



# Pine Gate

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Newsletter of the Pine Gate Sangha

Vol. 2 Issue 2: Spring – 2003

Inside...	
Waves Into Water .....	2
Culture Shocking in Kolkata.....	4
Day of Mindfulness at Pine Gate Sangha .....	5
The Buddha's Footsteps.....	5
Waging Peace.....	6
Contemplation.....	7
Celebrating Peace Through Song .....	8
The Sunshine of the Sangha.....	8
The Peace Movement.....	9
GAIA International .....	10
Healing The Inner Child .....	12
Retreats .....	15
Spring and Summer 2003 Schedule.....	16

Pine Gate is the voice of Ottawa's Pine Gate sangha, who practice engaged Buddhism in the tradition of Thich Nhat Hanh. Friends of the sangha also contribute to the newsletter. Submissions are invited, articles of 500 – 700 words, poems and insights that reflect engaged practice and personal experience are appreciated. The Pine Gate sangha has many leaders and the newsletter is an organic outcome of sangha insight. Effortlessly it appears.

Ian Prattis provides dharma talks and teachings that encourage practice through deep non-action, so that engaged practice (action) emerges from understanding and compassion. His wife, Carolyn, teaches a regular Qi-Gong class at Pine Gate Meditation Hall as an introduction to mindfulness practice.

The Pine Gate sangha welcomes old and new members to its regular and special activities.

Peace Vigils were held throughout the National Capital Region of Canada before the war on Iraq began. Over 4,000 citizens kept candle lit vigils. The silence was deafening in its roar. At the Peace Song Circle held on Parliament Hill in Ottawa after the outbreak of war, choirs, soloists and dancers gave their hearts for peace. The pouring rain was welcome for it symbolized the tears of Iraqi children, all our tears - transformed into hope through singing for peace and experiencing deep peace. There was a transformation of anger, anguish, hatred and violence into a determined clarity to be peace. The "shock and awe" campaign of bombing Iraq could very well invite hatred and anger. Perhaps the mantra "If they knew better, they'd do better.." can help. As students of Thay we do "know better" – that in this time of deep pain and suffering we must go that extra mile to develop compassion and choose the mind of love.

The Bush/Blair unilateralism for war bypassed the UN. War and occupation of Iraq are realities. In Canada it is vital that we continue to send very strong messages to our political leaders that such unilateralism is reckless and is not supported. Telephone your views to Canada's Foreign Secretary at: 1- 613 995 1851.

With war and occupation, simply remain steady, clear and compassionate - centered in mindfulness. Take refuge in strong sangha friends so as not to be overwhelmed by events on the global stage. Our authentic dharma practice is the process of global renewal. From the Buddha we know that with our minds we create our world. So let us be clear about the mind we choose to cultivate in these difficult times. The Mind of Love dissolves the toxic poisons of hatred, greed and delusion, and the

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violent conflicts they spawn. The Pine Gate Sangha and Friends will never give up on peace.

Whatever happens, let us stay steady for peace, knowing there are people in every part of the world supporting our endeavours. Let us wage peace together, practice diligently and include everyone in our Mind of Love. This issue of Pine Gate is focused on deepening our practice so that our minds are clear to assist in the eventual process of reconciliation and reconstruction of our world.

May everyone's days be well.

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## Waves Into Water

Ian Prattis

My practice has often been a clumsy and ineffective dance between the Ultimate and Historical Dimensions. Between these two dimensions lies the Action Dimension, which is secured through the practice of cultivating the Six Paramitas. This cultivation provides a conduit for the energy of the Ultimate Dimension to penetrate the domain of the Historical Dimension. At the same time the actualization of the Three Dharma Seals takes place as we realize liberation. That is the main idea anyway.

My focus is on my difficulties with this main idea of dancing between the Ultimate and Historical Dimensions. Thay uses the wonderful analogy of waves and water to help us understand how the Ultimate and Historical dimensions of reality are interwoven. Waves rise, they fall and die when they wash up on a seashore or riverbank. This is the analogy for the Historical Dimension. No matter what attributes apply to waves there is, however, always a constant. While a wave is about its business of being high or low, born or dying, coming or going, it is always water. The constant of water is what Thay refers to as the Ultimate Dimension. With the interconnected nature of waves and water, the idea is that if we touch the waves of life deeply with our insight then we can touch the water of life - the Ultimate Dimension that we can call Nirvana, the Kingdom of God.

I have heard Thay many times express the waves and water analogy, and the metaphorical qualities

make intellectual sense. But my experience was such that deep looking into my waves did not lead me to touch the water of the Ultimate Dimension. My waves did not shoot me through to the water as I expected them to after listening to Thay. So there was a disjunction between intellectual acceptance of this notion and the lack of personal experience. There were three logical options for me to investigate.

1. The first option was that my teacher was **incorrect** to use this analogy.

2. The second option was that my teacher was **neither correct nor incorrect**. Thay was simply very generous in choosing not to chart the difficulties for his disciples to transition from waves to water.

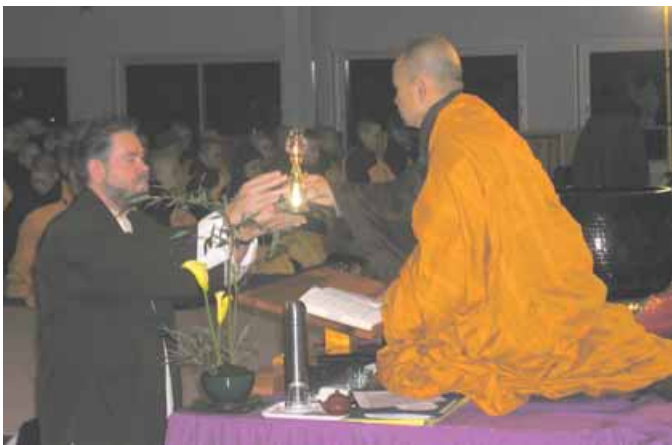
3. The third option was that Thay was **correct** and that something crucial was missing from my practice.

