are on a memory lane re-constituting the pain of our ancestors, creating an environment of revenge. We need to get out of this memory lane and be in the present lane. The past is an episode of the past. Accept defeat, forgive, and begin to heal the scars. Only this, I believe, will remove the most significant blockage to our development. After that, we will move very fast because a sacred place will have been created in our hearts and minds. ■

Generating the World with Pure Intentions

“When there are pure feelings, there is inner happiness, and the power of our thoughts reaches others.”

TYPICALLY, THE CALL-OF-THE-TIME DIALOGUES are held in retreat centers of the Brahma Kumaris, places that specialize in creating reflective environments for those seeking time away from the crush of their lives. However, when the Call-of-the-Time Dialogue convened in the south of Chile, there was no retreat center, so on a Thursday evening in November, 25 guests checked into a hotel on a clear cold lake at the base of the majestic Osorno Volcano.

A day and a half later, on Saturday morning, Dadi Janki spoke to the group about what was happening to the atmosphere in the hotel: “Within the last 24 hours, what has become the atmosphere in this hotel? Who created it? Love and trust have pervaded the atmosphere. In today’s world you don’t even feel such an atmosphere in churches. Churches and mosques were built in love, but what has happened to the trust?” As she spoke, everyone began to notice the atmosphere in the hotel. She was right. We had generated an atmosphere worthy of the most sacred temple or church.

It is the same with all transformation. As our thoughts and feelings change, the new thoughts and feelings touch those we are with and sweep through the spaces we are in, shifting the atmosphere in their wake. If the pure feelings and elevated thoughts of fewer than 30 people can transform a hotel in just a day, what might hundreds of us, or thousands of us, or more, do to transform the world?

In bringing the dialogue to a close, Dadi said, “Let there be good wishes, pure feelings for each one. When there are pure feelings, there is inner happiness, and the power of our thoughts reaches others. When I hold in my heart that there should be benefit for all, it appears in my eyes, words, and actions.”

(Based on the ideas expressed by Dadi Janki)





“These spaces of reflection give us the opportunity to consider the present we are living and the present we are creating for ourselves and for our world.”

WE ARE ALWAYS ONLY IN THE PRESENT.

History unfolds as a continuously changing present. Future and past are ways of being in the present. Future is an extrapolation of the present, and past is an explanation of how the present may have come to be. There is only the moment we are in. Whatever we are thinking, saying, and doing in this present moment is generating the present we will live. Of course, it is also true that we are living in the world we generated in the “nows” that we have lived. Therefore, all transformation must take place in the moment we are in – now.

If we freeze this moment and look deeply into it, we can see the present as a continuous becoming – the flow of thoughts and feelings that in turn generates words, actions, and relationships. If we are having thoughts and feelings of negation and competition, then we are creating a becoming present of conflicts, breakdowns, and fragmentation. When our thoughts are fixed on the injustices and disappointments we have experienced in our living, we generally set about getting even, seeking payback, and reinforcing our separateness from those who have dealt us this unkindness. It is a present that is absorbed with what we have lived and not with what we are living. It is a present that continuously creates the pain we are in.

One ability that makes humans special among all living beings is our capacity for reflection. We can think, “Do I like the place I am in? Dislike who I am? Do I like the present or do I want to change it?” These spaces of reflection give us the opportunity to consider the present we are living and the present we are creating for ourselves and for our world. Silence, and the space of reflection it offers, can become the crucible for clarifying our feelings and our thoughts. We can emerge from silent reflection with a clear intention about how we would want to be. This clarity of intention – this shift in motive – is fateful. With new, clear intention, we can begin to generate a new world now.

This brings us back to the present moment. Our new intention transforms our feelings and thoughts into pure feelings of love and respect and elevated thoughts filled with compassion and forgiveness for others. Instantly, we are transformed by the quality of these new thoughts. Our faces take on a different look; our bodies become different. We become a source of good wishes, cooperation, and support. This present instantly begins generating a new present ... in that moment. ■

(Based on the ideas expressed by Humberto Maturana Romesin)

MEETING IN SAFE SPACES



by Peter Senge

IT IS TRAGIC THAT PEOPLE TO WHOM we give a fair amount of responsibility for our societies and for our social well-being rarely ever get to have real conversations where they can talk honestly about their hopes, their fears, their concerns, their personal dilemmas – the kinds of conversations that all of us rely upon for a sense of connection when we are dealing with difficult things. The consequence is people who we look up to and count on are very isolated as human beings, and I think they suffer a great deal. We don't tend to think of them as suffering, because we see them as powerful. Yet, when we are around them, we can immediately feel all the constrictions they carry.

This is why we in the SoL (Society for Organizational Learning) community have gatherings like the Executive Champion Workshops, where leaders gather for honest conversation. Last August we had such a gathering in a place where we have convened many times before – in Stowe, Vermont. In Stowe, we erect a large tent in a beautiful field looking out at the mountains of Northern Vermont. It is an extraordinarily peaceful setting. One of the participants in this

meeting last summer was Mieko Nishimizu, a vice president of the World Bank for South Asia, a position she has held for about six years.

Over the course of several days together, we spoke about the Kyoto Protocols. Mieko said, "You know the Kyoto Protocols are not perfect. They do have flaws. If you had been in the meetings that produced the Kyoto Protocols, you would understand why they have flaws."

This led her to talk about the difficulties of bringing political leaders together, when they have to really think together, and the failures surrounding these attempts. Then she just leaned back on her chair, looked up at the tent we had been meeting in for three days, and said, "If we had been able to have the meeting in a tent, it might have been different."

Mieko believes it is very important to create "safe spaces" for the political leaders to meet. I think certainly you can extend this to other types of leaders – to all of those who are in significant positions of formal authority and who make decisions that impact a lot of people. They are very much constrained in being able to serve, since they lack the opportunity for real

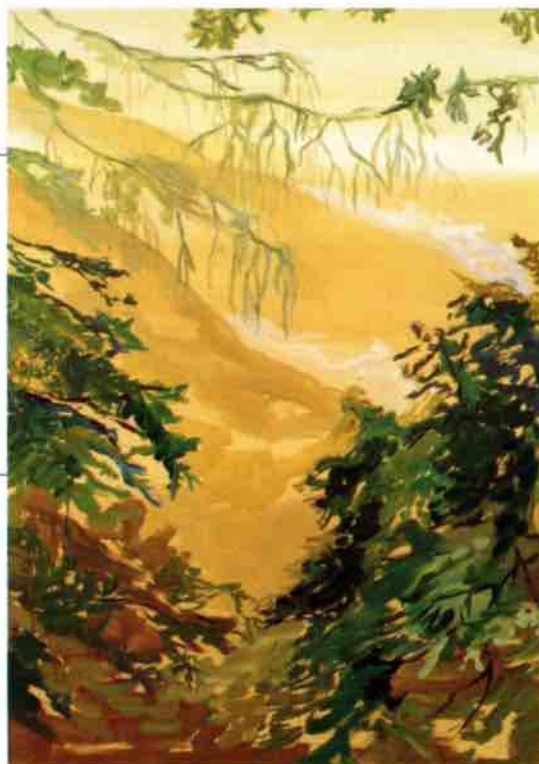
conversation. The lack of an opportunity among our leaders for real conversation and meaningful connection affects the kinds of decisions they make.

The decisions we get out of our current political decision-making processes are often simply compromises that everybody can live with. They are often one party's will imposed on everybody else. As people in these kinds of meetings come to realize that they really don't have political clout, they just try to negotiate to get a little bit of their interest included. As a result, they never get to the real possibilities. It is always a process of reducing, and we, the global public, end up with less than we could have.

Imagine if leaders could come together around important decisions in conversations that expand the possibilities – conversations filled with insights, ideas, and fresh perspectives. They might find themselves making decisions that nobody would have anticipated. When you really have something creative happening, it is a building process. In a sense, it comes down to the simplest definition of good conversation versus bad conversation. Good conversations are engaging. Time

slows down. You really feel the meaningfulness at a very personal level. In the end, something emerges that wasn't there before you started. Contrast that with decision-making meetings where something is on the table even before you start, and collectively you whittle it down so that everybody can live with it.

