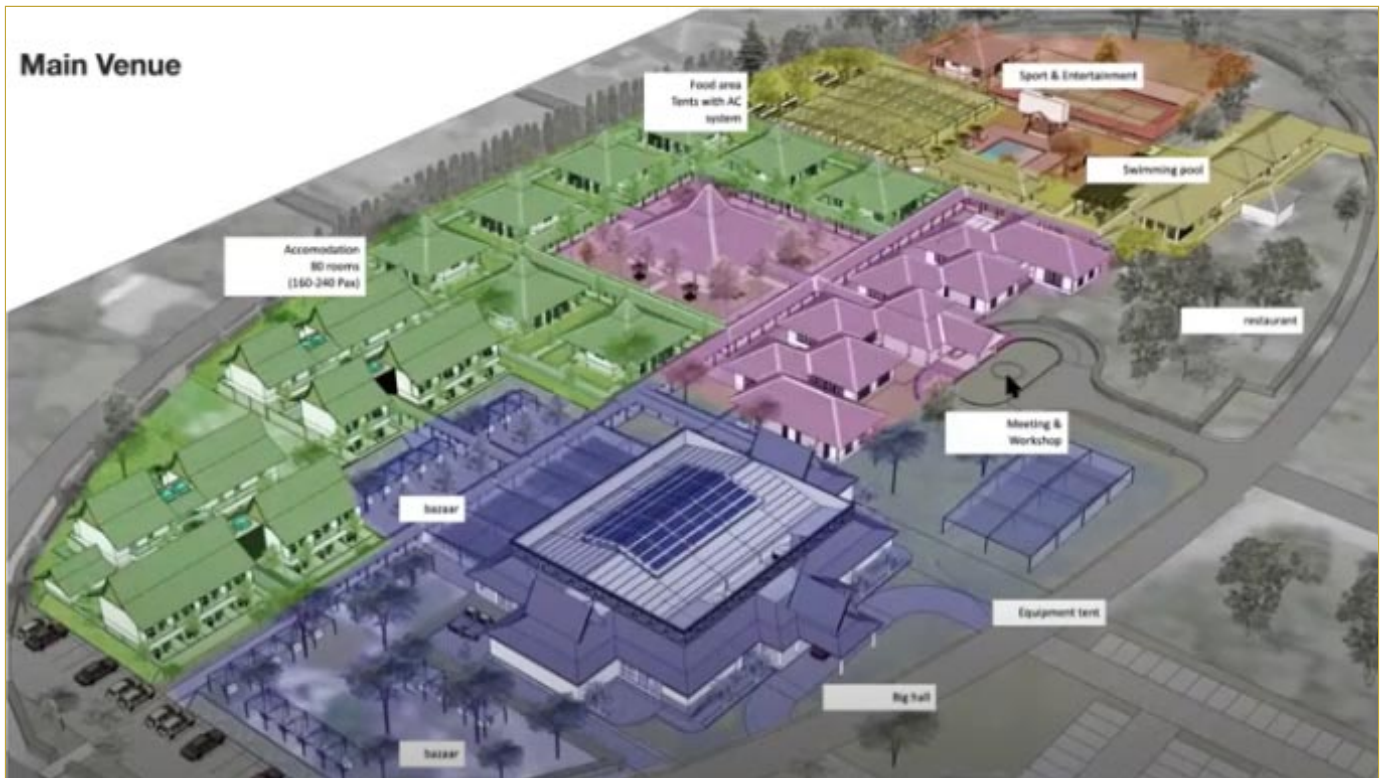




PREPARATIONS FOR WORLD CONGRESS

From the editor...



New centre planned for World Congress includes hall and accommodation.

In the last issue Of Subud Voice we referred to the recent WSA Zoom meeting in which Congress organiser Rusdi Bustillo presented various options for the 2024 Congress in Kalimantan. That Zoom can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/g0sRDXnAERU>

It is three hours long so we thought we would mention some particular points where people might like to tune into it. It is all worth watching of course but there are particular points of high interest.

The Zoom begins with a general introduction and a statement by the international helpers and then Rusdi Bustillo, the Congress organiser, presents three options for holding the Congress in Kalimantan. Options A & B involve holding the Congress at hotels in Palangka Raya, and Option C which involves holding the Congress at the Subud property, Rungan Sari,

The Rungan Sari option is of particular interest of course to many people and there is a strong wish amongst many that if all the practical and logistical problems can be overcome, that is the preferred choice.

So, for a more detailed look at the Rungan Sari option go to 52 minutes on the Zoom broadcast where Rusdi begins a detailed presentation about the fa-



SUBMISSIONS AND DONATIONS

Submissions to Subud Voice on any aspect of Subud life are welcomed. Send to Harris Smart, subudvoice@gmail.com We rely on donations to keep Subud Voice going. You can donate by going to the **PAYMENTS** button which is located in the toolbar at the top of the page. www.subudvoice.net

cilities that are available in Kalimantan. He points out that there are already many existing options for accommodation and meetings large and small in Rungan Sari. Such as the Rungan Sari resort, the existing latihan Hall, the BCU school, the Muhammad Subuh Centre, Borneo Indoor Football Court, the Eco-centre and so on. As well, new facilities are planned such as a Centre which includes a large hall and accommodation and a Borneo Football Sports Centre.



Bapak was smiling and present with us...



Another point of very strong interest in the Zoom is that Kohar Parra gives a presentation on behalf of the International Helpers. This begins at two hours 52 minutes. He says that the International



Another new facility planned to be ready for World Congress – Borneo Football Sports Centre.

Helpers did a great deal of discussion and testing at their recent meeting in Porto and there was a strong feeling that this Congress is all about worshipping God and being together as one in harmony and unity.

They feel that Indonesia is the right place for the Congress despite whatever difficulties might need to be overcome. They also felt that Rungan Sari is a special place. He says, "We felt Bapak was present with us and smiling. We were aware of the very different character of Rungan Sari because it was the place that Bapak chose for a Subud development."

We suggest that everyone watch the zoom for themselves.

News from Wisma Subud

November 2022

Lots of work is already underway to prepare Wisma Subud for an expected influx of visitors coming as a result of the World Congress in Central Kalimantan in 2024. If you have never visited Wisma Subud before, it will be a great opportunity for you to visit the 'home of Subud' before or after you attend the World Congress.