I eliminated the first option as I have trust and faith in my teacher. There may be something to the second option, as I know how generous a teacher Thay is. Yet, I realized very early on that the real investigation was the third option - to investigate what was missing from my practice.

You see, dear friends, I was very aware that my waves were too small to carry me through to the Ultimate Dimension; too small in terms of insufficient concentration, insight and mindfulness. What I needed was a tidal wave, a Tsunami in Japanese, to make my waves full of concentration, insight and mindfulness so that this energy would provide the "voltage" to transition from waves through to water. A tidal wave has the properties of increasing energy and appears to disobey the second law of thermodynamics. So my investigation was into my internal state for the causes and conditions that would make my waves into tidal waves - full of concentration, mindfulness and insight. I stumbled across what had to take place within me.

It was Silence. Deep Silence. This is where I found the causes and conditions that would provide tidal waves of un-diminishing energy to my cells and consciousness. I could then truly look deeply into my suffering, into the dark areas that held hostage

all my mental formations of a negative nature. And so over the past ten years I built more and more silence into my everyday life. On a daily basis I stop, look deeply and dialog with the feminine seeds in my consciousness, listening deeply to the communications from the wholesome attributes of feminine wisdom, insight and compassion within me to address issues and questions. For a long time now this has been and still is my fieldwork of life - observation and understanding of my field of consciousness through the eyes of the internal feminine. This for me was a very deep form of meditation.



My profession enabled me to set aside blocks of time and my home and sangha life supported by my wife Carolyn and the entire Pine Gate sangha enables me to retreat into silence on a regular basis. In this way – through silence and deep looking – my waves became bigger, more infused with concentration, insight and mindfulness. As I continued to stop in the silence and look deeply into my shadows, there emerged the experience of touching the water. My teacher was correct. I had to discover for myself the significance of silence, deep looking and consulting with the wisdom of the internal feminine. The fruits of this practice of silence and non-action were many and particularly manifest in my study of the Lotus Sutra.

After Thay's 2002 Hand of The Buddha retreat in Plum Village, France, I applied myself to study Burton Watson's 1993 translation of the Lotus Sutra from the Chinese version done by Kumarajiva in

406 CE. Prior to this intensive study I was much more comfortable with accepting the Buddha in the Historical form. The story of the Buddha's life, awakening and ministry was enough for me and I had not paid too much attention to the Buddha in the Ultimate Dimension. That changed radically through reading the Lotus Sutra from my practice of silence. For in the Lotus Sutra the Buddha in the Ultimate Dimension is revealed in no uncertain terms. In its beauty, grandeur and compelling intimacy with all that is, ever was, and ever will be, my discomfort and skepticism about the Ultimate Dimension of the Buddha disappeared. As I read different chapters of the Lotus Sutra I found myself transported to the worlds and dimensions described. I would read a little, then put the book down as I felt myself going deeply into meditation. I was profoundly moved by the words, the dimensions, by the energy that was still there through the series of translations into Chinese, then into English. And I would remain in a trance like state for hours. My wife Carolyn would come home from work, take one look at me and say:

"You've been reading the Lotus Sutra again, haven't you?"

My direct experience of the energy of this Mahayana masterpiece brought home to me so many insights. The most pertinent one was that I would not experience the Lotus Sutra in this way if my waves were still too small – lacking in insight, concentration and mindfulness. I came through this process with waves that are not so small, with joy and happiness, and a full heart to share with everyone. I also perceive a distinct cycle of interconnectedness from the Lotus Sutra to instituting yet more silence into my life even when I am talking. I become available to the Three Gems in a manner I was not before. My waves carry more voltage, my Six Paramitas are filling up rather than being half empty. My activism rests on this foundation of silence and non-action. It all weaves together like a spider's web glistening in the morning dew. It is so lovely.

*Lotus Sutra sings.  
Fresh dharma rains penetrate  
My heart – wide open.*

*This essay is taken from the Lamp Transmission dharma talk given at Plum Village, January 14, 2003.*