There is one other aspect about decision-making meetings that I think about often: we get too obsessed with the outcome, with producing high quality decisions. All decisions are flawed and incomplete. They are the best we can do at the time. The important issue is how can we go about implementing and learning going forward. The real crux of any decision-making process is to get headed in a direction that has possibility. And then, if we are open, and if we do have some trust among the group, we start to tap into our collective intelligence. If decision-making were to happen as part of an ongoing conversation, then the learning process might take place in the course of our making a decision. Then we might notice that the conversation has taken us to an entirely different place, and realize, "This is not



what we thought before. We were working with the wrong assumptions."

We would be open to seeing that, but of course exactly the opposite happens in most decision-making. People have their personal egos and their public personas invested in the decision, which means that they can't say that it was a bad decision. I think most of the harm comes from that dynamic. It is not the decision-making dynamic, but it is the attachment to appearances and the absence of learning that most limit our progress in decision-making.

Look at your personal life. I think that most of the decisions I have made in my life were wrong. Few things turned out the way I expected them to. But once I notice that, I can say, "That's interesting. Let's make an adjustment here." That is the way living systems work; they are always in an adjusting process, and yet that is not what we get at all in most decision-making processes. If we thought of our decision-making as part of an ongoing learning process, it would be easier for us to acknowledge uncertainty and error and unintended consequences.

“People have their personal egos and their public personas invested in the decision, which means that they can’t say that it was a bad decision.”

I think the principles and the process we use for the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues could be very relevant here. Imagine if, before any scheduled decision-making meeting, people were invited to a half-day session for honest conversation, reflection, and personal connection with others like themselves. I personally think there is no reason to be too conservative or tentative in offering such a session. I think people are wide open to direct experience of deeper awareness and to spiritual reflection as long as you are up-front about it. If people understand they are going to spend a half-day with some time of quiet, some type of meditation, and a chance to begin to talk more openly with others, completely off the record, I think they would be grateful.

People understand the failing of the current approaches and the consequences of not really being able to talk honestly. Imagine if we found a way to be able to respond to opportunities as they develop, so that when a meeting is going to occur, we could arrange for those involved to set aside a half day at the beginning of the meeting to come together and really just be together. It would be a

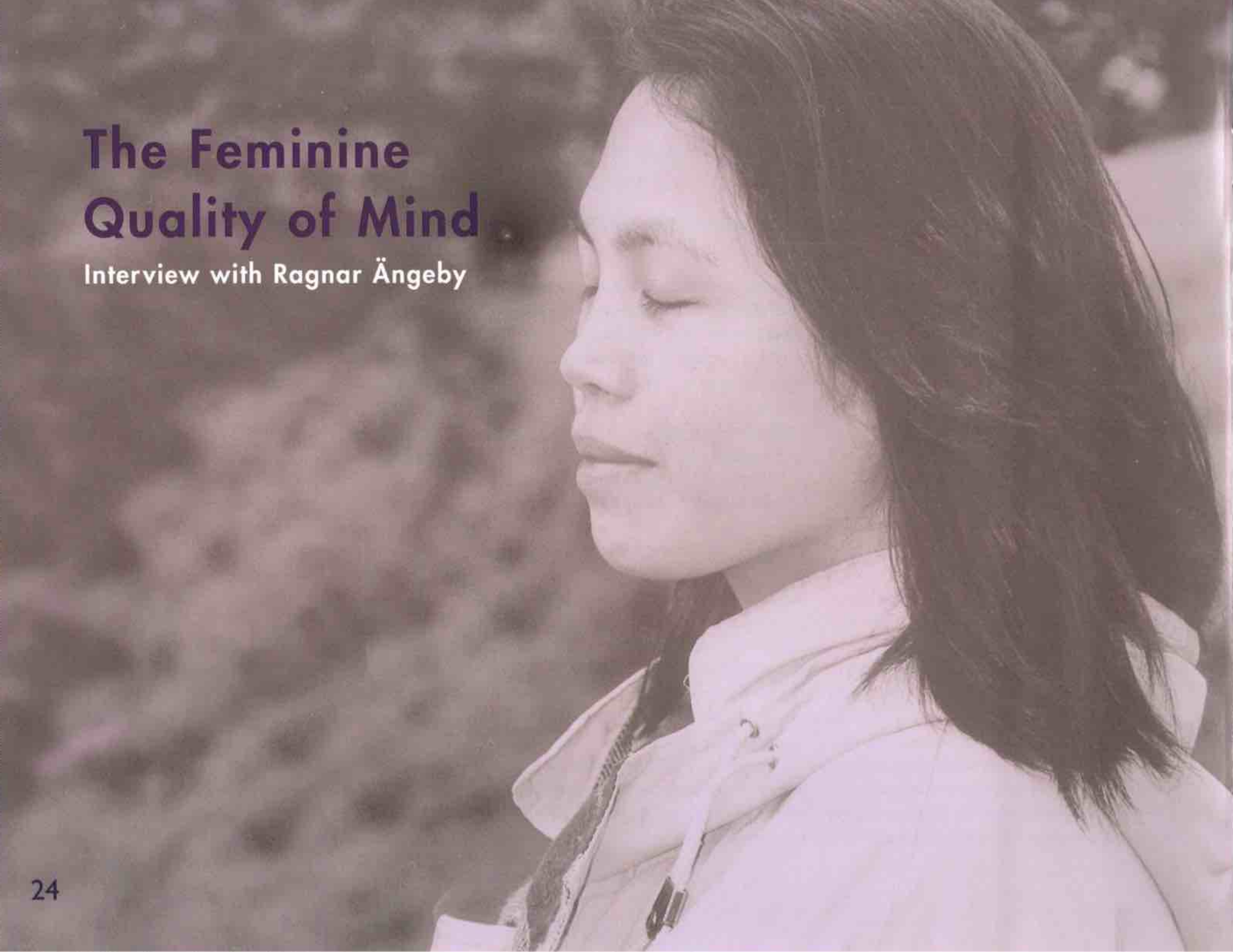
shock to the system. It would take a little getting used to, but imagine what might happen if people started to get used to having this safe space in which to prepare for their meetings. They would come to expect it. They would be able to plan on having some quiet time up front to get to know each other, a chance for completely confidential, off-the-record conversation.

Of course, this might be difficult for those in a negotiating mode, because their minds would be racing with what they are going to have to give up in order to get what they want. They might be concerned that talking honestly might make them feel as if they were making themselves vulnerable prior to their negotiation. It would be like two fighters who decide they are going to hug a lot before they get into the ring to fight! They prefer to hate each other. They want to work up animosity toward each other, to work up a kind of competitiveness.

On the other hand, particularly if they were in a setting where there is a larger collective aim such as that of the Kyoto Protocols, safe space would provide enormous benefit. In situations such as

these, people arrive with a concern about their national sovereignty and the potential cost to their country, but there is a transcendent goal that they really do agree to. We all know we need to do something about carbon dioxide going up into the atmosphere and about other aspects of global climate change, and we know that it has to be done collaboratively.

So that was Mieko’s idea, and that is why she thought it was important. She was not exactly sure of the best way to do it. It has to be with real people in real settings, which is why she reacted positively to the spacious tent in the big field in the mountains. It can’t be in artificial settings. I think the only thing to consider is who to invite and when to do it, and how to do it in a way that increases the likelihood of its being successful. The most important part of the idea is what might happen if a norm begins to develop so that for certain types of meetings, people start to anticipate that there will be an advance meeting in a safe space. I think this would come to be a reinforcing process for more effective and more meaningful decision-making. ■



The Feminine Quality of Mind

Interview with Ragnar Ängeby

Q: You have talked of the feminine principle as it applies to new leadership, stressing how important you believe it is in the world today. How would you describe the quality of mind of one who is applying this feminine principle to his or her leadership?