One recurring problem Wisma Subud experiences is flooding during the rainy season. Flooding has been exacerbated in the Cilindak area due to government road projects and increasing commercial development. Flooding spreads disease, damages vehicles, homes, furnishings, and erodes building foundations. A very large portion of the Wisma Subud compound is now affected by this unfortunate environmental disaster.

To address the flooding problem, Yayasan Subud (the charitable foundation established to care for Wisma Subud, the Latihan Hall, and visitors) has launched the 'Culvert Construction and Road Asphalt Program'. This massive program will help ensure the comfort and safety of Subud members, visitors and residents alike through proper rainwater drainage management.



*Top Right: In front of Wisma. Top Left: The side of the latihan hall.
Bottom right and left: Construction work underway.*

Rainwater runoff will be directed through culverts under the roadway in key locations in the Wisma Subud compound, and then the roadway repaired and a layer of asphalt added to make the road surface smooth again.

Work has already started. But, as you can imagine, this substantial upgrade costs quite a bit, about USD 60k. Luckily, we've already collected almost half the funds needed, enabling us to start the project. We will keep working to help ensure Wisma Subud is safe and pleasant to visit at any time of the year.

Sending you all big hugs from Wisma Subud!

For further information on visiting Wisma Subud, and if you're interested in helping with this project, please contact: Sudanang Dananjaya, Yayasan Subud Executive Director WA +62 812 928 8700 sudanangdananjaya@yahoo.com

SURVIVING HURRICANE IAN

A letter from Lynnelle Stewart, Florida, USA...

Lynnelle Stewart is an isolated Subud member who lives in Orlando Florida. As you may know, towards the end of September Hurricane Ian was wreaking havoc in that part of the world, affecting Cuba, the USA and even much more far distant places like the Philippines.

I happened to see a letter that Lynnelle had written to a Subud friend about her experience in the hurricane and I thought it was a wonderful testament to the faith in God that it is open to us to develop in the latihan.



Damaged homes and debris in the aftermath of Hurricane Ian on Sept. 29, 2022, in Fort Myers, Fla.(source npr)

So, I asked her permission to publish this letter in Subud voice. Usually, she is a shy and modest person who does not need the spotlight and has often in the past been reluctant that I should publish things she has written. So, I'm very glad that this time she agreed.

To me, the letter is not only a testament about faith and network for us all and this letter reminds us of that. I also like to publish this letter because it is a vivid personal response to a major world event. It tells us all about the event in very expressive language and how she responded to it with Susila, Budhi and Dharma...

Dear (to a friend)...

Thank you for your prayerful and truly reassuring communication, very much indeed! I am relieved to have no dangerous adventures to report, personally, in the aftermath, though many all about this area and all of Florida do! I have not even lost power - which keeps me feeling connected via TV and the Internet. GOD's mercy...

I've spent time today reading the October Subud Voice and watching the YouTube of the WSC/IH session about the upcoming Kalimantan World Congress - and wishing (at age 76) I might be brave enough, strong enough and able to attend!

You probably get televised reports of the impact of Hurricane Ian on Florida. In the midst of surprising flooding and terrifying winds, and power outages, experienced by others close by to me - I am grateful to report that I have passed through the worst of the storm with relative calm and without harm.

I feared that strong winds would break my windows and prepared a safe area in an inner windowless closet - but no. I believe GOD has truly protected me and am so thankful for that Kindness and for all of your prayers. First responders are busy rescuing people today - the rest of us are asked to stay inside.

“ Truly, I felt protected by the One Who watches over us... ”

The lake 3 blocks from me flooded and overflowed the walkway around it; downtown Orlando flooded - with cars nearly covered and people wading through hip deep water - again, about 3 blocks away in another direction. All around, power outages.

My friend on the 7th floor of her senior community heard frightening howling winds all night, and water got in through her windows into her living room and bedroom.

Here, on the third floor of my senior community, I was not distressed by such sounds - I even slept - and remained safe and dry, with the TV and computer left on... most of my local friends lost power... truly, I felt protected by the One Who Watches Over Us.

Again, thank you for your prayers, and I am grateful for the same day latihan, simultaneous with sisters from the UK and Ottawa, Canada, and the prayers of all. The day before the storm began in earnest - I must admit that I felt Bapak cheerfully "look in" on me...

NEW COMMUNICATIONS AT SDI

Solen Lees writes...

You may know that I will shortly be quitting my post as communications coordinator with Susila Dharma to concentrate on other projects.

I am in the process of passing on different areas of my job to two new people to whom I'd like to introduce you, as they may well be in touch with you in the future to ask you to include material in Subud Voice.

Margarita Fiscó is now responsible for network communications and publications (newsletters, website, reports etc.) and Isidro Jimenez is responsible for audiovisual content, volunteering and translations.

Isidro was born in Armenia – Colombia, in 1998. After graduating from l'Alliance Française with a diploma in French language studies, Isidro moved to Ecuador, where he joined RET, an international organization dedicated to helping people in need. As a volunteer, he formed a youth group that carried out activities aimed at helping immigrants and minorities to adapt and develop livelihood skills for a better quality of life.

He was then appointed RET's Youth Ambassador for Ecuador, which allowed him to participate in several training courses, including the first youth ambassador training in Mardin, Turkey. Later, he applied for a government program to teach foreign languages to low-income children. After finishing the program, he became a volunteer with BFIF (Kalimantan, Indonesia), where he worked for a year and a half as a Fundraiser and Media Coordinator. Isidro then spent a year as an SDIA Board Member before joining the staff in a Communications & Networking role.

Margarita is a professional in Industrial Design with a postgraduate degree in Commercial Management and Marketing Management. Additionally, she has extensive experience in the field of communications and editorial, thanks to her work as Editor-in-Chief and Marketing Manager in two important magazines in Latin America. As a designer, she has had the opportunity to collaborate in different projects for organizations such as SICA International, The Muhammad Subuh Foundation, The Guerrand-Hèrmes Foundation for Peace, among others.

For Margarita, values and principles such as empathy, tolerance, humility, kindness, gratitude, child protection and sustainability, are fundamental pillars for the development of a better society.

This is one of the reasons she is very happy to be part of Susila Dharma International, an organization that not only encourages and promotes these values, but also strives every day to contribute and serve humanity, with the aim of always building a better world for present and future generations to come.



Isidro Jimenez – Media Coordinator – Ecuador



Margarita Fiscó – Publications & Network Coordinator – Chile

A WOMEN'S HISTORY OF THE BEATLES

A new book from Christine Feldman-Barrett who teaches at Griffith U in Queensland, Australia, and is a Subud member in Brisbane...

