



Newsletter, Spring 2010

BRIEF ENCOUNTER



A few years ago as I left work late one night the phone rang with a message to be at Wembley conference hall early next morning. Not knowing where it was I found myself going into a nearby pub on the Edgware Road to ask for directions, forgetting that all the customers might be men “having drink taken” as we Irish say. Loud catcalls greeted my entrance so without thinking, I asked the noisiest group for directions.

As one, the men surged to their feet, a bit unsteadily to be sure and launched into advice. In a heartbeat the room was unified as each person gave their instructions - and they bonded with me too! When it was time to go, I was bowed out with fatherly expressions “take care of yourself now” and “mind how you go”.

That night was a reminder just how close to the surface this instinct is in us to help each other. For some reason, asking the way is something people respond to especially if they are approached politely. Try it yourself as an experiment. In a sense you are saying to someone that not only do you respect them but you think they have greater knowledge than you. It's irresistible and a good chance to connect with someone.

Bad experiences can shatter a belief in others so it is easy to keep to yourself for protection. On page 3 though, Chris and Greg in HMP Bullingdon and Stephen in HMP Barlinnie say that people who arrived in their lives helped them at the right time. And it is often a chance encounter that delivers an angel

to your door.

I have often thought of those kind men in the pub who helped me find my way. Over a thousand years ago a Buddhist priest once asked an old woman for the way to a nearby town. She told him to go straight on. Her answer has left meditators throughout the ages pondering her reply. David's query for the right path in psalm 25 - “*Show me thy way*” - keeps Christians pondering too. You often say that finding the way isn't easy for you. Two things

can help. One is not to be put off by feelings of lack of confidence. You have all the answers inside you - as most people know if they are honest. But putting time aside to allow the mind to settle so that the way is clear takes strength of mind. The strength is in you, if you tap into it - even though you may doubt it.

When you sit still feeling the inbreath and outbreath wash through you in silence, gradually the bad experiences, the questions and the lack of confidence start to recede.

It doesn't happen all at once but after a few weeks you can find a real change has come over your mind, just as, on page 2, Ian says came over him. You might find yourself more alert to other people too, especially those that crop up in your life to help.



Working together in a yoga class in HMP The Verne



Love Sandy - and Jo, Jason, Sam, Kate, Kaye, Clive & David

“Angels come to visit us, and we only know them when they are gone.”

- George Eliot (1819 - 1880) writer



ABOUT THE PRISON PHOENIX TRUST

The Prison Phoenix Trust supports prisoners in their spiritual lives through meditation, yoga, silence and the breath.

It recommends breath-focused stretches and meditation sensitively tailored to students' needs. This safe practice offers students ultimate peace of mind. The PPT encourages prisoners and prison staff through correspondence, books, newsletters, workshops and weekly classes.



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The Gym Hero

By Jason



Prisoners'

Envelope drawn by a prisoner at HMP Brixton



Jason flexes his muscles

There is a saying that goes something like 'If you want to know someone's personality, look at their friends'. But what about those fleeting friends who appear unexpectedly and give us a little helping hand?

Like many of you, I go to the gym several times a week, and recently seem to have been there at the same time as someone whom I found intensely irritating. He struts around wearing a too small T-shirt, continually admiring himself in the mirror, before lifting the heaviest weights possible and with the maximum of grunting noises to make sure everyone else knows. After a few minutes he is completely exhausted and so he goes back to gazing at himself in the mirror. He is a lot younger than me, and usually arrives with a couple of admirers, one rather overweight, and the other small and frail, and I find myself wondering if these outriders are there to make him feel even more of a hero. As you can tell, he has played on my mind a lot! (Even with regular meditation, I wrestle with a judgmental side at times.)

One day I was pondering the satisfaction of making a sarcastic comment to knock him down a notch when luckily something unexpected happened. It stopped me in my tracks. He saw me looking at him and strolled over to me, breaking into a pleasant smile as he got nearer and he asked if he could use the rowing machine when I had finished. He couldn't have been more polite and friendly.

Instantly all the images I had built up crumbled away and I was able to see him clearly for the first time as I found myself breaking into a smile in return. Of course he could use the machine. Be my guest! How amazing to discover that my own feelings and judgments were replaced almost simultaneously with positive feelings and encouraging thoughts. Suddenly I was able to recognise him too. No wonder he comes to the gym often. I try to stay fit as I approach middle-age and go to the gym a lot as well. He does because men around 18 years old care about their appearance and they work on it. How well I remember. I was just the same (and probably still am). He is teaching me a lot.