RA: The feminine principle characterizes a quality of mind that has the ability to see each individual and the needs of each and every one. It implies an approach based on the value of each individual. A feminine quality of mind sees different things linking together. The feminine principle, as I see it, is based on the ability to see the multi-functionality and the multi-dimensionality of the world. Someone with this quality of mind sees different things at the same time and sees the linkages between ostensibly different things. She sees, for example, that order and chaos have to be related, that security is closely connected to development, and that sorrow and happiness are related. The feminine quality of mind makes one open to the linkages between areas and to holistic solutions

to problems – to a consideration of the whole and not only to pieces of the whole. The feminine mind is a very practical mind, seeing the practical needs and not only theoretical concerns. It is also characterized by compassion.

Q: Are there instances on the current landscape of world events where the feminine principle is being applied successfully?

RA: There are several examples of this. I think that the whole democratization process, the process of bringing the equal say of each individual into the management of states, regions, and towns, is an application of the feminine principle because it requires collaboration and seeing the interests of others. In creating new democracies, it is necessary to cultivate unanimity and to build solutions together. One such example is the European Union, a post-Second World War peace project, in which I am deeply involved. Here, collaborative behaviors have replaced the violent behaviors we have seen so much of in past history.

It is basically about being inclusive and seeing common security for all.

Those applying the feminine principle choose to make good alliances and do good research before they make decisions and act. This is important in an area that is very dear to me, the domain of the prevention of violence in general – not only between states but also within a society, between groups and individuals.

Q: Can you think of one or two women or one or two men who, in your assessment, are successfully applying this feminine principle in the world?

RA: The present Secretary-General of the UN, Kofi Annan, is applying the feminine principle, showing understanding of the present situation by not accepting violence as an alternative. He has very clearly stated his position, non-acceptance of violence, although he recognizes the need for order and security. You can clearly see his pattern of thinking applied in, for instance, the “Secretary-

General's Report on the Prevention of Armed Conflict," published in 2001. He is a very good representative of this kind of thinking.

Mother Teresa is another example of a person who applied the feminine principle to her work, showing love and acceptance to all, and seeing the rights and the dignity of each individual, including the most disadvantaged ones in the shantytowns of Calcutta.

One of the best examples in both the political and diplomatic arenas is Mary Robinson, the former Irish President and High Commissioner for Human Rights. She has given a strong profile to the role of individuals as spiritual beings with equal rights to life, justice, and prosperity. She has left her official position, but continues to be a strong voice for global peace, and is now working with business, civil society, and religions in the international community.

Q: How have you applied this feminine principle in your work in conflict prevention?

RA: The feminine as well as the masculine sides exist naturally in all of us, women and men. It is not always easy for a man to apply the feminine principle, because we are likely to be perceived as being

weak, for failing to force everybody to do what we think is right. I try to make the idea of the prevention of violent conflict grow by involving a lot of people in different kinds of national, regional, and global institutions and social groups in a common learning process. The efforts require a long-term

***"In creating new democracies,
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solutions together."***

perspective. Some people claim that this long-term inclusive approach is not efficient and does not yield immediate results. But one can see results from these changes even within two years. And I think two years is a short time.

There is now a heightened awareness of the importance of so-called "soft security" because of recent wars and the difficulties of consolidating peace. You might call it the "masculinization of soft security." We are, though, still far from a time when

all violent conflicts can be successfully prevented by soft, preventive security measures.

By encouraging a broad base of people to work with conflict prevention, I am not trying to lead anything myself, but rather, I am trying to spread the ideas around and allow the ideas to lead. As people begin to accept them, I can give support and assistance when it is necessary to explain things and promote processes that allow people to apply them.

Q: How does the feminine principle change the way we think about power?

RA: The feminine principle of power is to distribute power among everybody concerned, while the masculine principle is more focused and concentrated on one centralized power base. Using an organic metaphor, the use of power can be compared to the application of fertilizer. The feminine way of using power is to spread it in order to increase growth in different places, and the masculine principle is to grow only in a few particular places. Anybody who has been involved in gardening and agriculture knows that if you concentrate fertilizer too much, everything dies. If you spread it around evenly, it makes everything grow. The feminine principle is about making life grow. ■



THE UNITED NATIONS MEDITATION ROOM

A ROOM OF QUIET

Secretary-General Dag Hammarskjöld (1905-61) personally planned and supervised in every detail the creation of the United Nations Meditation Room, and the room remains unchanged today. He wrote the following text.

WE ALL HAVE WITHIN US A CENTER of stillness surrounded by silence. This house, dedicated to work and debate in the service of peace, should have one room dedicated to silence in the outward sense and stillness in the inner sense.

It has been the aim to create in this small room a place where the doors may be open to the infinite lands of thought and prayer.

People of many faiths will meet here, and for that reason none of the symbols to which we are accustomed in our meditation could be used.

However, there are simple things, which speak to us all with the same language. We have sought for such things, and we believe that we have found

them in the shaft of light striking the shimmering surface of solid rock.

So, in the middle of the room, we see a symbol of how, daily, the light of the skies gives life to the earth on which we stand, a symbol to many of us of how the light of the spirit gives life to matter.

But the stone in the middle of the room has more to tell us. We may see it as an altar, empty, not because there is no God, not because it is an altar to an unknown god, but because it is dedicated to the God whom man worships under many names and in many forms.

The stone in the middle of the room reminds us also of the firm and permanent in a world of movement and change. The block of iron ore has the weight and solidity of the everlasting. It is a reminder of that cornerstone of endurance and faith on which all human endeavor must be based.

The material of the stone leads our thoughts to the necessity for choice between destruction and construction, between war and peace. Of

iron man has forged his swords, of iron he has also made ploughshares. Of iron he has constructed tanks, but of iron he has likewise built homes for man. The block of iron ore is part of the wealth we have inherited on this earth of ours. How are we to use it?

The shaft of light strikes the stone in a room of utter simplicity. There are no other symbols, there is nothing to distract our attention or break in on the stillness within ourselves. When our eyes travel from these symbols to the front wall, they meet a simple pattern opening up the room to the harmony, freedom, and balance of space.

There is an ancient saying that the sense of a vessel is not in its shell but in the void. So it is with this room. It is for those who come here to fill the void with what they find in their center of stillness. ■

Dag Hammarskjöld, 1957



Inside the door it says...

“This is the room
devoted
to **peace**

and **those** who are

giving
their lives
for peace.

It is a **room** of
quiet where only

thoughts
should speak.”

Opening Spaces of Reflection

BY HUMBERTO MATURANA ROMESIN



EACH PRESENTATION WE HEARD IN our dialogue was an invitation for reflection. They all referred to a different reflective standpoint, but they all referred to human beings. If we are to reflect on the call of the time, we need to specify a point of departure. Past, present, and future are manners of being in the present. I would invite you to reflect on what you do as a starting point.

I could say, "I am a biologist, a teacher, a philosopher." Each reveals one side of the many dimensions I have. As a biologist, I live with an interest in living things. "What is a living thing? Why does it die?" I ask these questions in an attempt to understand what it means to live as a transitory being. Each one of us lives as a center of the universe. We are different, but we can cooperate. If we are living as individual centers of the cosmos, how can we live together? Empathy means attempting to encounter another in his or her "emotioning." We can do things together, but we are separate. Why are we concerned about the well-being of others?

A small child who sees a wounded animal is worried and acts accordingly. We are living beings, but we are very different from other living beings. I was in Germany a short time ago with His Holiness the Dalai Lama and others. We were invited to think about unity in duality. Someone asked the Dalai Lama, "Are human

beings fundamentally good?" He referred the questioner to me. I answered, "A baby is born in trust, confidence, and love. He or she seems to say 'I am here. If you love me, I will be an adult who has self-respect.' Consider the butterflies. They too are born in trust – confident that there will be plants, flowers, and nectar. This is apparent in their form and action. We all are born in the implicit trust that there is a world ready to welcome us."