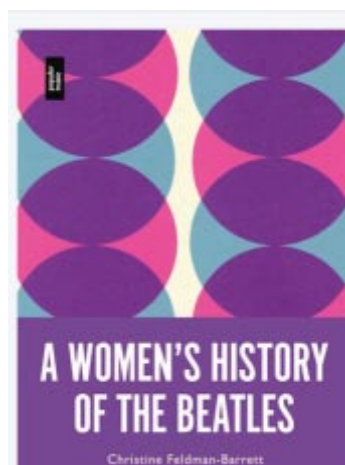
A Women's History of the Beatles (Bloomsbury) is the first book to offer a detailed presentation of the band's social and cultural impact as understood through the experiences and lives of women.

Drawing on a mix of interviews, archival research, textual analysis, and autoethnography, this scholarly work depicts how the Beatles have profoundly shaped and enriched the lives of women, while also re-examining key, influential female figures within the group's history.

Organized topically based on key themes important to the Beatles story, each chapter uncovers the varied and multifaceted relationships women have had with the band, whether face-to-face and intimately or parasocially through mediated, popular culture.

Set within a socio-historical context that charts changing gender norms since the early 1960s, these narratives consider how the Beatles have affected women's lives across three generations.

Providing a fresh perspective of a well-known tale, this is a cultural history that moves far beyond the screams of Beatlemania to offer a more comprehensive understanding of what the now iconic band has meant to women over the course of six decades.



Biography of the author

Christine Feldman-Barrett is a Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Griffith University, Australia, and is a member of the Griffith Centre for Social and Cultural Research. She is the author of *'We are the Mods': A Transnational History of a Youth Subculture* (2009), the first scholarly book dedicated to the history and global reach of Mod culture, and the editor of *Lost Histories of Youth Culture* (2015). She has published on topics of youth culture history in various collected volumes and in the *Journal of Youth Studies*, *Space and Culture*, *Feminist Media Studies*, and *Popular Music and Society*.



Christine Feldman-Barrett.

Extracts from a review by Candy Leonard

"Thrilling never Prurient" at CultureSonar.

I've been reading books about the Beatles for over a half-century, but none have spoken to me like Christine Barrett-Feldman's *A Women's History of the Beatles*.

This much-needed book shows us the mission-critical role of women in transforming four talented and ambitious young men into the Beatles, and the myriad ways the Beatles have, in turn, inspired and transformed the lives of women across three generations.

Feldman-Barrett, a Senior Lecturer in the School of Humanities, Languages and Social Science at Australia's Griffith University, is a self-described "aca-fan"—an academic who studies a cultural phenomenon of which they're a fan.

Yet you won't find the pretentious, obfuscating prose often found in academic books on fandom. It's well-written, respectful of the reader, and acknowledges that fandom is joyful. Focusing on female perspectives gives the book a different kind of energy that is hard to describe.

A Women's History of the Beatles is organized thematically rather than chronologically, though it does begin at the beginning, with the foundational support of mothers and aunties, and the un-failing devotion of female fans in Liverpool and throughout Merseyside—to whom the world owes an enormous debt of gratitude.



You won't find the pretentious, obfuscating prose often found in academic books on fandom...



We hear the voices of local women who were friends as well as fans. According to Feldman-Barrett, Liverpool had “an organic, community-oriented music scene that sometimes even suggested a familial closeness.”



We hear the voices of local women who were friends as well as fans...



Feldman-Barrett suggests the Beatles’ rapport with their fans—locally and then globally—was a natural extension of their relationships with the strong, supportive women in their families who “served as role models and mentors.”

Indeed, despite prevailing attitudes toward women in their Northern, working-class milieu and tales of sexual adventure on the Reeperbahn and on tour, *A Women’s History of the Beatles* shows that the Beatles’ “interactions with women were varied, multidimensional, and contextual.”

Many observers say there would have been no Beatles without Brian Epstein; others say George Martin was the *sine que non*. But after reading this book, it’s clear that Mona Best and Astrid Kirchherr come before either of them.

It was during a 1960 residency that the Beatles befriended Kirchherr, whose friend Klaus Voormann persuaded her to go with him to the red-light district to see



Fans, “embracing the permission and the possibility the Beatles embodied”.



Astrid Kirchherr with Ringo and John

and hear them “*mach schau*.” Six years later Voormann would design the cover of *Revolver*, and three years after that would play bass in the Plastic Ono Band.

But none of that would have happened were it not for the alluring and enigmatic Astrid, the educated, middle-class girl who wore leather and a Jean Seberg pixie cut. A musician and photographer who says Kirchherr was one of her biggest influences aptly described her as “a woman who went where she wasn’t supposed to go.”

According to Feldman-Barrett, Astrid played the role of fairy godmother in the Beatles’ fairy tale, the kindly, knowing figure who ensures good things will happen. Using her camera as a magic wand, >

she was the first person to take composed photos of the band; the first person to whom this idea occurred! Her female gaze showed these “Cinderlads” who they were and the Prince Charmings they would eventually be.

Yoko, who Feldman-Barret says is the preeminent female figure in the Beatles fairy tale, “was not widely received as a virtuous maiden worthy of a princely reward. Instead, she was presented and viewed as a cunning sorceress who had Lennon spellbound.” She was also a “godmother of punk” whose influence can be heard in numerous punk, post-punk, and riot grrrl bands.

Other important contributions of *A Women’s History of the Beatles* are the overlooked voices of lesbian fans—who found the Beatles attractive “irrespective of their sexual orientation”—and black fans, like the woman from the south side of Chicago who moved to the UK because of them.

Another black fan recalled, “There’s something about how [the Beatles] talk about the world that has always made me feel comfortable in my own skin and made me feel like it’s okay to like what I like and be who I am.”

Beatle wives and girlfriends— Cynthia, Pattie, Jane, Maureen, Yoko, and Linda — are presented as significant figures in their own right. But Feldman-Barrett also zooms out and puts their Beatle relationships in a broader context, showing how they were role models for fans as well as exemplars of changing gender dynamics throughout the decade.

Another fan, born in Argentina in 1995, hears the breaking of social convention in their early hits. This book enhances our understanding of the entire phenomenon—how it happened, what it meant, and why it will continue—by showing us three generations of women who heard, saw, felt, and embraced the permission and possibility the Beatles embodied.

The book is available from [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com)



Yoko Ono, “the preeminent female figure in the Beatles fairytale”.