So now I rather look forward to meeting him, and we always exchange greetings. It's a relief to let all that judgmental stuff go. (I've even got my eye on a slightly too small T-shirt...)

From HMP Peterhead

I have a new job, emptying the Portaloos here. It's a shit job (no pun intended) but someone has to do it. It is the best paid job in the jail, £15.80 a week. At first it was really difficult with the smell. But it's fine, I don't really smell it any more. I don't even wear a mask now. I repeat Vajrasattva* mantra as I empty shit. I use it as a kind of purification. I rather enjoy doing it. A worthwhile job. Strange how your mind changes. A year ago I would not even have done this. The last decade has been a nightmare for me, brought on by myself. Here's hoping that I am bringing something better into the new year. Here is my first week's wages and I hope you will accept it with my love.

**Vajrasattva is the Buddha of purity, embodying reality, compassion and wisdom.*



From HMP Bullingdon

The other day, me and my cell mate were able to lead a discussion about *We're All Doing Time* and how it had been helpful in our own lives. I am normally an introverted person and find it difficult to express myself in front of groups, but on this occasion I found the opposite to be true. The ensuing conversation went on for so long that an officer had to come in to tell us to bang up. Meditation and yoga has a positive effect on me that I didn't expect.

When I was released last June I was alone, really alone. My sister lived mere minutes away but refused to speak to me any more. It was that loneliness and despair that had me back here again. But now, not only have I rediscovered God, but I've found peace through these practices and learnt to cope with my guilt. I know I did wrong but I have learnt I can still love myself, as only by doing so can I fix the issues and love others. I am worth something after all. I apologise for rambling on so much but these letters with you have been the first time I have really been able to open up about my feelings.

From HMP Littlehey

Back on recall and it looks like I'll be spending at least another year in jail. Obviously my knock back made me angry and upset – but I will try to see it as a benefit and use it to my advantage to become a better person, son and father. With the calming effects of meditation and some of the poses of yoga I'm trying, the racehorses of my mind are starting to calm down and make some sense -- well sometimes!

You're right about the tree pose – it takes concentration so in effect it calms those racing thoughts down so you can concentrate more on your breathing. I am trying other poses but wonder if I am doing them right – it would be great to have a class here one day soon, but I will continue to do what I can when I can in my cell. Thank you for your books and support. I'm sure my chance will come again and this time I will be ready. I know where all



Letters



the pot-holes are, I've fallen in them enough times, let's hope I can get them all filled in before I see freedom again.

Ed: A Littlehey yoga class is due to start next month.

From HMP Bullingdon



A few months ago a friend comes back into jail, we go to church together and whilst waiting in the Chapel library, he picks up Bo's book and I start reading it over his shoulder. It feels like a metaphorical next chapter to overcoming the addiction of wanting to be happy.

And now I have read the *We're All Doing Time* myself, and finally get the breathing exercises which is a lot easier than just trying to clear my mind of all thoughts. After half a dozen cleansing breaths focused on my heart, my prayers come a lot more easily. I benefit and so does God.

My bad decisions in life culminated in prison. My laziness stopped me listening to myself and I wilfully didn't improve my situation. Now I am here, a two year sentence to have an effective think, and to work on things I otherwise put off. For instance I can play the guitar now, quite clumsily, but getting better all the time.