**"The world in which we live
is created every day with
other human beings. When we
change, the universe changes."**

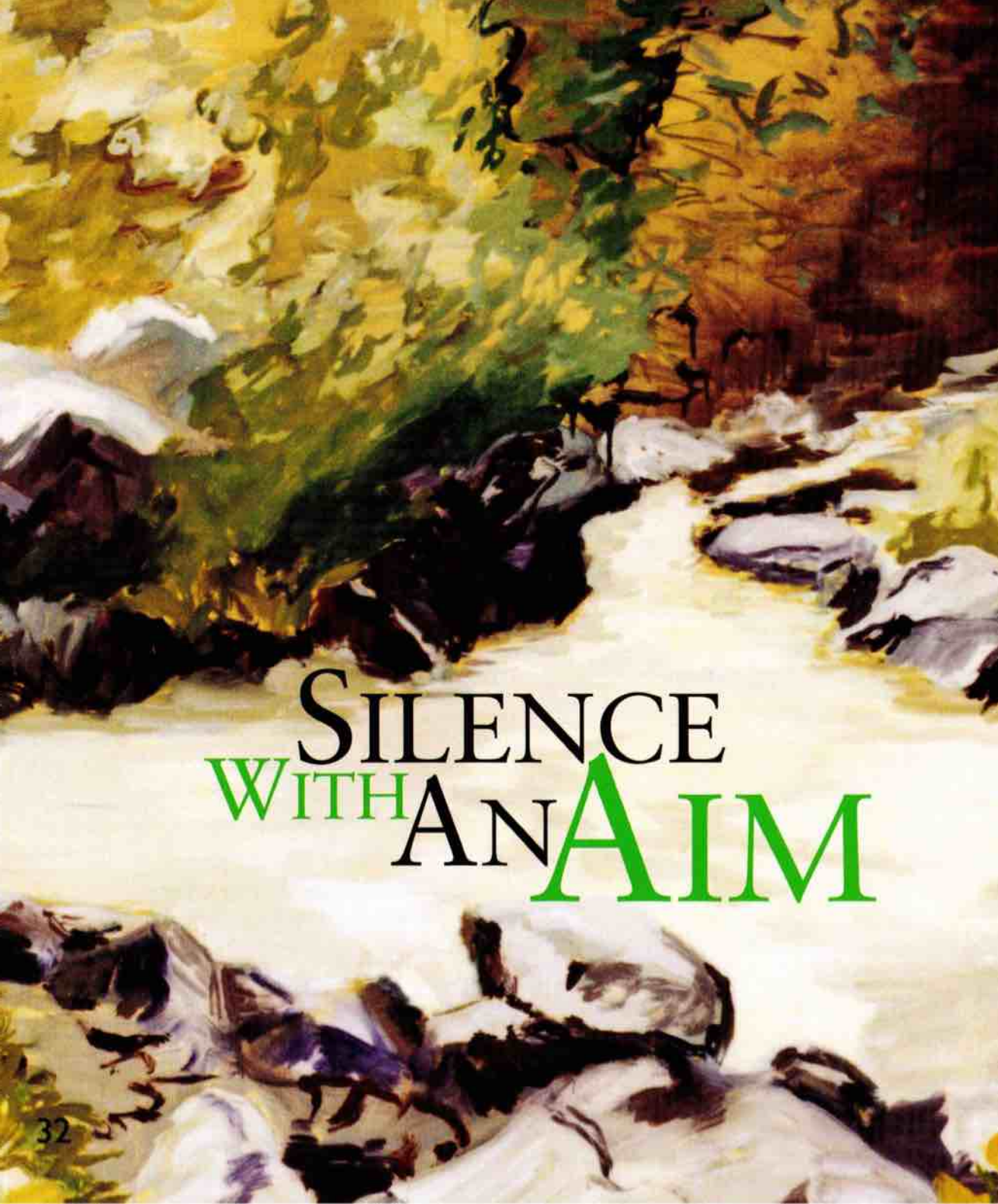
Genetics does not determine the historical future of human beings; it only determines a point of departure. A human being is a range of possibilities. He or she will choose a certain kind of life. All human beings are born in trust. In general, human beings are born where they can survive. The story of the biosphere is a story of building a world where different beings appear, constructively transforming themselves in a continuous present. Past and future are manners of living in the present. Historical

transformation takes place in this present. The only difference about human beings, as part of the historical unfolding to which we belong, is that we live in language and we can think.

Reflection is an act of emotion, not reason. "Do I like the place where I am? Do I like who I am? Do I like the present or do I want to change it?" This is what differentiates us from the rest of the biosphere: we reflect. We human beings can stop to reflect and, releasing our certainties, we can change what we do: "Do I like where I am?" This meeting is about this.

Each one of us lives as a center of a universe. In a way, none of us is telling anything new and yet it is new. The world in which we live is created every day with other human beings. When we change, the universe changes. The question facing us as adults is, "How do we make our daily life as adults such that our children grow in self-respect and create a world that is desirable to live in by all living beings?"

All values have to do with seeing the others and with the question of how to live with others in well-being. Who likes to obey? Who likes to be ordered about? No one, and yet we are creating a world full of demands. I am a teacher. What do I do as a teacher? I open spaces of reflection. Cooperation is only possible when we meet in mutual respect with a common purpose. ■



SILENCE WITH AN AIM

BY JUDY RODGERS
AND GAYATRI NARAIN

There was an experience I once had in silence that I have treasured and used. Just as sometimes we go in front of elders to seek blessings, or we go in front of God to seek God's blessings, in the same way I once had a powerful idea come to me, and I chose to keep that idea in front of me, giving it the power of my own good wishes and blessings. Later, I witnessed the very good results that came from this. In the same way, even when I take medicine, I pause for a minute and give my body good wishes so that the medicine will work more effectively and heal and give strength.

– Dadi Janki

See the Self. Serve the Self

When we choose to spend an extended period of time in silence, it is useful to have a specific aim for our silence. One aim might be to come to the realization of my own spiritual identity, that is, to know myself as a spiritual being and to see the world with spiritual vision.

There is an inside “eye” with which I can see myself, and an inside intellect with which I can know myself. When I am using this inner eye, I can see clearly what is eternal and what is transi-

tory. In silence I gain an appreciation of what is true, lasting, and creative, and I don't have to labor over what is false, transitory, or negative. This ability to discern between what is eternal and what is transitory allows me to look beneath my surface flaws and reclaim my self-respect.

See the World. Serve the World

There is the tendency to become involved with what is happening in society, with what people are saying and doing, and to think that I will have to do the same. With an extroverted intellect, I focus on the actions and reactions on the world stage. I may begin to devise techniques to respond to the ever-shifting scene of circumstances. When I choose my actions under the influence of outside pressures, I limit my capacity to bring greater benefit.

When I turn within in silence, I access my introverted intellect, which is the conscience. The introverted intellect allows me to look at the external world with x-ray vision. I can see that many of those who call for peace are consumed with conflict. The spiritual vision sees the disconnection in calling for peace from a consciousness of war. When I enter silence with the aim of experiencing peace as my true

and innate nature, from this consciousness I then become a force for peace in the world.

My Intention in Silence

The journey into silence begins with solitude. I separate myself from others, but often solitude doesn't immediately bring peace. In solitude I may initially find myself surrounded with hundreds of swirling thoughts and memories, plans and lists that pull me back into the world of sound. The introverted intellect can work as a filter to help me move beyond those swirling thoughts. The things that are not useful to me will flow out and away from me, and the things that are useful to me will take me to a deeper level in silence.