TOWARD GLOBAL CITIZENSHIP

From Reynold Ruslan Feldman, Ph.D., Subud-Boulder, Colorado, USA. (He also happens to be the father of Christine Feldman-Barrett whose book about the Beatles we review in this issue.)...

Plato quotes Socrates as saying, “I am a citizen of Athens but also of the world.” That statement occurred 2500 years ago. Now, all these centuries later, we are in the midst of a hyper-nationalist revival. One need but think of Hungary and Turkey, not to mention Russia, China, and the MAGA-fied USA. Even liberal Sweden in its last national election made a smart turn to the right.

Consider also that the old-fashioned liberal arts, with their goal of humanizing and universalizing students, have lost major ground in the past few decades to skills training and professional education. Learning about and from Aristotle, Shakespeare, and Caravaggio may be fun and in some sense enriching, but true enrichment of the green, folding kind comes from I.T., Finance, and Mar-



Dr. Vittachi and me, Honolulu International Airport, early 1970s.

keting majors. Everyone now knows that, with most acting accordingly.

At nearly 83, I am clearly of a different cut. Maybe because money was topic number one in our house when I was growing up coupled with my love of languages and school, I unconsciously considered all possible professions and settled early on teaching as something I would be good at and, not incidentally, as the least well-paid of the bunch.

My heroes, both at prep school and Yale College, happened to be my English teachers, two in particular. They had what I wanted, to be an updated Mr. Chips with an American accent. Later, Robin Williams portrayed just such an individual in the film *The Dead Poets Society*. As a teenaged boarding-school student, moreover, I made a point of living with students of radically different backgrounds in terms of nationality, religion, and interest.

My parents, who lived in their mainly Jewish middle-class world, could never figure out my choice of roommates and friends. My rationale was why live with kids like you when you could learn so much more from those who weren't. I kept that value into college, grad school, and beyond. In fact, I extended it to include age and profession as well. I didn't want to trap myself in any particular social ghetto.

Some 50 or more years ago, a guy in New York City would, for only \$25, send you a Global Passport, with room to get stamps from the various cities and countries one visited. One of my life regrets is that I never sent him a check for my passport. I'll have to check Google to see if there is still something similar around.

Maybe I can make up for that early failure yet. Come to think of it, the U.N. could create something similar as a fundraiser by offering Honorary World Citizenship at prices commensurate with various standards of living so that people from even the poorest countries could join. As the numbers increased, it would double as a consciousness-raiser for the need for true global citizenship.

My dream would be that future nationality would be equivalent to state or provincial residency today, with world citizenship having primacy of place, both legally and emotionally. I only wish my long-time friend and mentor, the late Dr. Varindra Tarzie Vittachi, a U.N. Assistant Secretary-General, were still with us. He might even be able to make it so. ●

“ My dream would be... world citizenship having primacy of place, both legally and emotionally... ”

THREE IMPORTANT SUBJECTS (DID YOU GET THEM?)

Dahlan Simpson writes...

At high school in the sixties, I missed out on three important subjects: understanding relationships (intimate and other), looking after money and investments, and the Subud latihan. I learned about the first two in the usual way (school of hard knocks), but with the third I was lucky: my father was in Subud, and he told me about it.

Bapak, the founder of Subud, told us not to proselytise; that Subud would grow by the example of Subud members, evidencing their change for the better. “You know, Bill used to be a grumpy fellow, but these days he is bright and bubbly. What happened to him?”

Let me tell you what I think. The Subud latihan is an incredibly important grace and everyone on the planet – everyone aged 17 and over – ought to know about it. Know about it. That's right, not told it is the greatest thing since sliced bread and you must do it. Not at all. But you should at least know about it.

Take my case. If my father had not been in Subud, would I have ever known about it? Possibly. I had since the age of 6 wondered about life and whether, for instance, I would go to heaven or hell. It's possible that, with my antennae on alert, I would have heard about Subud at some point. Possible, but unlikely. And if not, then my life would have been very different. These days, I am happy, but that is not the common condition of 70-plus-year-olds, is it?

I believe that the gift of the latihan is probably the most important since, let's say, the gift of Jesus' or Mohammed's lives. It is a rescue, a balm, a reawakening. Everyone should know of it. Not to be told – as an advertisement – that it is the greatest boon, and you must join or you are mad. But to be

told that it exists and why not check it out for yourself.

Who will search for goldinum (a new metal I just invented) if they don't know it exists? But here is the thing: goldinum doesn't exist, but the latihan exists everywhere.

As I once said to a young Subud member, holding up my mobile phone: if one of these things can receive calls, videos, messages and photos that are flowing invisibly through the air, imagine what a human being can receive.

It's time for people to know that the latihan exists.

No, we won't be flooded with applicants. It doesn't matter. That is not even the aim. The aim is to respect every human being's right, I believe, to know about perhaps the most important gift in humanity's history. The latihan kejiwaan of Subud.

Because it can change your life - if you let it.

“ *It's time for people to know that the latihan exists...* ”

Interfaith Test

Sebastian Paemen writes...

This is a pic I took during a lovely multi-faith cultural weekend at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. A muezzin was calling the azan.



At one point I found myself in a very small lift with an imam, a female vicar, a Sikh priest and a Buddhist.

We were standing really close to each other, shoulder to shoulder. I thought about what would happen if the lift got stuck. That would be taking interfaith to an entirely new level.

TECHNOLOGY, FAITH AND HEALTH

Ilgas Baker on Bapak's advice about cancer...

Most of us have known or heard about someone whom Bapak advised not to get surgery as a treatment for cancer because it might spread the disease. There may have been additional recommendations, but that is the most repeated.

I remember meeting briefly a young man at the Subud hall in Bankhead Farm in Edinburgh in about nineteen-eighty, who had cancer and had been advised by Bapak to reject an operation in favour of relying on a meat-free diet except for white fish. I remember him vividly because I thought he seemed too young to have cancer and he was very anxious about his future.

He was part of a group of young people, some of whom had joined Subud, trying to emulate certain aspects of the way of life of Native Americans. They lived in conical tents (tipi) in the woods >

in Perthshire and had dedicated themselves to “healing the earth”. He was only visiting the group and I never met him again.

Diagnosis and treatment

I have a preference for science-based integrative medicine. When I was diagnosed with neuroendocrine cancer eight years ago I accepted the oncologist’s advice to undergo surgery and targeted chemotherapy. I did consider Bapak’s advice to others. As far as I was aware this wasn’t a total rejection of surgery but specific advice regarding specific individuals who had cancer and how surgery could spread the cancer.