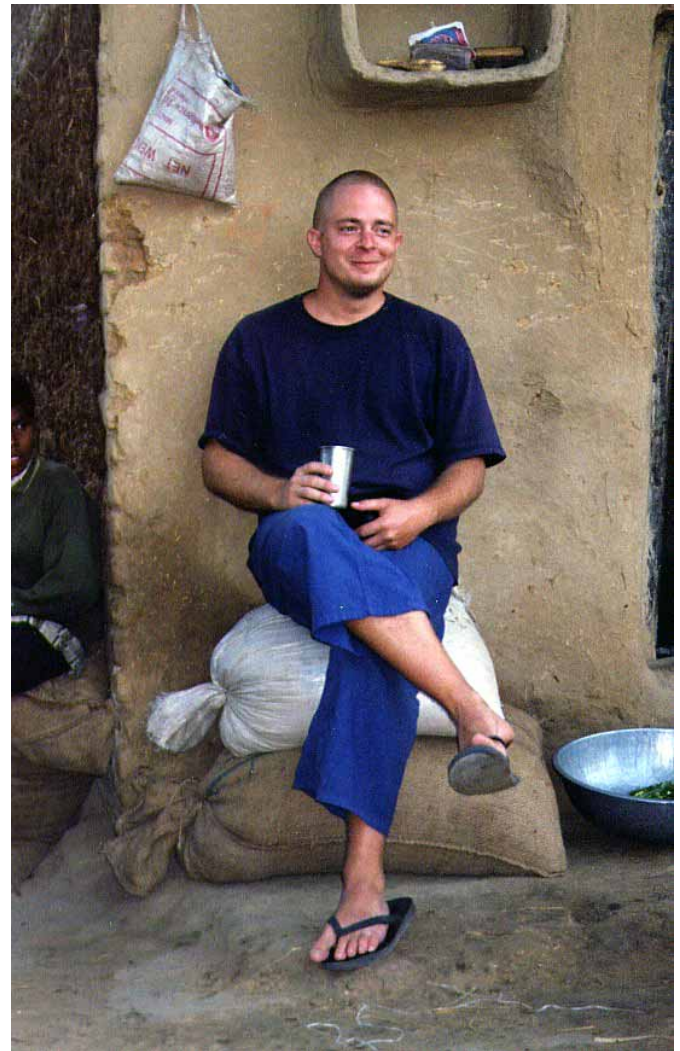
## Culture Shocking in Kolkata

David Geary

Touchdown India!! After a short 2 1/2 hour flight from the warm, easygoing bungalow beaches of Thailand I arrived in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta). Somehow I had an impression that Thailand would serve as a nice cushion for the culture shock of India.... I was wrong! The city of joy looked as if it had been targeted for some apocalyptic catastrophe - a Mad Max film starring Mel Gibson and a cast of Bengalis. When I arrived at the airport, I quickly entered my antique Fischer-Price style taxi mobile and cruised through the spralls of the outer city. With all sincerity I could not believe my pre-schooled western eyes! Where am I? Is this some kind of mistake? Thick clouds of pollution, relentless horns, filth infested streets, cascade hills of trash, meandering cattle, massive porkers, goats, chickens, dogs, wagons, rickshaws, pandemonium, CHAOS A.D.

I have also discovered this is the land of the snot shot - sometimes you are inches away from free flying projectile nasal slime. During my first full afternoon in Kolkata I also experienced a massive million strong political demonstration by the Communist Party of India. After some confusion and dissociation, I quickly came to my senses and realized this is no place for a camera wielding capitalist pig! So with mindfulness and ease, I have slowly inched my way into this extraordinary injection of humanity. With my breath as refuge I opened my senses, absorbed the tempo and every step to this date has been a beautiful revelation into the heart of Mother India. However, its not uncommon for me to stop in my tracks and break out in laughter! Its hard to explain, but I find that if you struggle to comprehend this all encompassing fusion of activity through western eyes, one ends up

feeling like an entangled pretzel. Accept, acknowledge the reactions, remain open and allow the moment to recoil with its own pace of awareness. Even as I attempt to put this flood of experience into words, I realize the limitations of my conceptual vocabulary. What I can tell you is that each day has been a journey, a pilgrimage through cultural, religious and humanitarian cross-currents. Equipped with grace and compassion this wonderful land comes alive with unimaginable beauty.





## Day of Mindfulness at Pine Gate Sangha

Claudia Baker

One day, late last August, a friend and I picked up a book on the "reduced" table at Chapter's Bookstore in St. John's, Newfoundland. He read it, then passed it on to me. It was called *Going Home* by Thich Nhat Hanh. Thay's simple, clear message jumped out at me from the pages. Some seven or eight books of his later, and back in Ottawa, I knew I needed to find a Sangha. I wanted to practice with other people. After a couple of evenings at Pine Gate Meditation Hall, I was invited to a Day of Mindfulness. We spent part of the morning in sitting and then walking meditation. It was the first time I had practiced walking meditation with others. It felt a bit awkward at first, but by the afternoon, when we headed outside to walk the beautiful pathway through the woods, I knew I was "home".

Ian's gentle guidance through the sitting meditation helped me, a new person to the practice, to stay in the moment. A struggle at the best of time, not just for me, I'm sure. But I know, that as time goes on, with the help of the Sangha and in such a caring and loving environment, my meditation times alone will be deepened and strengthened. Carolyn led the Sangha in some Qi-Gong exercises. They were so beautiful. Everything about the day was peaceful and beautiful. It was my first time also, enjoying a silent meal with other people - eating mindfully. I found myself wondering why it had taken me so long to find the practice, and at the same time, thanking whatever had turned our hands to that "reduced" table at the bookstore in August: 'when the student is ready, the teacher appears'.

In such a short time my life has changed. I am encouraged in my practice by Thay's words: it doesn't have to take one year or six months or one month; it can happen NOW. That's how it has been for me. The end to the day brought the group sharing stories, songs and poems and I found myself participating unhesitatingly. Such was the peace and comfort there in the group. The closing ceremony came all too soon for me. I wanted

more... The day of mindfulness opened up a new world for me. The Sangha has opened up a new world for me. I want to thank Ian and Carolyn for providing a loving and peace-filled space for us to gather and to practice together. Because of the Sangha, I now find myself planning to go to Maple Village in May, and to Stonehill College in August. And, even thinking ahead to Christmas! I want to spend it at Plum Village. My family and my grown children are looking at me and wondering, I know. And all I can do is let this river take me along. "Gone, gone, gone to the other shore, gone together to the other shore."

O Awakening!

Thank you Pine Gate Sangha and all of the people who practice there.

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## The Buddha's Footsteps

From the garden of Gandhi's last breath,  
to the sanctuary of Jeta grove  
the Dharma is the fabric  
of a spinning wheel of change

Shielded from our senses,  
the great white monster roars through rural India.  
our pampered appropriating western eyes entangled,  
awe, numb, stillness, aversion, repulse.  
India creeps inside you like a parasite,  
I am coming undone...

The miracle of life surrounds you,  
our mind the only obstacle.  
Poverty shattered through dignity and generosity,  
difference evaporates through a smile.  
The skylight of interbeing is there  
penetrating my consciousness.