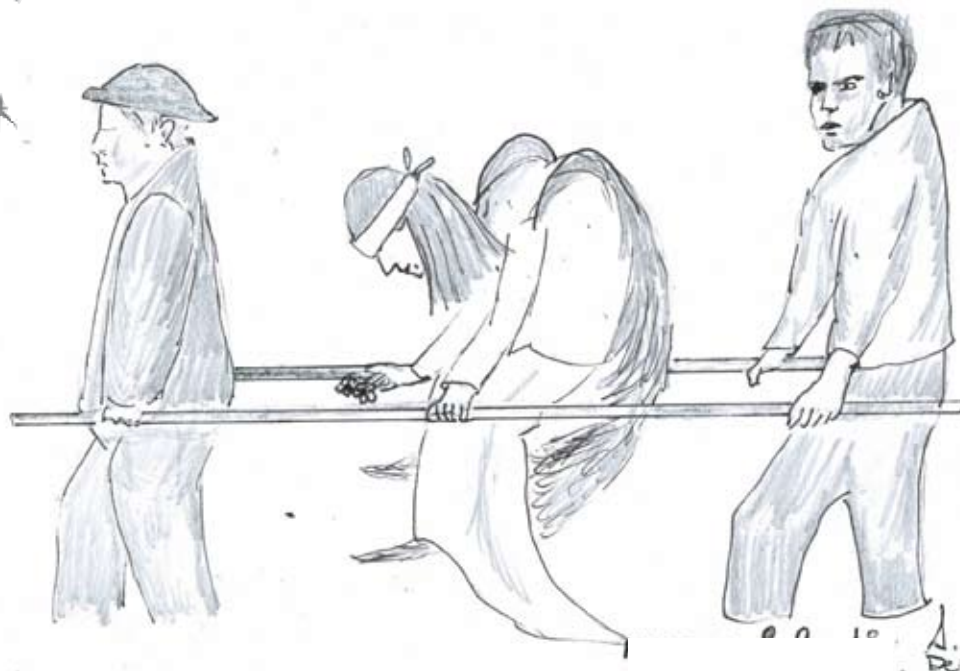
I'm exercising too (shan't diet). I can meditate, and little by little I am taming my wild mind and finding a new calm. And I am praying. Still lots of physical, mental and spiritual neglect to fix, but I have the means and will, now. By chance because of your existence I got to read this book and I am better for it.

From HMP Liverpool

I am a wing cleaner in here and am always busy. Although I am quite a restless person I have been finding pockets of time like lunch time lockup and an hour before morning unlock to practise meditation and pranayama. The yoga asanas are ideal for my sport training and weights.



Becoming Free Through Meditation and Yoga and the other books talk so much sense that it smacks you right between the eyes when you take time to think about it clearly. I am sort of at the very beginning of my journey and have a lot of ego to shed or break free from I should say. There is so much fear in this place when you step back and look from the sidelines; it's like a thick cloud dragging all within it. We all strut round like cockerels frightened of what the next man's going to think; it's all just ego and has no use to man or beast. I can't and won't proclaim that I'm a changed man yet, but I'm on the first steps to giving it my best shot. The breathing techniques are excellent and although the meditation is hard right now, it feels if I keep at it with honesty it will come to me.



Drawn by Stephen at HMP Barlinnie

From Stephen at HMP Barlinnie



I believe God sent me a soul today in the form of Big Gary. As he was leaving us and going to Glenochil prison I invited him in for a cuppa. I told him all about myself and showed him your letter Ava, we chatted for 30 minutes and had so much in common. I was able to express my inner self, breaking down walls in my heart and explaining finding peace inside, even inside jail. Gary says I'm a 'brand new geezer' and gives me a hug. We're going to stay in touch.

Thanks for your letters Ava, they are very helpful. I'm going back to gym, yoga classes, meditating and starting to feel empathy and compassion for my kids. I'm doing fine and I've started praying again.

From HMP Wormwood Scrubs



Thank you for sending me the book I requested – *Freeing the Spirit*. I have really enjoyed using the book and found it of great help. I use the new techniques daily along with the CD, *Clearing the Head, Relaxing the Body through Yoga and Meditation*, and now feel stress free most of the time. I'm going to carry on using the book every day when I can, but would be interested in any other books you have to offer that may help me with my time inside.

We are happy to reply to all your letters and help in any way we can with your yoga and meditation.

From HMP Bullingdon



I go to the yoga class here and am encouraging others to join. My meditation is coming back slowly now I'm settled a bit more. I've been blessed with three lovely old padmates in a row. A 72-year old Christian, a 55 year old Muslim, and now a 55 year old Sikh. So the cell is being charged with prayer, meditation and yoga.

You ask if manic people can meditate?



A prisoner at HMP Risley offers this insight on the manic phase of bi-polar disorder

You ask if manic people can meditate. I'd say yes, if they can relax. Thoughts arise with greater frequency and randomness, also cyclical thoughts can easily become obsessive. To avoid this, I use the phrase, "The Himalayas are infinitesimally growing and growing", which helps me, letting the thoughts slowly imagine the mountains growing as fast as my hair.

There are dangers mainly from conditioned behaviour in older people and delusions in the young. If a manic person can learn to relax and be peaceful when they are high, it can help enormously. However we do tend towards the faeries, if you know what I mean, and can easily lose our way.