Cancer cell.

Without questioning Bapak’s advice with respect to the individuals to whom he had given it, I rationalized that treatment for cancer had improved a great deal since Bapak’s time and I didn’t worry too much about the surgery causing the cancer to spread as it had already metastasized from my small intestine to my liver.

I was aware that the statistics strongly supported my decision: in blunt terms, those who rely only on alternative treatments including diets die much sooner than those who opt for conventional treatments. I was aware too that statistics don’t tell the whole story.

A month or so after the diagnosis a section of my small intestine was removed and over a period of years a number of tumours on my liver has been treated with targeted chemotherapies (transarterial chemoembolization and radio-frequency ablation).

As a result I am able to carry on with my life much as before my cancer diagnosis although I am now retired from university teaching and am almost a decade older. I take no medication, conventional or alternative, whatsoever.

A recent visit to my oncologist

On a recent visit to my oncologist to hear the results and implications of the latest MRI, she gave me a huge smile and said, “Your original diagnosis was eight years ago.” She seemed surprised that I was still alive.

Then she continued, “There are no active tumours and everything is fine, It seems we found the right treatment for you.” I have six-monthly MRIs to detect any change in my condition, the most likely being that the cancer has spread to other organs, or the remaining very small inactive tumours on my liver deemed unnecessary as yet to treat have started to grow.

My oncologist was right, I believe, about the treatment. They did find the right treatment for me. Being a Muslim I never felt that technology was inherently opposed to God’s will and I never felt that it conflicted with my practice of the Latihan. Technology, as Bapak reminds us, is also true culture and scientific discoveries and technological inventions are inspired by God.

A belief that the outcome of any action is in God’s hands is a hallmark of Islam. So for me there is another dimension to choosing and appreciating the effectiveness of technology that does not simply arise from its scientific credentials.

But I must confess I used to wonder about the contribution to my survival of my Latihans, prayers and fasting during Ramadan every year except the first after diagnosis when I was preparing myself for surgery. Then one day feeling very quiet and at peace and not thinking about anything in particular I received incontrovertibly that, “What kept you alive was the medical technology.”

I was surprised and my secret vanity, now apparent, deflated. But I am absolutely certain the prayers and Latihans helped me to deal with the shock of a cancer diagnosis and to cope with the unintended effects and uncertain outcome of the treatment and for that I am grateful.

I received incontrovertibly that, “What kept you alive was the medical technology.”

Rumi on the First Cause and secondary causes

The thirteenth century Muslim poet Jalaluddin Rumi has some interesting insights that can be applied to what I am writing about here. He is recorded as saying, "People simply see the secondary causes and know things through them. For the saints, however, it is revealed that secondary causes are no more than 'veils' that keep people from seeing and knowing the Causer." (Fihi ma fihi 15, Thackston translation, p. 71). Thus the medical technology is from this perspective only the secondary cause in the healing process. It is a theme he also addresses in his Mathnawi:



Rumi.

"These secondary causes are veils upon the eyes,
for not every eye is worthy of seeing His craftsmanship.
One must have an eye which cuts through
secondary causes and tears aside all veils,
To the end that it may see the First Cause in
No-place ...
Every good and evil arrives from the First Cause ... "
(*Mathnawi, Book V, Nicholson translation, p. 94*)

"He (Azrael) replied, 'O Lord, there are also servants (of Thine) who rend (shatter the illusion of) causes ... '

Their eye pierces through the cause: by the grace of the Lord, it has passed beyond all veils.
It has obtained the collyrium of Unity from the oculist of ecstasy and has been delivered from ailment and infirmity.

They do not look at fever and dysentery and consumption:
They do not admit these causes into their heart.

For every one of these diseases has its cure: when it becomes incurable, that is the act of the divine Decree.

Know for certain that every disease has its cure
When the Decree comes, the physician is made foolish,
and the medicine too loses its beneficial effect."

Mathnawi, Book V, Nicholson translation, p. 103

Clearly the physician has an important role to play but he cannot guarantee the outcome of his treatment.

My Islamic faith plays an important role in my everyday life and even more so when everyday realities are swept aside by more testing realities. Even when I didn't always feel the Latihan /the presence of God's Power during the immediate period after my operation and treatments when I was preoccupied with nausea, pain, profound fatigue and sleeplessness, my faith that "... Allah is watchful over all things" (*Qur'an, 33:52*) gave me the patience and confidence I might otherwise have lacked. And my faith has surely been made real and strengthened over the years by the regular practice of the Latihan.

One final thing: The main feeling that I had during periods of convalescence was that my body was in a state of disequilibrium and ditching the drugs as soon as was feasible was part of my effort to restore the equilibrium, as was resuming my usual practice of walking as exercise.

I tried to inhabit my body as much as possible during my periods of convalescence and at some point I became aware of a "switch" being turned on, which meant that I was now ready to step up my recovery by resuming my daily walking outside, fortunately along tree-lined roads, past a couple of large ponds and many gardens bursting with trees and plants. Birdsong was the accompanying soundtrack. Gradually I walked my way back to health as equilibrium was restored.

For an earlier and fuller account of my experience with cancer see:

<https://www.patheos.com/blogs/mostlymuslim/2019/06/cancer-one-watches-over-us/>

“ Gradually
I walked my way
back to health
as equilibrium
was restored...”

THE TRUE ROLE OF A HELPER

Héloïse Jackson, Exeter group UK, writes about the role of helpers in a broken relationship between two members...

I was reminded recently of what the true role of a helper is. Although we all understand it and think we are good helpers many of us actually fall short of what it is.

When a member in distress from a broken relationship comes to us, our first instinct is to want to help and try to understand (particularly for the women). We listen to his or her story and then we try to appease him or her, often without realizing it, by making a judgement which is sometimes based solely on the account of one of the injured parties.

I received that a helper has to listen to the injured member without any judgement whatsoever or prejudice and just accept what is being said without any comment. *And that is the key!*

We should then only offer sympathy, compassion, love and of course the most important thing: a latihan - and a latihan of support, with some testing, but only if required, and all this, as often as it is needed. AND THAT IS ALL

To pass judgement or offer counselling or agreeing with the injured party or feeling outraged by some comments made, is quite wrong since all this is happening when two people are still fighting and out of control of their feelings.

A helper is neither a judge nor a counsellor. These methods, are useful only to appease the heart and mind.