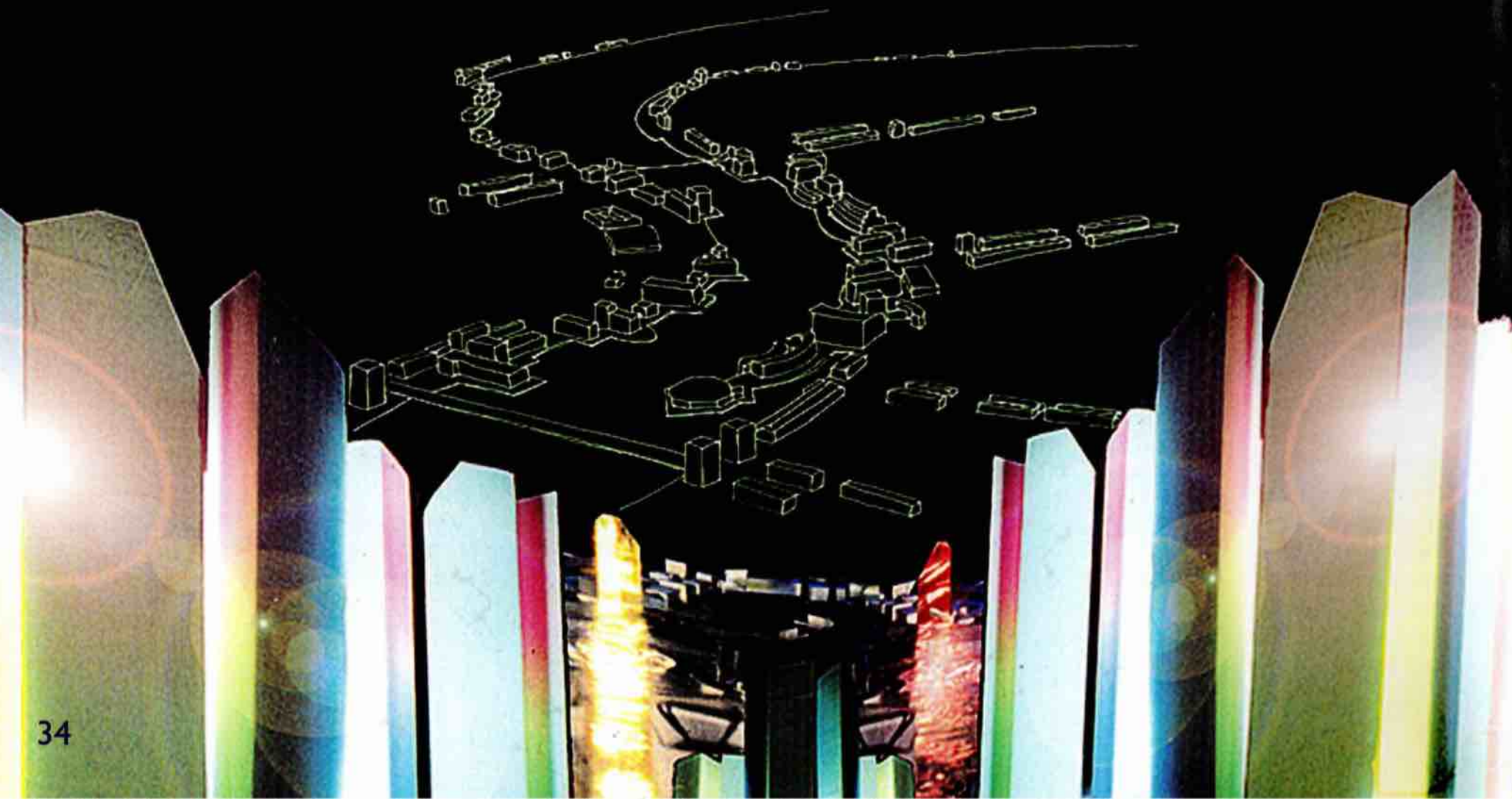
I know I am entering deep silence when I find that the outer world has fallen away and I am in a state of timelessness, of light. In this state of pin-drop silence, I can sense my concentration stabilizing, and I become aware of deeper patterns of the self. I am aware, for instance, that peace is innate in the self. I experience myself as intrinsically nonviolent. This experience is the seed of future action and moves me to trust that I can return to the field of action, expressing this quality in my work and relationships.

There is an absolute, direct link that connects what is happening inside of me to what I am doing on the field of action. If I want to make a difference in the quality of an outcome, it isn't a question of thinking of a better technique. Rather, it is a signal to move into silence with the aim of clarifying my intentions, for they are the seeds of action. A pure intention creates a more powerful result. ■

I came to learn that silence is a very strong power. I compare it with the nonviolence of Mahatma Gandhi. Silence amplifies my inner strengths. The power I wielded as President was given to me by the Constitution of Mauritius, but this power I am talking about is personal. I use it first of all to create and then to give expression through my words and actions. When one goes deep inside in search of truth, one becomes more confident and strong, and it shows in one's attitude and behavior. It is this that convinces people. This is what meditation in silence brings to me.

— Cassam Uteem, Mauritius

EXPERIMENTS IN SILENCE



AT SOME POINT DURING THE CALL-OF-THE-TIME DIALOGUES, PARTICIPANTS ARE presented with the opportunity to spend most of a day in silence. There are no requirements as to how they spend this time. What follows are reflections from participants about their own experiments in silence.

Inner and Outer Perspectives

“During my time in silence, I reflected on the integrative way of looking at the inner and outer perspectives of the three important qualities of respect, tolerance, and compassion. (*Respect, tolerance, and compassion were the themes of the Asian Call-of-the-Time Dialogue.*)

“When we say, ‘I respect you,’ what exactly are we saying? We are really respecting a quality that has been expressed by the person, and we are forming a symbiotic relationship with a quality that we admire. However, when the divinity in the individual that is common to all beings is respected, then the meaning of respect is taken on golden wings to a new height.

“When we say that I am tolerating something, for instance, ‘I am tolerating his behavior,’ ‘I am tolerating her attitude,’ or ‘I am tolerating a certain phenomenon,’ this brings a limited and limiting

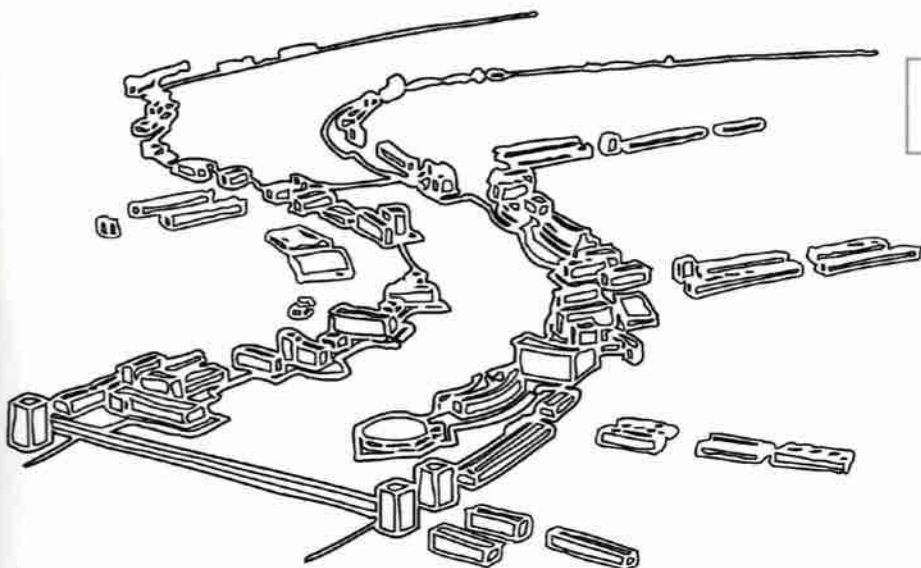
compassion

notion of individualization. However, the inner aspect of tolerance is a

sublimation of our ego, of our ‘I-ness,’ and the recognition of the subtle bonds that bind us as a collective.

“It is common to say that we must have compassion for our fellow human beings, but the inner meaning of compassion, viewed through a prism of interconnectedness, exhorts us to extend it to all forms of life.”

(*Mohamad Reaz Abdullah, from dialogue in Malaysia*)



The Diamond Sparkle

"I entered my silence, looking at my life and the different events that make up my life, and I had a sense of sorrow and started crying. It was a cry that was cleansing me; I felt that I was being cleansed. Later on, I still remember with clarity that I assumed the attitude of a small girl who had no expectations, who had no intellectual arguments, and who was not inventing anything. I only had curiosity. I was like a girl going into a room not knowing what I would find. The first thing I experienced was who I was, and I remember seeing a very large diamond. The diamond was sparkling as if it had many sparkling facets and lots and lots of light.