David Geary

## Waging Peace

Dr Robert Muller

*Dr. Robert Muller, former assistant secretary general of the United Nations, now Chancellor Emeritus of the University of Peace in Costa Rica has worked in support of or inside the U.N. ever since its inception. Recently he gave a speech in San Francisco to be honored for his service to the world through the U.N. and through his writings and teachings for peace. At age eighty, Dr. Muller surprised, even stunned, many in the audience with his most positive assessment of where the world stands now regarding war and peace. Here is an excerpt from his speech.*

I'm so honored to be alive at such a miraculous time in history. I'm so moved by what's going on in our world today. Never before in the history of the world has there been a global, visible, public, viable, open dialogue and conversation about the very legitimacy of war. The whole world is now having this critical and historic dialogue--listening to all kinds of points of view and positions about going to war or not going to war. In a huge global public conversation the world is asking-"Is war legitimate? Is it illegitimate? Is there enough evidence to warrant an attack? Is there not enough evidence to warrant an attack? What will be the consequences? The costs? What will happen after a war? How will this set off other conflicts? What might be peaceful alternatives? What kind of negotiations are we not thinking of? What are the real intentions for declaring war?"

We, the world community, are WAGING peace. It is difficult, hard work. It is constant and we must not let up. It is working and it is an historic milestone of immense proportions. It has never happened before-never in human history-and it is happening now-every day every hour-waging peace through a global conversation. The conversation questioning the validity of going to war has gone on for hours, days, weeks, months and now more than a year, and it may go on and on..... It is tense, it is tough, it is challenging, AND we are in the most significant and potent global conversation and public dialogue in the history of the world. This is a new era of Global listening, speaking, and responsibility. New alliances are being formed.

Russia and China on the same side of an issue is an unprecedented outcome. France and Germany working together to wake up the world to a new way of seeing the situation. The largest peace demonstrations in the history of the world are taking place. This is a miracle. This is what "waging peace" looks like.

No matter what happens, history will record that this is a new era, and that the 21st century has been initiated with the world in a global dialogue looking deeply, profoundly and responsibly as a global community at the legitimacy of the actions of a nation that is desperate to go to war. Through these global peace-waging efforts, the leaders of that nation are being engaged in further dialogue, forcing them to rethink, and allowing all nations to participate in the serious and horrific decision to go to war or not. Up until now there has been just one superpower-the United States, and that has created a kind of blindness in the vision of the U.S. But now there are two superpowers: the United States and the merging, surging voice of the people of the world. All around the world, people are waging peace.

### JAINIST PRAYER FOR PEACE

Peace and Universal Love is the essence of the Gospel preached by all the Enlightened Ones. The Lord has preached that equanimity is the Dharma. Forgive do I creatures all, and let all creatures forgive me. Unto all have I amity, and unto none enmity. Know that violence is the root cause of all miseries in the world. Violence, in fact, is the knot of bondage. "Do not injure any living being." This is the eternal, perennial, and unalterable way of spiritual life. A weapon howsoever powerful it may be. can always be superseded by a superior one; but no weapon can, however, be superior to non violence and love

## Contemplation

Thich Nhat Hanh 1965

Since the moon is full tonight,  
let us call upon the stars in prayer.  
The power of concentration,  
seen through the bright, one-pointed mind,  
is shaking the universe.

All living beings are present tonight  
to witness the ocean of fear  
flooding the Earth.

Upon the sound of the midnight bell,  
everyone in the ten directions joins hands  
and enters the meditation on Mahakaruna (great  
compassion).

Compassion springs from the heart,  
as pure, refreshing water,  
healing the wounds of life.

From the highest peak of the Mind Mountain,  
the blessed water streams down,  
penetrating rice fields and orange groves.

The poisonous snake drinks  
a drop of this nectar  
from the tip of a blade of grass,  
and the poison on its tongue vanishes.

Mara's arrows  
are transformed  
into fragrant flowers.

The wondrous action of the healing water--  
a mysterious transformation!  
A child now holds the snake in her innocent arms.

Leaves are still green in the ancient garden.  
The shimmering sunlight smiles on the snow,  
and the sacred spring still flows toward the East.

On Avalokita's willow branch,  
or in my heart,  
the healing water is the same.

Tonight all weapons  
fall at our feet  
and turn to dust.

One flower,  
two flowers,  
millions of little flowers  
appear in the green fields.

The gate of deliverance opens  
with a smile on the lips  
of my innocent child.



## Celebrating Peace Through Song

Tricia Diduch

Ottawa Valley region performers and choirs adopted an alternative approach to promoting peace. On Saturday morning, March 22 they celebrated peace through song. Instead of chanting slogans or participating in violence, attendees united as one voice to send their message for peace by participating in a Peace Song Circle on Parliament Hill. Groups performing at the two-hour long event included: First Unitarian Church Choir, In Harmony, Mennonite Church Choir, Ottawa Folklore Choir, Ottawa Community Gospel Choir, Sacred Dance Guild and The Oddities. Ian Tamblyn, local song writer and singer also sang for us on this special day as did soloists from Israel and Palestine.

In addition to performing selected songs of peace, participating choirs formed a mass choir conducted by Mike MacDonald to sing "All Within Me Peaceful", a simple anthem of peace, adapted from Josh Login's "The Prayer" and connected to the Navajo chant "Beauty Before Me". This massed choir opened and closed the Peace Song Circle. At the end we stood in silent meditation on peace as the rain poured down on our heads. Building on the positive momentum generated by recent assemblies for peace that have been staged in the Ottawa region, Pine Gate Sangha and Friends for Peace, a coalition of meditation, environmental and peace groups, organized the Peace Song Circle as a call to strengthen peace, both within and without. The event was created around music because of its universal strength and ability to create a positive energy through which to communicate the message of peace. Uniting people from all walks of life, regardless of age, political affiliation, faith or ethnic background, the Peace Song Circle encouraged all to embrace the pursuit of inner peace through meditation and mindful living as an alternative to conflict. Many people who were there had never protested before. This was a first for them.