So how should a helper behave if one of the injured parties has left the group? They should email/phone him or her and inquire how he or she is; not just once, but often. Tell him or her that they are sorry for the break-up, offer compassion without comment, and invite him or her to come back and receive the latihan with them since he or she is very much missed – as indeed all lapsed members should be missed.

If or when he or she comes back then no question should be asked, nor help offered, nor comments made. Just say that we are happy to see them again - and that's all. Only later, if asked, we can offer testing or special latihan if the member is receptive; but not push; just accept.

Only when we can truly offer a latihan combined with those humane qualities of love and compassion but without judgement or comment on whatever has been said, however distasteful it might appear to us, can Almighty God really begin to start repairing the hurt these members have suffered.

It is so simple and yet how many of us can really do this, without either getting too involved with either party or on the contrary not wanting to be involved?

I have written about broken relations between couples. Exactly the same principle apply when conflict arises in the course of committee work or any other engagement between Subud members.

Later, we need to contemplate the outcome of our own actions; after all, we are Bapak's helpers and the result of our actions or inactions should speak for themselves.

With much love and May God forgives us and bless us all. ●

Decision Making in Subud Organizations

By Benedict Herrman and Kenneth Clark...

Both of us have been Subud friends for almost fifty years, and we recently gathered with some other Subud friends and ended up discussing — what else — Subud matters. One subject we touched upon felt important enough to pass on our reflections in the hope it might prove useful.

Decision-making by Subud organizations can get stuck. It is not uncommon for a minority to disagree with a majority view. When such disagreement persists even after a majority decision, relations can fray. Disagreement can turn into retrenchment, then acrimony, even group fracture — particularly when fuelled by strong feelings of 'rightness' based on beliefs or receiving.

Dialogue, sharing of feelings, role playing, and testing can sometimes be helpful, but when beliefs and personalities are strong, these approaches are often not enough.

When a minority view is very vocal, sometimes the majority gives in, holding the view that harmony is more important than majority decision-making. However, this approach can lead to group >

inertia fuelled by apathy on the part of the membership.

As we wrestled with how we and other Subud members can find the best way forward, we considered the Indonesian concept of “musyawara,” which can be translated as meaning “consensus.” One of us recently discussed this matter with Isti da Silva, a member of Bapak’s family and one of the current International Helpers. It was related how in some Western countries very little could sometimes go forward because of strong minority views — and because of the view that consensus meant everyone should agree on the outcome.

“No, that isn’t “musyawara,” Isti said, laughing. “Musyawara is when those in the group whose ideas lost during the original vote changed their votes so that the outcome was unanimous.” In other words, if their ideas didn’t carry the day, they let go of them and worked in harmony with the majority of the group. They didn’t take the outcome personally.

It was noted that a world-leading Stanford University expert on organizational behavior had visited Kenneth’s company and gave a lecture. She said that her research showed that companies often have strong disagreements among decision makers, but that after a decision is made at the most successful companies, dissenters close ranks, support the majority decision and, importantly, leave all personal issues about the decision behind.

So, the Indonesian approach to “musyawara” really works.

Bapak has said, “The content of surrender is action.” A challenge for all of us is to accept conflict and disagreements as a normal part of finding solutions, so that we can then “take action.” Our hope is that when Subud organization decisions arise in the future, those whose views have not prevailed will consider the Indonesian approach to “musyawara,” as well as the best practices used by the most effective organizations.

“After a decision is made at the most successful companies, dissenters close ranks and support the majority decision.”

CHAPTERS OF LIFE

Lawrence Brazier writes about a new recording by guitarist Hassan Czwiertnia...

In 1933 the poet Garcia Lorca wrote about Duende, which was: “A mysterious force that everyone feels and no philosopher has explained.”

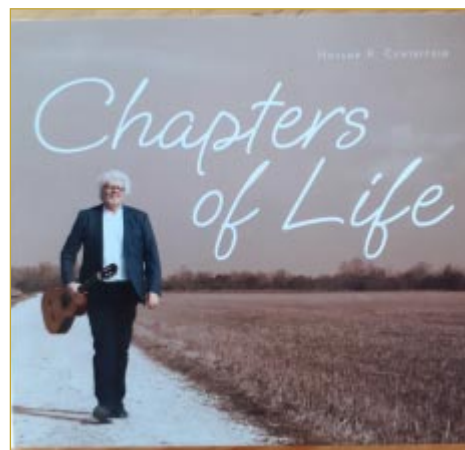
Creativity is obviously of the essence, and is received more than conceived. If music is the highest of the arts, musical composition is often something beyond, even, inspiration. According to Mozart: “The essence of music is melody.”

The classical guitarist, Hassan Czwiertnia – of Subud Austria – has given us his *Chapters of Life*. What is most evident here is that Hassan plays his own compositions. We hear extraordinarily strong, elegant melodies coupled with dynamic attack segueing into whimsy, and pervasive warmth. There is, of course, that resonant depth of an acoustic guitar. You can lose yourself in this music.

From the Prelude, in which melody begins to assert itself, we arrive at *For You*. Here is a piece that should conquer the world. It is gorgeously romantic with passages of poignancy, and off-the-cuff lyricism in execution. You will walk away humming it after one hearing.

Hassan is now in his stride and Intermezzo continues with reflective nuance. Attached here is an example of this deeply satisfying album. We hear echoes of Albéniz and de Falla, and as Hassan says, “a bit of Bach.”

Chapters of Life can be ordered through contacting Hassan at guitar@themusic.at - costs amount to €15 plus postage.



“We hear strong, elegant melodies coupled with dynamic attack...”

TO THE SOLOMON ISLANDS

Solomon Islands update from Natascha Wernick and Bruce Ray. Northern rivers, Australia. Natascha writes...

Many of you may know from a previous story in Subud Voice of my history in the Solomon Islands. You may know that I was married to a Solomon Islander and had a child to him, Biku.

You may know that I lived there for 5 years, teaching, setting up a school, setting up a restaurant and an eco-resort and, living in a leaf house next to the biggest blue lagoon in the world.

You may know that my relationship with the Solomons began when I was 17, 33 years ago, when my parents spun the globe, to decide where they would visit next, and the finger landed on Munda in the Solomon Islands.

All of these stories are long and old now. Let me share the latest update with you from our recent visit.

Merle...

Merle Aqorau (83 yrs) is my Solomon Mother-in-Law or “Mummy”. Her story is a fascinating one dating back to headhunting times when her great great grandfather, Hinqava, was the greatest chief and headhunter of all times.