"I would like to clarify that, in the past, when I tried to connect with God, I experienced a very, very thin thread of gold, which connected me to someone who seemed

experience

very, very far away. But in this specific silence, when I saw the diamond, I felt that God was very close to me, like a person sitting very close to me. I felt that He was my father. I felt that I had a very, very powerful father, the most powerful of all fathers, and that He was holding my hand. This experience touched in me an infinite and unlimited happiness. I felt empowerment and energy to do whatever I wanted because my father was with me and was holding my hand, and my father was God."

(Mónica Herrera, from dialogue in Chile)

Recognizing Love

"Alison Edwards talked about the love and care with which her grandmother used to pack her lunch of sandwiches. In my silence, I reflected on the way we express love. If everyone did everything with that much love, what would the world be like? Is love a vibration? Is there something the human race has to offer to the universe with this vibration of love? If we were to recognize that the real gift we have to offer the world is our love, in every action we take, what an immense responsibility that would be!"

(Jody Grossman, from dialogue in USA)

vibration

Cleaning Out All Kinds of Residue

“The time spent in silence was greatly revealing, so much so that it changed my whole outlook. Before coming here, I was engaged in a lot of exercises in which I was told to take deep breaths in order to remove the residual air that is stuck in my lungs. However, I never looked at the residue that was far beyond the bottom of the lungs and saturated the whole body. This silence provided me with quality time to clean out all kinds of residue that was stuck within the mind, within the psyche, within the soul, and within the body. I felt energized in a very potent manner.”

(Hon. Patrick Pillay, from dialogue in Mauritius)

energy

Mastering the Sarod

“The first time I heard Ustad Amjad Khan, then barely out of his teens, playing the *sarod*,* it was like beholding a horseman handling a wild stallion, jumping, kicking, bolting, resisting the harness, and refusing to be ridden. But the man, with great skill and patience, eventually masters the horse, calms it down, harnesses it, and finally rides and controls it, going from ‘painful strangeness to mutual complicity.’**

“That is the experience of our soul wrestling with our ego, to soothe it and harness it to silence and meditation. This silence around me is invigorating, and the stillness of all things heightens my senses so that I become receptive to strange sensations and mysterious vibes.

patience

There is also a subtle apprehension, which gradually subsides, and an infinite, indescribable ecstasy takes hold of me, so that I experience a kind of harmony with the entire creation, a harmony born in silence and realized in deep meditation.”

(Mohamad Vayid, from dialogue in Mauritius)

* The sarod is an Indian classical musical instrument.

** In his comments, Mohamad Vayid was quoting from “Points of Entry” by Dominique Peccoud, *Experiments in Silence, Issue No. 1.*

PRACTICING MANSA SEVA

DADI JANKI

SENDING ...

WHEN WE USE THE TERM *mansa seva*, we are talking about service with the mind, but the mind is deeply connected with the heart. The mind creates thoughts, and the heart has feelings. If a thought arises but there is not that feeling in my heart, how can I serve? Or the other way round, if there is a feeling but there isn't the thought, then again how can it work? Service happens through honesty, through compassion, and through feelings of love. It is the heart's desire to do something. It feels that it is necessary that I should do this.

Everyone is engaged in action; there is nobody who can stay without action. But when we use the word *service*, then the motivation behind the action is love and compassion – that's what makes us serve. Spirituality helps in terms of service. When we say spiritual service, then it is the spiritual being we are serving, but the service will happen through the body.

From childhood I have had feelings of service, and I have found it very pleasurable to be able to

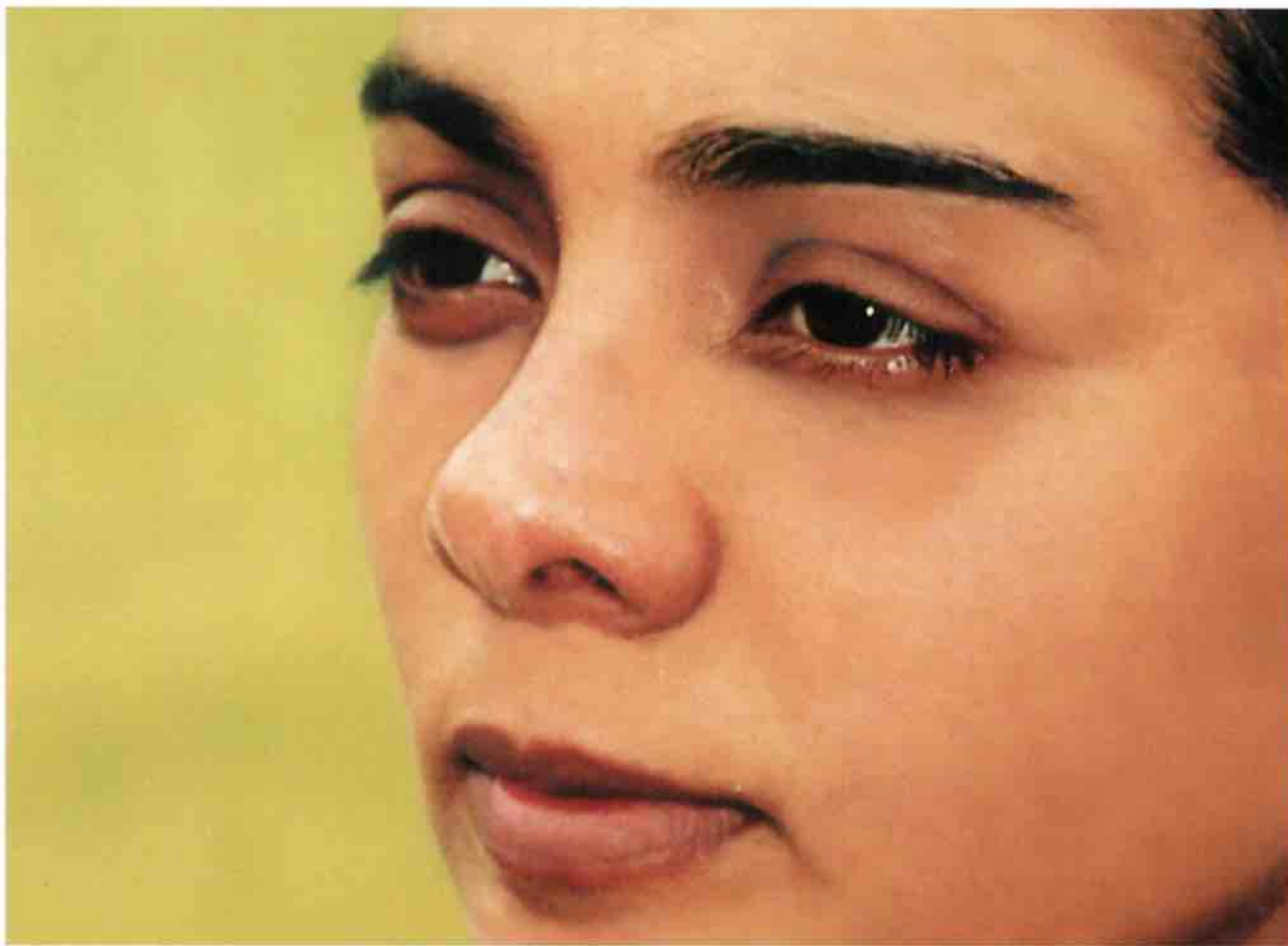
serve, whether it was serving the poor or serving the sick. I have seen how God has served all of us souls, and God has transformed us souls through His service. Service has to be altruistic, without the thought of "I." I have to forget myself. I cannot even have the thought that I am serving because I want the good wishes and blessings of others. I am simply serving. Automatically, as a result of this service, I become worthy of receiving the blessings of others.

In 1989 when I was in London, I received a message from the founder of the Brahma Kumaris to be forwarded to "Uncle" Steve Naraine who was in San Francisco preparing to have a second open-heart surgery. The message called on him to go beyond the somber predictions of the medical community and to focus his mind on the spiritual dimension of what was going on in his life. Before sending the message on, I added a note reminding him of the role played by life's drama – that we cannot control the events of life, but we can choose to respond to events with a deep faith that

whatever is happening to us will bring benefit.