Our sangha invited the general public to make a conscious choice to join in the continued pursuit of peace. The motto for the event sums up what we

asked of participants -- Sing for Peace, Stand for Peace, Be Peace. We believe that the only way to achieve lasting peace is by fostering it within and by re-evaluating the choices we make daily in our lives. It is hoped that this awesome event will generate further impetus for the peace movement by eventually leading to the development of a broad network of spiritual leaders committed to transforming our country's current decision-making process and to leading with compassion and wisdom.

*A one-hour documentary film of the Peace Song Circle is available on VHS and DVD. Contact [kburton@cyberus.ca](mailto:kburton@cyberus.ca)*



## The Sunshine of the Sangha

Camila Reimers

A very cold December day Ian received an e-mail telling that there was a sing for Peace gathering across from the Parliament building. Even though as a rule I'm always out of tune, I decided to be there and support the initiative with my presence. When Ian, Carolyn, Nikki (Carolyn's dog) and I arrived at the eternal flame, there was nobody there. The organizers did not even show up. It was bitter cold but we waited for few minutes until we realized that nobody else would join us. At that point Ian and Carolyn started singing anyway while I hummed the best I could. After a couple of songs and lots of laughter, the three of us insisted that singing for peace was in fact a wonderful idea but required lots more organization than sending anonymous e-mails. That's how the Peace Song Circle started.



During our regular Peace Walk on the third Sunday of December, 2002, an organizing committee was formed and a date chosen: March 22, 2003. We wanted to celebrate and receive the spring equinox with peace songs. Little we knew that by that day the war would have started. During the three months of preparation, it was always wonderful to meet and observe love and dedication pouring from each one in the group. All the organizers had regular meetings after the Peace Walks, but there were many extra meetings for some coordinators to cover all the details that never ceased to appear. Ian had suggested - and most of the time we did - to meditate before meetings so we would decide from our hearts, clarity and strength. Ten days before the event, I started checking the weather channel and of course I had ten different weather reports. Needless to say, March 22 we had pouring rain. When I woke up that morning I looked through the window in disbelief while I reached for my umbrella and walked to Parliament Hill. During the last days I had prayed for sunshine and threatened God with all sorts of horrible things (from not praying anymore to turn myself into a non believer) if the good weather didn't happen. Now I needed the walk to center myself and face the rain.

I arrived half an hour early, but most of the organizers, members of the Pine Gate Sangha and some choir members were already there. When I looked at them something turned in my heart and I knew that, despite the rain, still this was the perfect day. The smiles, the hugs, the love and support were better and stronger than any sunny day. What came after is history. At the beginning hundreds, later when joined by other peace groups that had planned peace demonstrations, thousands of voices sung for peace and we all experienced peace within us.

## The Peace Movement

Parmatma Leviton

Rain poured down and brought out the spirit in the 300 or more initially gathered to sing for peace. "The rain represents the tears of the children in Iraq, my tears and your tears. Those who are waging war would do better if they knew better; but they don't. We know better." It is our developed consciousness which allows us to know better. It is the work we do on ourselves every day of our lives to come to terms with the inner struggle, turmoil and trauma - the inner war which we must learn to identify as our own; and to find constructive ways to deal with the raging thoughts.

The rain let up exactly as the bells for 10 o'clock rang out. This was a moment of silence, knowing and a deeper listening. How can individuals create a balance between the responsibilities in their daily spiritual practice and the responsibilities calling out to us from the external world? What are our responsibilities? What comes to you after your quiet meditations?

Thousands of people are mobilizing to talk about peace issues, to meditate together on peace, to find new and creative ways to structure peace into existing institutions, and to question the legitimacy of war - the ideas are flying about peace studies in the schools, Peace Universities, Peace Museums and so on. There is a great movement afoot. When people get together more ideas reveal themselves. We breathe in a sense of possibility. People are nourished and rejuvenated by the energy of the sangha. We breathe out hope. It is both our sustenance and the antidote for alienation, racism, dwelling on the negative and for the endlessness of "living in our heads". What comes to me after my busy mind becomes quiet is that I-We must go deeper into our processes, become more disciplined in our practices, AND be more active in our social and political structures.

The tools are everywhere to be found: meditations to balance the hemispheres of the brain, to develop the skills of deep listening, for grounding and centering, for strengthening the nervous system, for coming to terms with what is truest in our heart. The inner peace movement did not just start

yesterday. It is so inspiring to participate in all the interfaith activity recently. Wednesday evening in Ottawa, April 9, 2003, Sri Sri Ravi Shankar said: "We eat food from many cultures without hesitation - Swiss Chocolate, Chinese food, etc; we listen and enjoy the music from varied traditions and countries: so why don't we listen to the wisdom inherent in the traditions of so many cultures?" A simple and beautiful message.

The Pine Gate Sangha and Friends for Peace organized the choirs, dancers and soloists on Parliament Hill and plan to make it an annual event. They are in the process of working on a second event, "Peace Prayer Day." The intent is to provide a day long celebration of peace prayer from different spiritual traditions. Briefs on the foundations of each tradition can be given or simple prayers, dances, creating and walking a labyrinth, first nations drum circle, invocations, talks, etc are some examples of what may be presented.

If your group is interested in being part of a coalition, which will work together to create bigger, newsworthy events and which will serve the purpose of support for peace initiatives and communion of souls, please contact us. It is our intention to touch that place in each of us that recognizes that we are a Universal community. Let the call to arms be your own loving arms and the arms of each other.

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## GAIA International

Tom Ellis

My agenda after I leave teaching at Hampton University is to work toward establishing GAIA International (Global Awareness Interdisciplinary Alliance), a nonprofit organization aimed at cultivating Gaian consciousness across the curriculum on college campuses. My mission statement is as follows:

"GAIA International (Global Awareness Interdisciplinary Alliance) is a nonprofit scholarly and educational organization whose mission is to sponsor projects, events, and publications that promote ecological awareness, understanding, and

responsibility in every academic field, in public policy, and in every domain of human endeavor."