She grew up a village girl with Methodist missionary influence and married the educated Francis Aqorau. Francis took Merle to England where he attended Cambridge University. He was earmarked to be lead the Solomon Islands through Independence (1978).

Merle and Francis had tea with the Queen of England and the Queen’s family when they visited the Solomon Islands in 1974. Francis was the first Solomon Islander to have a university degree, a phone, a car, an outboard motor, access to the expatriate clubs and all that comes with that. He suddenly left Merle a widower with five children and one in the belly in 1976 when he mysteriously passed away.

Merle then began her solo parent journey back in Munda. She became a very important leader on women’s social issues, travelling the Pacific representing the Solomons in this field. She was a YWCA leader and founded a kindergarten and young women’s place as well as raising many children, hers and others, along the way.

In 2018 she was awarded a Queen’s Medal MBE for her Services to Women in the Solomon Islands. She is currently the Chief of her tribe and the Matriarch.

Our paths crossed when she came to the Brisbane Expo 88 as a representative of the Solomon Islands as a weaver. My parents, who had their first visit to the Solomons the year before, adopted many of the islander visitors. Our house was filled for the 6 months of Expo with new Solomon friends who found comfort from the freezing Brisbane winter next to our inside fireplace.

I married Milton Aqorau in 1994, who was studying accountancy in Brisbane and moved to the Solomons in 1996. Merle and her family quickly became my family and over the 33 years these familial relationships survived the divorce and remain strong, heart filled and enduring.

Fundraising for Merle and her family...

In 2007, there was a horrible earthquake and tsunami in the Solomon Islands that left Merle’s house un-liveable. I returned and began dreaming up a new house for her with the family members. In 2014 when I returned, there had been no action taken on the rebuilding of the house and Merle was still homeless, living in other people’s houses.



Merle with family. She is currently the Chief of her tribe and the Matriarch.

So, I began a fundraising campaign. We held several events including a “High tea with Merle and the Queen”, in recognition of her having tea with the Queen as well as a Solomon style feast and concert. Those two events in addition to many financial contributions from many of my Australian friends and family meant that the house foundations could be made, and the building could begin.

When I returned in 2019, Merle was living in her new house, but it was unfinished and still needing furniture. We did another fundraising campaign and, with the help of financial contributions from her family as well, we were able to take the house to then next stage.

In 2021, when Merle’s 40-year-old son became a quadriplegic we began another fundraising campaign and after more than 6 long months of collecting and gathering donations through lockdowns and closed borders we amassed a total of 52 boxes to be shipped to Merle in Munda. A phenomenal achievement for all those involved. The boxes arrived New Year’s Day 2022, on one of the first ships allowed back into the country.

Merle expresses such emotional gratitude through tears. “There were over 50 boxes! That is more like what the hospital or the school receives, not just one person or family. You must love me very much.”

The vision for the Merle’s house was that it would be a permanent building that would have full wheelchair access. A tiled and screened house with a big common area and veranda for large group meetings and family gatherings. Complete with inside toilet, shower and kitchen, all with clean running water and connection mains power. Three bedrooms with one room allocated to Merle at all times, and the other two rooms made available for village homestay, as a new family enterprise, or for family members when the homestay is not in use.

Our latest visit...

Bruce and I returned again to Munda in August this year just as the Islands opened up again after closing because of COVID. When Merle and the family heard we were coming they “started the engines” again on the house building and secretly finished it the day before we arrived.

To see Merle, now permanently in a wheelchair, happy in her own beautiful new home was so wonderful. We stayed for two weeks and recharged in the heat, the lagoon and the family. During my time I also made an AirBNB site for the Merle’s Village Homestay. You can see it here:

https://www.airbnb.com.au/rooms/700408907813843401?guests=1&adults=1&s=67&unique_share_id=74e77e6-6b70-4a66-9661-d496c422e489 >



Natascha with Isabule, Merle’s son, who is quadriplegic.



Merle’s new house. Our fundraising enabled us to build a new house for her.



The lagoon outside Merle’s house. A beautiful place to visit.

Whilst we were there they organised a special event to celebrate the official opening of the house. It was a wonderful afternoon tea celebration with about a hundred in attendance. The Reverend came and cut the ribbon, did some special prayers inside the house and led some beautiful singing.

Outside we were entertained by traditional dancers and Bruce, who was the MC, even sang a couple of songs.

Merle and I would love to invite you to come and stay at her village home stay and experience some custom cooking, dancing, weaving mixed with canoe trips to remote islands, resorts and incredible diving and snorkelling in the biggest blue lagoon in the world.

If you are interested please book directly through Airbnb or through me:

babareki@gmail.com

I can also arrange an itinerary and even come along as your tour guide, if you wish.

Although the house is now open for business there are still upgrades to happen. If you would like to make a financial donation toward this project, please contact me. There is still much to do.

Until next time, Leana Hola, Natascha and Bruce.



The road to Merle's house. You can visit there and stay through AirBNB.



Bruce Ray entertaining at the house opening.

RAIN

A memory of Bapak in the big house by Harris Smart...

I have read a vast amount of Subud literature, including many personal experiences by Subud members, but very rarely have I come across any descriptions by these writers experiencing that widespread human phenomenon known as "falling in love at first sight".

I know from talking to my male friends that almost all of us are continually falling in love. Sometimes these are very serious things and lead to people getting married for 50 years or more.

Sometimes they are more ephemeral such as glimpsing a pretty girl getting off a tram. By the next tram stop you have already forgotten her but for a moment you were "in love".

Perhaps there is a feeling that this subject is too trivial to be written about in the context of spiritual experience. However, since the best description of falling in love is by Bapak himself, it is strange that more Subud writers do not write about it more often, since it is commonly thought that Bapak is a good model of how to behave.

Bapak's account of falling in love at first sight...

You will recall that in his autobiography Bapak describes falling in love with his first wife, Rumin-dah. In summary, it goes like this...

Bapak writes that in 1925 while living in Semarang, he goes by train to visit a sick friend in another town. On the train he notices a young woman and he writes, "the moment I saw her, though I didn't know why, there arose a tremendous feeling of love from within my inner being".

When the train stops at a station called Pamotan, the young woman gets off, and Bapak follows her, but she is immediately picked up in a horse-drawn carriage. Bapak is so dismayed that he almost misses the train to continue his journey.

He goes to visit his sick friend "but the longing in my heart for the girl would not go away", On the way back, he gets off the train at Pamotan and searches the streets for hours in the off chance that he might see the young woman. Without success.