You need to get the medication right first, and get the right nurse (someone you like) and then advance into practices. Some bipolars don't like to be told anything. The real issue is, whose judgment to trust? While mania gives a lot of energy, it also takes away judgment. I have a list of mentors – my mum, a CPN, a few friends – and I don't contradict them. This means I don't mind if they make mistakes at times, because I trust them.

My experiences of chi energy are very real and sometimes I see auras. I saw the danger of this at the time and didn't put my faith in it; but the mentally ill can quite literally lose touch with reality.

Doing pranayama has the risk of being taken over by delusion or feeding the flow of energy beyond a person's ability to contain it.

It burns too fast

I gave up the joy of mania, which has surpassed any other feeling I've known. It's the brain at its absolute levity. I enjoyed it, but it burns too fast. Think about it now, I have learned to analyse it and have constructed automatic reactions that turn away from mania. The mania still gets me, but not for long and I always seek help as soon as I realise.

The emotional reactivity is a big problem and the most difficult to deal with. I can be unshakeably positive, but also get upset if opposed (e.g. go to see the doctor). So I'd say as a stage in the process, preparing to engage with treatments or (inadvisably) seeing if it will blow over, then actual rather than

supposed meditation will help, but it isn't an answer unless done for prolonged periods, lying flat to avoid muscular tension. It's so complex and subtle with many resolutions and possibilities... the metaphor of a fire in a cave seems best: gotta see it, but gotta breathe, don't wanna get burned.

I hope all that makes sense. When I said in an earlier letter that thoughts inhabit my mind comfortably, there are two meanings.

I don't get carried away, either with the excitement, although the odd madcap laugh slips out, and I can reduce my reaction to the upsets, not always easy, especially if I think about injustices like war, or something personal. But I have learned to practise what I call 'enforced tranquillity' and it works. This is what Buddhists call 'patient endurance'.

What I mean is that I don't let myself get ripped up, and I use appropriate restraint on my thinking. This involves moving gently, relaxing more, releasing muscles, just generally slowing myself down.

I call it 'enforced' because it takes effort, but it does help me not get so carried away by manic phases.

Wise Words...

From Nelson Mandela who spent 27 years in prison:



When he was in prison, Nobel Peace Prize winner Nelson Mandela once wrote these words to a fellow inmate held in another jail.

"You may find that the cell is an ideal place to learn to know yourself, to search realistically and regularly the processes of your own mind and feelings.

"In judging our progress as individuals we tend to concentrate on external factors such as one's social position, influence and popularity, wealth and standard of education... but internal factors may be even more crucial in assessing one's development as a human being: honesty, sincerity, simplicity, humility, purity, generosity, absence of vanity, readiness to serve your fellow men – qualities within the reach of every soul – are the foundation of one's spiritual life... at least, if for nothing else, the cell gives you the opportunity to look daily into your entire conduct, to overcome the bad and develop whatever is good in you.

"Regular meditation, say of about 15 minutes a day before you turn in can be very fruitful in this regard. You may find it difficult to pinpoint the negative factors in your life, but the tenth attempt may reap rich rewards. Never forget that a saint is a sinner that keeps on trying."

And from poet Benjamin Zephaniah who also did time:



I get up, look in the mirror, pout my lips, raise my eyebrows, wink and think, "Wow, it all works!" Then I go for a run, in celebration of being alive.

My dreads are part of the Rastafarian idea. Rastafarianism was a backlash against black people who felt the need to copy white people, to lighten up and straighten their hair. We have white and Japanese people with dreadlocks now – it's a bit of a style thing. Religious and non-religious historians can identify when the comb was invented, so before that, we all had dreadlocks. So I say, anyone can wear dreads.

I am 51, but look younger. My doctor thinks it's my veganism – I've been vegan since I was 13. I also do yoga and t'ai chi. It's important to learn how to be relaxed; if you are tense and miserable, it stamps itself on your face.

I wrote a novel called *Face*. People were expecting a kind of black gangsta novel, something about racial or sexual discrimination. I thought, "Let's do something about facial discrimination." We judge people by their looks, and people invest so much time and money in rearranging their faces. I've met people with severe facial disfigurements and they have the best attitude. They know the face is superficial. They are just happy they can breathe and see – that their faces work.



CAT POSE



As the long winter gives way to spring, here are some stretches to awaken your spine.

In cat pose the wave-like spinal movements loosen, warm and energize the nerves and the muscles along the spine. If you practise them for a few minutes each day your spine will become more supple. Back ache is relieved too. There is no better movement for activating the spinal fluid and pacifying the nerves.