The idea is to create a mechanism for "playing host" on college campuses to Gaian visionaries of all varieties. Expertise in permaculture, solar and wind energy, sustainable community enterprise, organic gardening, full-cycle water use, sustainable architecture, and industrial ecology (full-throughput manufacturing, where everything is recycled and waste is minimized)—to be presented to students, regardless of their major so they can participate in an ongoing conversation about sustainable alternatives to the toxic "Glomart" (Global Market Economy) status quo.

*Seventh Generation in Ottawa have programs committed to these principles. Contact [info@seventhgeneration.ca](mailto:info@seventhgeneration.ca)*

### JEWISH PRAYER FOR PEACE

Come let us go up to the mountain of the Lord, that we may walk the paths of the Most High. And we shall beat our swords into ploughshares, and our spears into pruning hooks. Nation shall not lift up sword against nation - neither shall they learn war any more. And none shall be afraid, for the mouth of the Lord of Hosts has spoken.

*The artwork on the next page is by David Geary. It is based on Chapter 5 of "Transformation at the Base", by Thich Nhat Hanh.*

# æ FIVE

## Individual and Collective Seeds

Whether transmitted by family, friends,  
Society, or education  
All our seeds are, by nature  
Both individual & collective.

EVERYTHING = manifestation of our collective consciousness

o subjective

o objective → is no objective reality apart from consciousness  
"line of struggle."

"Painting"



\$\$

Product of beauty that our  
collective consciousness deems  
valuable

Sown over generations



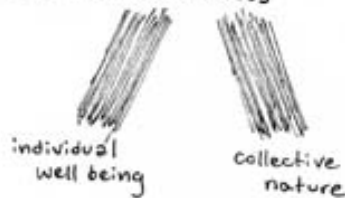
distinction is provisional: assists in our understanding

In the end, we need to transcend ideas  
of "individual" & "collective"

Everything has both elements in it

"no seed is 100 % innate or 100 % transmitted"

RETREAT = conducive to mindfulness



Every step of peace → the world changes.

- Important to associate with those who water seeds  
of joy in us.

- must restore peace within yourself in order  
to water seeds of happiness in others.

?

Where is our store consciousness?

- within each cell of our body & also outside our body.

"Inside is made of Outside"

## Healing The Inner Child

Ian Prattis

The use of an Altered State of Consciousness in healing is particularly pertinent to any therapeutic process that focuses on trauma experienced during childhood. Sexual, emotional and physical abuse during childhood creates a lost, frightened and frozen child within us. If we are unable to reach this lost and wounded child then we may never heal ourselves.

We prefer not to remember the sufferings of childhood, so we bury them and hide. We run away from seeing deeply into the causes of our suffering. Yet we have to find a way to reach the hurt child and make her safe. Although we may now be adult, there is also a little boy in us, a little girl in us, who is so afraid and suffers deeply, no matter what kind of happy pretend face we present to life. This suffering child within our adult frame colors everything we do, generates our fears, insecurities and self loathing, wounding us in our relationships and life. That wounded child is us and we must extend a different energy to him so that the energy of childhood suffering can be understood, defused and transformed.

This means touching the seeds of childhood suffering from an adult state of being mindful and aware, knowing that we must make it safe for that child to come out from hiding behind the closed doors of suffering and pain. It is us as adults who must no longer run away. We must have the courage and awareness to bring healing to our hurt inner child and thereby produce a transformation for ourselves. The steps we take are not only to heal ourselves, we somehow connect to all wounded children – those in our ancestors and descendants and elsewhere in the world. For once we cultivate the seeds of mindful healing in ourselves, the energy of these seeds continues on into all that we interconnect with. It is a quantum leap from our cellular memories to everyone else's throughout time and space.

Thich Nhat Hanh addressed the issue of child abuse in a Question and Answer session held in the Lower Hamlet of Plum Village, France on the 17th

October 1998. Very gently he spoke about the ignorance and pain of the abuser as well as that of the abused, and stated clearly that understanding was the basis of recovery. Not blaming or feeling guilt and shame, but seeing deeply and understanding. First of all to understand that the person abusing must have lived under ignorant and deprived conditions without support, guidance or a wise teacher. So much so that the power of ignorance was stronger than the person, and thus they were driven to do wrong things. If the person abused can begin to understand just a little bit of that, then their anger, shame and outrage can transform into compassion and through mindfulness practice their suffering can diminish. When forgiveness and understanding are there, suffering decreases.

The second step Thich Nhat Hanh referred to was to recommend that the person abused practice mindfulness, to transform herself into a Bodhisattva and engender the compassion to help and be of service to all children who need protection. By merit of understanding his experience and recovery from abuse, such a person can practice and use their talents to promote education and measures to protect children from abuse. This helps to eradicate the ignorance which generates abuse. This practice and the energy of compassion for children will transform the pain and sorrow that have been with the abused person.

There are many techniques and methodologies of therapy that address issues of the inner wounded child. The first one I am going to describe is simple and anyone can do it. It is a first step and I recommend that it be practiced under the guidance and consultation of a therapist, shaman or spiritual teacher. You are going to start a diary or log book for you and the inner child to write to one another. The adult you will write using the hand that you normally write with. You begin by saying "hello" to Little John, to Little Allison. Then go on to say you are sorry for having been away and neglectful; that you are grown up now and strong, and that you are going to do everything to make it safe for Little John, for Little Allison. They will be safe, loved and cherished. Write in your own words along these lines.