I know Uncle to be a person who never has doubts and for whom the thread of Godly love has never diminished. Because of his love for God and his faith, I knew everything would be fine. I knew that God would take care of everything and would make the right things happen. There was such a strong pull of Godly love that the thought arose that I should travel to San Francisco personally. The plans for the trip came together naturally and quickly without any obstacles coming in the way. It really felt as if God was making it happen, and the power of Uncle's honesty and love was the stimulus to move everything.

I was taken from the airport directly to the hospital where he was recovering from the surgery in the Intensive Care Unit. At the time of seeing Uncle in the Intensive Care Unit, there was no conscious thought that I was actually doing anything or serving in any way. Instead, there was a very powerful sense of God's presence and sharing the experience of God. I took great inspiration



from the doctor. I understood the total humility with which he was serving, and that he didn't really even want the acknowledgment of thanks, and so I actually did not see him. I am sure he must have felt a "divine power" working through his hands.

In the history of my relationship with Uncle Steve, there has always been a very deep spiritual connection of love and affection from the moment that he came to this study with the Brahma Kumaris. I don't even think that it was a question of serving that soul. I would say that it is more a matter of mutual respect. When I emerge the soul of Uncle Steve in front of me, there are simply sweet feelings of helping those who are part of the spiritual family. When one is close to God, then one is able to sense when others are also close to God, and so there is a feeling of great love for each other. He has his own spirituality and his own relationship with God, and so what help could I give? Recognizing a soul who has his own close relationship with God, the feelings in my mind were of great happiness and simply wanting to offer support.

When one recognizes the specialties of each one, the virtues of each one, then this increases the feelings of friendship and a shared bond of service. It is a connection of deep, spiritual, Godly love for each other, which is part of the *sanskar** of the soul. Of course, there are other souls who are in situations of karmic bondage or who have

some weakness, and it is important to give them that spiritual love to support them and help them. Sometimes there are souls who feel hopeless, and it is important to serve them with the mind and fill them with hope again. This is very essential service. It is subtle service to awaken hope in someone who has lost hope. Others may have a great deal of ego. So on the one hand, there is that inferiority complex; but on the other side, there is the superiority complex – they think they are better than others. Those souls don't think they need any help, but there is a deep feeling of compassion for them and the thought, "Let me help them so that they can be free from ego." They should be able to experience a realization of truth through good company. That also gives help to souls. It is not right that I should leave them and forget about them. It is my duty out of that sense of love that I should try to help them so that they are able to see themselves. They perhaps don't know the value and the importance of humility and truth. With love and tirelessness, one should be ready to serve such souls.

So there are three different varieties of service through the mind that I have just mentioned:

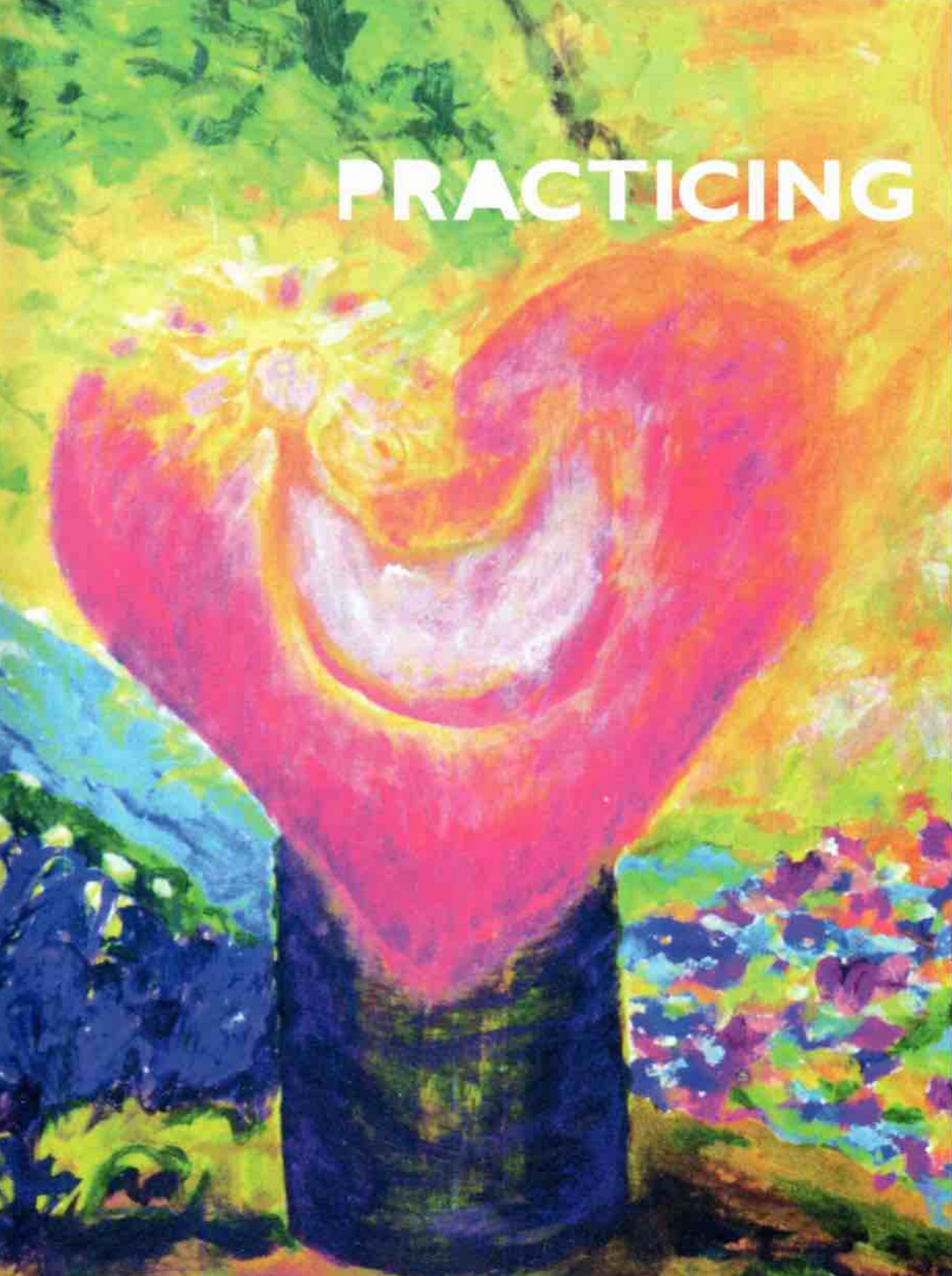
- **Service with feelings of love and mutual respect for one who already has a close relationship with God,**
- **Service with feelings of love and sup-**

port for those who are feeling weak, and
• **Service with feelings of love and compassion for those who don't believe they need any help.**

Service through the mind is unlimited. The feeling is, "Let every soul receive whatever it is they need at the time that they need it." Then there is unlimited service. My mind really has to be very open and generous, so I don't have the thought that I have tried to help them, but I don't see any results or they are not showing any signs of changing. I must not keep that thought. But with love let me continue. I must not notice negative comments or criticisms, but I must be tireless so I don't give up serving through the mind.

The spirit of service creates that perfect image of the self. One enjoys being an instrument to serve. It is an opportunity to use God's virtues and God's powers in the self. I don't have these; they are not natural within me at this time. They are the gifts from God as my inheritance, and if I can use them, then it is my great fortune to be able to do so. ■

**Sanskar is a Hindi word depicting the invisible blueprint of thoughts and assumptions that govern our actions.*



PRACTICING

MANSA SEVA

STEVE NARAINÉ

RECEIVING ...

MY BEST EXPERIENCE OF *mansa seva* occurred in 1989 when I was going to San Francisco to have my second open-heart surgery. When the doctors made their diagnosis, they were rather hopeless because they believed that I was likely to have a heart attack before, during, or after the operation. After doing the angiogram, they were even more doubtful. Around this time I received a message from the founder of the Brahma Kumaris which said: Remember A, B, and C. This message was sent via London through Dadi Janki, who added the letter D.