Kneel on all fours with your weight distributed evenly and try to straighten your back and align your head so your neck and back spine are in a line. Using just the nose breathe in, and as you breathe out fully curl your tailbone under, arching your back and letting your chin drop towards your chest. Stay evenly balanced and relaxed on your hands and knees maintaining the arched back position and in this arch relax into five easy breaths.

Then breathe in and allow the tailbone to point up as the chest relaxes down and the back becomes like a hammock dipping in the centre. If it is comfortable for your neck, look up slightly, feeling the natural hollow in your back. Allow yourself five more easy breaths like this.

Then for the next five breaths, move from one to the other. Breathe in with your back hollow and as you breathe out, tuck the tail bone under, pull your belly muscles in tightly, drop your chin to your chest and pull up everything between the legs. Spend a couple of seconds while you are empty of breath experiencing these three body locks - the chin lock, the stomach lock and the pelvic lock. When you long to breathe in, let everything go and inhale, tail bone up and hollowing the back. Four more breaths like this with this wave-like motion of body and breath moving together.

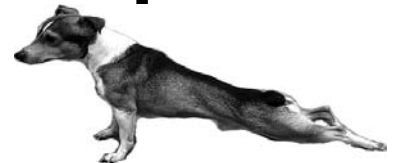


Inmates in HMPs Springhill and Wellingborough and HMYOI Huntercombe demonstrate these poses for us.



Freeing the Spine

by Jo

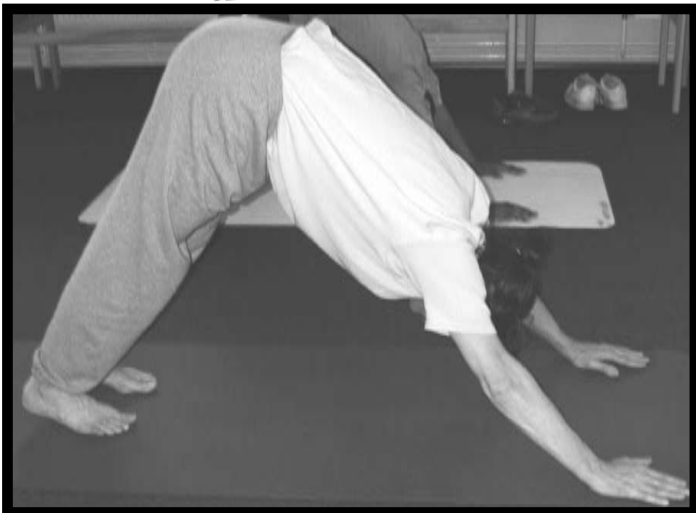


DOG POSE

In the dog stretch the shoulder joint is opened and the chest expands, allowing a deeper fuller breath. The whole back side of the body is stretched, increasing the blood circulation throughout the body.

From all fours, push yourself up into dog pose, allowing yourself time to accept the challenge you feel on the back of your legs. So start by allowing your knees to bend while you get used to the position and you can stretch one heel down, straightening one leg while the other is bent, and then swap over. When you feel you have given the muscles on the back of the legs a chance to lengthen, which can take up to 15 seconds, take your attention to your breath, breathing in and out through the nose in as easy a way as you can.

As your body begins to accept this pose, straighten the arms, pushing your trunk back towards your thighs, and take your heels towards the ground. Try to maintain the pose for five full breaths through the nose if you can. Then kneel down and bend over into child pose (right) and relax.



Staying Away From Trouble

from Patrick

Well I got out of HMP Lewes a month or so ago and have so far maintained my sobriety and am still drink and drug free.

Back in November you asked me if a time would come when I decided I could no longer take drugs and be who I wanted to be. After serious consideration I did leave Portsmouth my home of the past 15 years and moved to West Worthing to get away from everything I knew. If I could have stayed and helped many I would have, but I have come to understand that unless I am well myself how on earth can I help someone else – tough but true.

Since I've been in Worthing I have remained positive, meditating 1 ½ hours daily (thanks in no small part to yourself and kind words of encouragement you sent). I did go down to the Tuesday night meditation in Worthing, it's great and I will go again next Tuesday. It's led by Steve a Buddhist who practises and encourages Mindfulness. I haven't asked any questions yet, but with time comes courage. I also went to Brighton and meditated with the group there. It is strong and powerful meditating in a group.