Then with your other hand, the one you do not write with, allow the inner child to express herself. Do not edit. Just write down whatever comes out. It may well be angry, blaming and abusive words that come out, and it is your job not to be shocked or defensive but to provide constant re-assurance, love and guidance. You bring to this communication with the wounded inner child all the qualities of love, compassion and wisdom you can muster. These are the seeds of mindfulness you consciously bring to support the wounded child inside you. The energy of these seeds works on the energy of the traumatized inner child to reduce his pain and suffering. Talk to him through writing in this way – with total love and acute mindfulness.

Details of trauma may be revealed that you did not know about, which is why you need the help and guidance of a trusted therapist, shaman or spiritual teacher. This is to support you being a wise and loving parent to your wounded child. And with time you will notice shifts and changes in patterns of expression as the child becomes trusting and starts to grow, eventually merging fully with you as an adult. (You also learn to write very well with your other hand!) In your letters tell your inner child about yourself and your life, take her on picnics, treats and give to that child all the care, attention and love you feel you did not receive when you were a little boy, a little girl. The suffering will diminish and you will experience such a transformation, for you discover that your relationships with co-workers, friends and family start to change, and your fears and anxieties do not have the same driving force. When you notice things like this, tell your inner child “Thank you for being with me. That makes me so happy.” The experience of being with the inner child in the healing journey is a stimulus for this kind of happiness.

There are times you may cry, or feel total joy and also suffer despair, which is why guidance and support is necessary on this beginning journey of reclaiming yourself. You need that wise friend and teacher to keep you steady and mindful. I know, for I went through it. I am happy to say that it worked for me, as I experienced the painfully slow establishment of trust, then the exhilarating joy of

safety and integration, until finally my inner child was the adult me, integrated with a freshness and vitality that I continually treasure. To support this journey there are other practices and meditations that are valuable for the steady process of healing.

In Plum Village, Thich Nhat Hanh’s practice center in France, he has provided a much loved practice gatha for the meditation community, which begins with “I have arrived, I am home.” This is used in walking and other meditations as an instrument to concentrate on breath and be present. In this way the fears and traumas of the past and anxieties about the future do not crowd in and overwhelm the mind. The gatha with walking meditation, connected to in breath and out breath, provides an essential tool to take care of the many mental formations that flood our waking consciousness with fear, pain and suffering. With daily diligent practice we can examine these same mental formations but from a place centered in mindfulness. Thich Nhat Hanh has described this simple gatha as the dharma seal of Plum Village.

The Vietnamese origin of the gatha provides a penetrating tool to touch our inner child who suffers from trauma and abuse experienced in childhood.

It does not translate as:

“I have arrived, I am home.”

It says:

“Your child has arrived, your child is home.”

This is so beautiful to say to yourself as you breathe in and out whenever you do walking meditation, for each step welcomes your wounded child to be well and to come home to you. When you walk to your car or your office, by a river or in a park, you can be more specific and recite to yourself on in breath “My inner child has arrived,” and on out breath “My inner child is home.” This is good practice, for with intelligence you use your breath and concentration to heal, simply by welcoming your wounded inner child home through the practice of being present. Thich Nhat Hanh often talks about arriving in every moment of practice, whether it is sitting meditation, walking meditation, having a mindful meal, brushing your teeth or washing the dishes. Being present in each moment is a way of



practice that welcomes home the injured, frightened inner child harmed by abuse.

In order to heal it is necessary to cultivate the internal energy of mindfulness before stopping and looking deeply into what caused the fears and traumas of abuse. The practice of arriving in each moment nurtures that strength. From the clarity provided by locating yourself in the present moment, not only is your child welcomed home, there is also the lucidity and equipment of mindfulness practice to deal with the ghosts of the past and at the same time put the ghosts of future anxiety to rest.

In Breath: My inner child has arrived

Out Breath: My inner child is home.

Another tool is to adapt the Four Brahmaviharas meditation to focus on the injured inner child. This meditation is based on the Buddha's teachings on Love.

### Love Meditation for the Inner Child

Prepare for meditation by sitting comfortably with the spine erect. Bring your concentration and focus to breath on the In-breath and breath on the Out-breath. After ten or twenty breaths, whenever you feel calm and stable, begin by bringing each of the components – Love, Compassion, Joy, Equanimity – into yourself. The initial sequences of bringing the energy of Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity first of all into yourself, then into your teacher, followed by someone you love and then someone you are neutral about are done with slow in-breaths and out-breaths. The next sequence now provides a focus and concentration to water the seeds of Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity within your inner child.

In-breath I bring Love  
Out-breath to my inner child.

You can say your own name silently if you wish. Feel the energy of love fill you from top to toe and register with the energy for several breaths. Then continue in the same way with:

In-breath I bring Compassion  
Out-breath to my inner child

In-breath I bring Joy  
Out-breath to my inner child

In-breath I bring Equanimity  
Out-breath to my inner child

Then conclude the meditation by once more bringing Love, Compassion, Joy and Equanimity to the adult you. This meditation nurtures the wounded inner child wonderfully and at the same time nurtures the adult you. The Buddha's teachings on Love provide the foundation for this Love meditation to the wounded inner child. The concentration on these four qualities is an incredibly powerful instrument for healing. I do not have the words to adequately describe the impact but my teacher, Thich Nhat Hanh, does (Teachings On Love, 1997, 18):

*The Buddha says if we gather together all the virtuous actions we have realized in this world, they are not equal to practicing love meditations.....If we collect together all the light from the stars, it will not be as bright as the light of the moon. In the same way, practicing love meditation is greater than all other virtuous actions combined.*

There are many other methods of meditation and practice that could be documented here. I felt it appropriate to indicate some of the ones I used to good effect in my process of healing. These were practices that accompanied shamanic healing conducted in an ASC. One factor that was important is that I was very determined to heal once understanding dawned in my consciousness. From that awareness I took specific steps and relied on wise teachers, medicine women and steady friends to help me along the path of healing and transformation. I must emphasize that this is not a journey that can be taken alone.