What the message meant was ...

A Atma: The soul is eternal.

(*Atma* is a Hindi word for the soul.)

B Baba: Baba is the Supreme Surgeon.

(*Baba* is a Hindi word for father.

This word is often used by the Brahma Kumaris to refer to God.)

C Company: The support that comes from being in the company of the Brahma Kumaris (BK) family gives strength.

D Drama: Whatever happens in the drama of life is of total benefit.

After receiving the message, my thoughts kept going to Dadi Janki, even though others were around me. It was as if she was transmitting some kind of powerful energy to me.

During this time I experienced something going on inside of me. I felt as if God was giving me some additional power, some additional understanding. I was also getting quite a lot of support from the BK family in San Francisco as well as from my own nuclear family. This support contributed to the increasing feeling of confidence I had in the doctor. As the doctor and I talked about my condition, I felt it was not just we who were talking, but that something greater was influencing these decisions. Despite the grim diagnosis, I never had the thought that I was not going to succeed in the

operation. The feeling I received from God was: "Go ahead and do it." I was convinced, so it was just a matter of convincing the doctor. Finally, the cardiologist and I together decided to go ahead with the operation.

On the day of the operation, I felt myself receiving a tremendous amount of strength in the form of blessings and good wishes. As I was being wheeled into the operating room at about 9:00 a.m., the family was there to wish me well and to send me off with the power of their love. As I left for the operating room, word arrived that Dadi Janki was coming from London to San Francisco just to see me. Just before entering the room, I asked, "At what time is Dadi Janki arriving?" I was told she would arrive at 6:00 p.m. This was the thought with which I succumbed

to the anesthetic, and it was as if this thought kept me connected to God and Dadi Janki in silent communication for the many, many hours that followed. When I woke up from the anesthetic, the first thing I said was, "Has Dadi Janki arrived?" Minutes later, Dadi Janki was in front of me looking at me with the gentlest yet most powerful *drishti*.

As I looked into her eyes, I felt that her coming had a greater purpose. Dadi did come to see me but, most important, she had come to serve. Her presence did wonderful service at the hospital. The doctors, nurses, and patients all received the benefit of Dadi's presence.

When I look back on this experience, I am more convinced than ever that I was being served on subtle levels through elevated

thoughts and pure feelings. It couldn't have been my strength alone, because under normal circumstances, if a doctor tells you that you will die if you have a certain operation, it will drive a lot of fear and anxiety, a lot of if's and what's and how's. But this was not my experience. Something greater was motivating me. It was embodied in the message I received from the founder of the Brahma Kumaris: Have faith in the self. Have faith that God's canopy of protection will serve as an instrument to subtly guide the doctors and surgeons. Have faith in the support of the family. And have the deep understanding that whatever happens will be of benefit. I felt at the time and I feel today that there was a combination of mental and physical service taking place. Whatever was happening

on the physical level was being directed by minds that were being touched by the Divine.

Because of the unusual nature of my experience, my doctor wanted to meet Dadi Janki, for he too had been receiving the subtle mental and emotional support that was being sent. On the day Dadi Janki left San Francisco, she came by my room to say good-bye and left a gift for my doctor. Later that day, when he came to my room, I said, "Dr. Garfield, you have just missed Dadi once again. She has left for the airport." His expression was of total disappointment. But then he smiled as if to say that certain experiences are so strong that, even if you never meet the person with whom they are shared, they nevertheless leave an indelible imprint on the soul. ■



ONE

HUMILITY

To be a part
To be a piece
Of chain, of life,
Of being in,
Of being born
From apple tree
Just to become
A part of bee
That flies away.

ABILITY

To fall apart,
To reconnect,
A stand to take
In greater stream,
To ride a beam
Of light, of force,
That makes you small
By getting lost
In magic large.

SINCERITY

To break a sense
Of rigid "I,"
To see the world
With open eyes,
With open heart
To welcome blood
Of sound whole
Just to become

ONE.

Nadya Zhexembayeva

ARTISTS' STATEMENTS

JUDI GOR, THE NETHERLANDS

("Transformation of Monotony," Page 30;
"The Colors of Silence," Page 34)

"The illumination of cities creates a symphony played through architectural instruments, orchestrated and directed by the magic hand of light. In medicine, the healing powers of light are well known, for instance, to cure winter depression. The time has come to enlarge the scale and use light for the same purpose in urban planning."

MARIA ADRIANA PABLOS, CHILE

(Detail of "The Light of Silence," Page 10)

"Silence is light, it gives me inner power, showing me my inner truth, which always has been there . . . but I am not able to make it sparkle . . . unless there is that deep inner silence which harmonizes myself and the world around me."

MARIËLLE SOONS, THE NETHERLANDS

(Detail of "Swirl," Cover; detail of "In de Schaduw van de Bomen," Contents page; detail of "Beyond," Page 12; "Gouden Bergen," Page 22; detail of "One," Pages 18-19 and Page 32)

"Basically, the paintings start from an empathetic, deeply felt experience of my surroundings. I get inspired by the beauty or magic of a place. Like a deer, pure and wild, skipping over the globe, impressed and surprised by the wonder of creation. In the studio I remain silent and listen, to create space for the voice that wishes to speak. My hands, the paint, the colors, the landscapes become serviceable; they make way for greater things. I hope the

work can be a touching resonance of what cannot be painted; the colors and shapes as vessels for the energy, which has the power to connect the soul to its true nature. I guess the landscapes are the expression of the inner way."

MIRIAM SUBIRANA, SPAIN

(Detail of "Life," Page 41)

"When I sit in front of the white canvas, I turn inwards, and in silence, a vision emerges. Colors full of their original light start to flow, and a landscape begins to take shape. It is the expression of the connectedness between the inner landscape and the outer world."

HARRY VAN ESSEN, GERMANY

(Illustration for "Tomato Economics," Page 14)

"When one touches the original silence of the soul, the expression of perfection emerges in light and colors."

PHOTOGRAPHS

("Meditation Room at the United Nations Headquarters," UN 57107, United Nations, New York, 1957, Page 29)

Our heartfelt thanks to the photographers of the dialogues who have contributed to this journal:

Angélica Fanjul, Chile (Pages 6 and 8)

Erik Larson, USA (Pages 8 and 9)

Peter Osborne, UK (Pages 6, 8, 9, 20, 24, 27, 39, and 44)

Judy Rodgers, USA (Page 6)

A Tribute to Thomas Odhiambo (1931-2003)

Professor Thomas Odhiambo was a giant among men. His excellence in science was matched by his love for humanity and his altruistic motivation: he believed that science should be used for serving people in the best way possible. I knew Thomas for the last five years of his life and was moved by his humility and his constant love for learning, even though he had achieved so much already. He was a spiritual man with a strong commitment to truth. In chairing and participating in the Call-of-the-Time Dialogues, Thomas demonstrated clear and precise thinking as well as a gentle nature.

A powerful legacy for me will be the momentous redefinition of his stance on slavery. He shared in Mauritius, in August 2002, that instead of reparation or restitution, the only thing that could bring about a Renaissance in Africa would be total forgiveness. Thomas's insight in this was that this alone would remove forever the consciousness and relationship of "victim" and "oppressor" and allow new developments. Thomas knew that this would be a difficult road to pursue and that his position would be challenged, but he had the courage to state his vision publicly.

Our thoughts of God's love and peace are with him as he continues his journey.

Jayanti Kirpalani, Co-facilitator,
Call-of-the-Time Dialogues

The power of silence
transforms the nature of human souls
and, in turn, the nature of the
natural elements.

The instruments of the
power of silence
are pure thoughts, pure feelings, and the
language of the eyes.

With pure thoughts, you can finish the
waste thoughts of others;
With pure feelings,
you can create in others
the feelings of love;
and with just one look,
you can take others
to a place of inner contentment.

The impact of the subtle is indelible.