I had a couple of questions – could you please help me with them? First, they talk

about wisdom, mind and understanding things more than intellectually. Could you please help me to understand 'No Self' and help me to reduce the Me, Me culture I've grown accustomed to?

I'm becoming more mindful of negative thoughts because I know personally they can damage me very much. Can you help with bad thoughts that arise? I seem to get upset with things and then in my mind I imagine harming someone or something. I watch the thought come, then go, but I just don't like having those selfish negative thoughts.

Anyway Jason thank you for your

"I used to be an apprentice jockey"



support. It would be great to hear from you. I am no Buddhist, not by a long shot but I am trying to be more aware, and mindful to stay away from trouble.

I am going to Shoreham to see if they want any voluntary help from me in their dog shelter, I love animals and used to be an apprentice jockey before the drink and drugs. I feel well and happy for the first time in 10 years.

Thank you so much for your 'kick up the ass' and kind words to encourage me. *Ed: We'll try to address some of the important questions you raised in the summer newsletter, Patrick.*



I Need My NA Meetings

from Chris



I've been out of prison for just over 3 months now which as far as I'm concerned is a bit of a minor miracle!

All my family and friends tell me I'm doing REALLY well, better than any of them thought I would and to be honest I think so too! Apart from one hiccup where I used cocaine one time, but it was a lapse, not a relapse, and since then I've kept away from it, with the help of my family, drug worker and NA meetings.

When I first got out I was going to NA meetings at least a couple of times a week but then for one reason or another stopped going and lo and behold I used. It took

everything I could muster to stop my world crashing once again.

But I did it, pulled myself back from the brink and now I'm back at the NA meetings and progressing well again.

I'm still practising meditation at least once a day, normally just before I go to bed – and this certainly helped me thru' those dark days. I am still at the hostel but should be out of here within the month.

I had a good Christmas with my family, my first one with them in eight years. I'm even reconciled with my father after five years so I'm well pleased about that. They say life begins at 40 so I'm about to put that theory to the test.



Painted by John at HMP Wymott

SPOTLIGHT ON THE SPIRIT

'Spotlight on the spirit' provides prisoners, staff, and ex-prisoners a chance to share their spirituality, especially as it applies to current issues.

There is a way of walking...



Yvonne is a counsellor working with sex offenders on release with the charity Circles of Support and Accountability, and many of you will know her as a PPT letter writer. She is also the Quaker Chaplain at HMP Grendon, where every week Muslims, Buddhists and Hindus can join Christians in silent prayer. She said someone once told her that he didn't believe in God so she asked him why he came. He said, "I love the quiet."



Yvonne dancing with a street friend at London's Notting Hill Carnival

I think I was quite a religious child although didn't grow up in a religious household. My first memory of a religious experience was reading 'The Piper at the Gates of Dawn' in *The Wind in the Willows* when I was nine. The sense of beauty, reverence and all-pervading love in that passage moved me.

When I was twelve I asked Jesus to come into my life and felt a sense of newness and again the awareness of a loving presence. I was baptised when I was sixteen and found my church a nurturing community.

At university though I began to question the implication that the vast majority of us are bound for eternal punishment and only a tiny minority will be saved. It was hard reconciling that with the idea of a just or loving God. The result was I lost my Christian faith and for the next twenty years devoted energy to martial arts training later discovering Qigong, a Chinese form of therapeutic movement which I have practised for fourteen years.

In 1998 I read *We're All Doing Time* and that was the beginning of my daily meditation practice which has become fundamental. I looked for a group to support my practice and discovered Sufism, a mystical path deriving from Islam and seeking to discover an underlying peace and unity. My Sufi teacher is an important guide in my life.

The 9/11 terrorist attacks were a severe shock to my growing sense of harmony. I found myself drawn to Quakers because

they have a peaceful and practical way of working with conflict.

Interestingly the experience of Sufism and Quakerism gave me a new appreciation of Christianity and I began to have a sense of God in my life again, but somehow more grounded within than before. Sufism includes the practice of Zikr, 'remembrance', a moment-by-moment, breath-by-breath awareness of God. I find the same idea in the gospels and St Paul's letters, for example 'Pray without ceasing' (I Thessalonians:5:17). There is a way of walking or going about daily life noticing how the breath changes with certain thoughts and feelings, and placing a prayer or mantram on the swing of each breath. When I prepare the chapel for the Quaker meeting in the prison each week I concentrate on the Aramaic word 'Ethphatah' ('Be opened') which Jesus spoke when he healed the deaf man and which is related to the Divine Name 'Fattah' in Arabic.