I am reminded with great gratitude of a particular closing chant sung after ceremonies and sutra readings in Plum Village:

*..... practicing the way of awareness  
Gives rise to benefits without limit.  
We vow to share the fruits with all beings.  
We vow to give tribute to parents, teachers.  
Friends and numerous beings  
Who give guidance and support along the path.*

*This short piece is a postscript to "Healing Journeys," a chapter in Ian's forthcoming book "Living Breath: Stories, Essays and Meditations."*

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## Retreats

**With Sr Annabel and the nuns of Green Mountain Dharma Centre**

**"Why Are You Waiting To Be Happy?"**

May 15 – 19, 2003 in Maple Village,  
Bolton West, Quebec, Canada.

Contact: [NguyenZou@aol.com](mailto:NguyenZou@aol.com);

Tel: 450 678 9575

Fax: 450 678 5229

**With Thich Nhat Hanh, The Sage For Our Times**

**East Coast Retreat**

August 11 – 16, 2003

Stonehill College, Mass., USA

Contact: 802 436 1103

[MF-Office@plumvillage.org](mailto:MF-Office@plumvillage.org)

**Retreat for Law Enforcement Professionals**

At Madison, Wisconsin

Contact: 802 436 1103

[MF-Office@plumvillage.org](mailto:MF-Office@plumvillage.org)

**With Dharmacharya Ian Prattis**

**"Centered in Mindfulness"**

April 3 – 5, 2003

Houston, Texas

Contact: Dick Steele

[Dsteele@aol.com](mailto:Dsteele@aol.com).

Tel: 713 201 4569

**"The Buddha At The Gate"**

May 2 – 4, 2003

Cape Breton, Nova Scotia

Contact: Johanna Padelt

[jpadelt@ns.sympatico.ca](mailto:jpadelt@ns.sympatico.ca)

**"Welcome to the New World Order –  
How do we Practice?"**

Pine Gate Sangha Annual Retreat

September 26 – 28, 2003

"The Barn" Retreat Centre,

Masham, nr Wakefield, Quebec

Contact: Carolyn Hill

[Chill@TierneyStauffer.com](mailto:Chill@TierneyStauffer.com)

Tel: 613 726 0881

### NATIVE AMERICAN PRAYER FOR PEACE

O Great Spirit of our Ancestors, I raise my pipe to you. To your messengers the four winds, and to Mother Earth who provides for your children. Give us the wisdom to teach our children to love, to respect, and to be kind to each other so that they may grow with peace in mind. Let us learn to share all the good things that you provide for us on this Earth.

<b>Spring and Summer 2003 Schedule</b>	
<b>Friday March 28</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>14 Mindfulness Trainings Recitation</b> <b>Pine Gate Meditation Hall – Special Celebration</b>
<b>Tuesday April 1</b> <b>7.00pm – 8.30pm</b> <b>Thursday April 3</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>8 week Qi-Gong Class</b> <b>Contact Carolyn Hill 726 0881</b> <b>Deep Relaxation</b>
<b>SATURDAY April 5</b> <b>5.00pm – 7.30pm</b>	<b>Sangha Gathering, Film: Regret To Inform</b> <b>and Pot Luck Supper</b>
<b>Thursday April 10</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Thich Nhat Hanh Video: No Birth No Death. Part 3</b> <b>Stonehill College Retreat, August 2002</b>
<b>Thursday April 17</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>No Birth No Death. Part 4</b> <b>Thay talks to America's Deep Suffering</b>
<b>Thursday April 24</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Five Mindfulness Trainings Transmission Ceremony</b>
<b>Thursday May 1</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Film of Peace Song Circle</b> <b>March 22, Parliament Hill, Ottawa</b>
<b>Thursday May 8</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Thich Nhat Hanh Video: Ending All Notions. Part 1</b> <b>Stonehill College Retreat , August 2002</b>
<b>SATURDAY MAY 10</b> <b>10.00am – 1.00pm</b>	<b>Hike in Gatineau Park. Gather at Parking lot #7, Kingsmere. Picnic lunch by the</b> <b>waterfalls on Eardley Escarpment</b>
<b>Thursday May 15</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Beginning Anew Ceremony</b>
<b>Thursday May 22</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Thich Nhat Hanh Video: Ending All Notions. Part 2</b>
<b>Thursday May 29</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Sr Annabel Video: Fourth Mindfulness Training</b> <b>Ascutney Retreat, Vermont 1999</b>
<b>Friday May 30</b> <b>7.00pm – 8.30pm</b>	<b>Fourteen Mindfulness Trainings Recitation</b> <b>Pine Gate Meditation Hall</b>
<b>Thursday June 5</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Touching The Earth Practice</b>
<b>SATURDAY JUNE 7</b> <b>10.00am – 4.30pm</b>	<b>Day of Mindfulness</b> <b>Pine Gate Meditation Hall</b>
<b>Thursday June 12</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Fourth Dharma Talk Video: Family Values</b> <b>Ascutney Retreat, Vermont 1999</b>
<b>Thursday June 19</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Five Mindfulness Trainings Recitation</b>
<b>Thursday June 26</b> <b>7.00pm – 9.00pm</b>	<b>Formal Tea Ceremony</b>
<b>JULY &amp; AUGUST</b> <b>Thursdays</b> <b>7.00pm – 8.30pm</b>	<b>The sangha scatters for holidays and visitors. Sitting and walking meditation, then</b> <b>mindful tea in the garden each Thursday evening. No formal program just</b> <b>friendship.</b>
<b>DIRECTIONS TO THE</b> <b>PINE GATE</b> <b>MEDITATION HALL</b>	<b>Take Queensway to Woodroffe S Exit; Go to Baseline Rd; RT on Baseline; RT on</b> <b>Highgate (next lights); RT on Westbury; LT on Rideout – follow the crescent round</b> <b>to 1252 Rideout Cr. 613 726 0881</b>