I love the verse in Isaiah 56:7 'My house shall be a house of prayer for all people'.

Eloquently expressed beliefs can be very inspiring but more than anything I

value the qualities of honesty, humility and, above all, kindness in a person. I'm often moved by the goodness of people whose beliefs and habits are quite different from my own - I like the Quaker advice 'Let your life speak' - that is challenging enough.

I love a song by the Sufi musician Zuleikha and was delighted to realise that the words are adapted from one of my favourite books, *Jesus the Son of Man*, by Kahlil Gibran. The words of the song are:

Your neighbour is your other self, dwelling behind a wall. In understanding, all walls shall fall down.

Who knows but that your neighbour is your better self, wearing another body. See that you love him as you love yourself.

Your neighbour is a field with a spring of hope flowing down. Your neighbour is a mirror where you may behold your countenance made beautiful by a joy you never knew.

See that you love him as I have loved you. See that you love them as you love yourself. They too are a ray of the Most High, whom you may not know.

Moving Forward



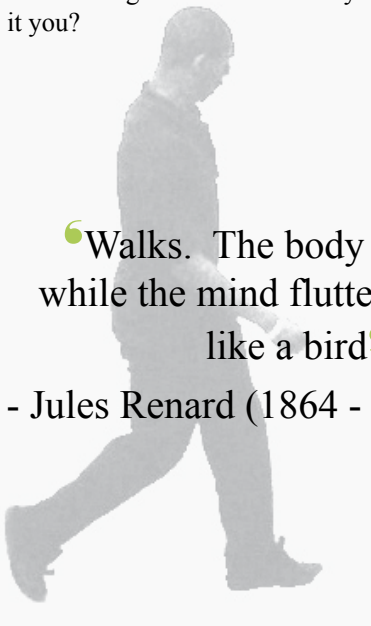
By Kate

It feels good to walk. The body has its own intelligence so you never need to think how to walk because the body knows. It naturally puts one foot in front of the other and moves forward swinging the arms. In its way it's an amazing action even though it is such an everyday one.

It feels good to breathe too. And the body knows how to do that too. It has been breathing ever since you were born. It feels even better to breathe in and out through the nose if you can because that really helps the body feel better.

You probably walk a dozen times a day, along the wings, during movement between work or classes, or in the gym and never give it a thought. Occasionally though, it's good to be aware of walking and breathing. It is so simple, such an everyday action. The Chilean poet, Pablo Neruda, said in one of his poems, *"I stroll along serenely, with my eyes, my shoes, my rage, forgetting everything."* How cool is that?

When you next find yourself relaxing into your stride, maybe you can appreciate what a little miracle this breathing and walking is. Is the miracle your body and breath? Or is it you?



‘Walks. The body advances, while the mind flutters around it like a bird’

- Jules Renard (1864 - 1910), author



“Seven men came to the first session and the results were encouraging”

PPT goes bail

We have just passed the anniversary of our first year supporting yoga teachers in a bail hostel. It all began in a local half-way house for former offenders when the manager contacted us to set up a weekly class.

Lissa, a yoga teacher in HMYOI Huntercombe and her fellow teacher in the community Sue began a six week pilot, teaching alternate weeks. Their aim included encouraging cheerfulness and breath awareness as well as offering breathing practice, standing and sitting poses, a basic sun salutation, gentle backbends, shoulder stand, relaxation and meditation.

After the pilot, the manager said she saw noticeable benefits. It was rare, she said, there was not one negative comment from any resident who attended. As Oxford's hostel yoga class completed its first year of teaching, the manager of a South London hostel rang us wanting a PPT workshop so she could assess if high risk residents on license would benefit. Seven men came to the first session and the results were so encouraging that a regular teacher, Dave, started teaching a ten-week pilot there in February. We are watching the space with fingers crossed...

This newsletter goes to members of the prison community and to our many friends on the outside who continue to offer us their encouragement. The Prison Phoenix Trust is a small charity depending totally on supporters' kindness and financial generosity to continue in our work to help our friends inside. One way you can help is to consider remembering us in your will. Any sum, however small, is much appreciated.

Prison Phoenix Trust Newsletter
PO Box 328, Oxford, OX2 7HF
registered charity no. 327907