But then he is having a coffee at the station, and he describes the young woman to the coffee vendor who is able to identify her.

When he returns to Semarang, a friend's wife is able to tell him that her name is Rumindah, and she lives with an uncle in a town called Rembang. She probably went to Pamotan to visit her parents who live there.

A few days later Bapak goes with his friend to visit the uncle and recognises the young woman who serves refreshments as the one we saw on the train.

When he returns to Semarang he asked his mother to accompanying him to Rembang to ask for the young lady's hand in marriage.

The proposal is accepted, and they are married on October 9, 1926.

Bapak goes on to say that after his marriage good fortune came, and he was able to get an additional job which bought in a good income to meet the household needs and he was able to build a good-sized stone house.

The reading...

In the 1970s I was several times fortunate enough to go to Cilandak during Ramadan. The custom was that after the fast was over all the visitors went to see Bapak in the "big house" to say farewell to him.

So, one time I went with about 40 other people to say goodbye to Bapak after Ramadan. We gathered at about 10 AM in the morning. Bapak came down to greet us wearing a jacket and an open necked shirt and still unshaven.

After some greetings, Bapak remarked that he had been writing his autobiography. He said he wrote it in spare moments while he was on one of his tours. He said that he had completed it and that Sharif had already translated it into English.

He asked, "would you like to hear a passage from my autobiography?"

Would we? Of course, we would.

So, he sent Sharif upstairs to get a copy of the English translation and then he directed Sharif to read a passage from it. The passage that Bapak chose to have read was the one where he sees Rumindah on the train and is attracted to her.

What is so likeable about this passage is that Bapak falling in love is just the same as anyone else falling in love. So, he continues his journey to visit his sick friend, but his mind is constantly distracted with thoughts of the attractive woman he has seen.

When the reading was complete, and we had all said goodbye to Bapak, we went out from the big house and a gentle rain began to fall.



Bapak writes in his autobiography that the moment he saw the young woman on the train "there arose a tremendous feeling of love from within my inner being".



The young woman got off the train and took a horse-drawn carriage. Bapak ran after her and almost missed his train, but he came back the next day to look for her.

“ Bapak asked, “Would you like to hear a passage from my autobiography?” ”

You know how it is sometimes, rain feels like a special rain, and there was something special about that rain.

Many years later I heard a pop song called “The Streets of Your Town” by the Australian band The Go Betweens, in which a young man searches for his loved one in the streets of her town. It reminded me of Bapak’s experience in Pamotan searching for Rumindah.

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8M_P_xX9Cmw

Bapak’s Autobiography is available online at www.subudlibrary.net in the section Books by Bapak.

The illustrations used in this article first appeared in Luqman McKingley's book *Journey Beyond the Stars*. Copies of this book may still be obtained by contacting Sahlan McKingley at sahlan78@gmail.com

STILL A LOVELY GREEN PLACE TO LIVE

This reflection by Rashad Carre first appeared on the web site Subud and the World Facebook...

The other night when I was going to bed, a feeling came to me. It was something 'obvious' and one that I already thought I knew, but like with a lot of things, to feel it is something else, and I'm still learning to implement it. The feeling was that the latihan is about learning to bring into our daily lives, our homes, our workplaces, Subud, Susila Budhi Dharma.

The awareness stirred something in me and settled into a deep feeling that took me to sleep soundly for over ten hours. It helped me realise that it doesn't matter where you are in world, whether you find yourself in the heart of the most materialistic environment or the most peaceful, because both are an expression of what life is.

The whole thing came about because of a comment about Wisma Subud being the “Mecca” of Subud. It struck a cord because I grew up there, and never saw it like that; it was simply home. It's only looking back that I would liken the atmosphere of the complex to a Subud congress, especially during Ramadhan and other occasions that brought more people together.

Bapak was also still alive then and there was a dynamic feeling of optimism. However, like any other community, there were disagreements, gossip, affairs and power struggles. But I was just a kid navigating all the issues of growing up, like any other child.

I went back quite a few times over the years and saw a lot of the original residents move away, pass away, and their homes rented or sold to members and those not in Subud. Jakarta has also grown more and more rapidly and is now well entrenched to include Wisma Subud.

The atmosphere has completely changed, and I would say that now it's a housing complex like any other. It's true, however, that in the mega hustle and bustle of the city, the complex is still a >



“

*To find that feeling
of home inside
myself through the
latihan...*

”

lovely green place to live. And for Subud members, they have the luxury of having, at their doorstep, a large hall for latihan.

What bothered me with the original comment regarding Mecca, is not only that the complex has changed, but also because Bapak never wanted us to attach Subud to a place, like what's happened with religions. I think that's why he helped set up the organisation for groups to be autonomous, committee members re-appointed and congresses held in different countries.

I don't believe he wanted one place to feel more important or influence another. It makes me remember reading in the memoirs of an Indonesian member how Bapak tried to dissuade the purchase of his house in Semarang and his childhood home in Kedungjati. He saw it as a waste of money, and didn't want pilgrimages surrounding an image of who he was.

I believe it's about finding balance between respect and adoration, especially surrounding Bapak who brought us so much. I've often been to Bapak's grave in the mountains, Suka Mulia, and I'm very grateful to have had that opportunity. Not only is it a lovely, peaceful place to go to, it moved me to pay my respects to someone I feel had a tremendous love for mankind.

But on occasions I saw how having spiritual expectations can stir up the imagination and desires. It's that wishing again, which can lead to fantasy receivings or disappointment when you don't feel anything. When I was last by his grave, I felt something unexpected. It wasn't a receiving, more an awareness. "If you want to come and be beside Bapak's grave, that's fine, but it's actually not necessary as Bapak can be with you wherever you are."

It's strange, the experience I felt the other night, writing this all down and sharing it with you has been hard for me. It's made me realise more vividly that my home, my safe harbour during times of emotional difficulty, exists now only as a memory. It's made me feel very lonely and empty, but it's a reality. I now have to hope that I have faith and trust enough to find that feeling of home in myself, through the latihan.



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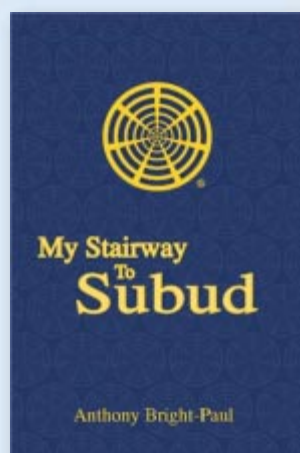
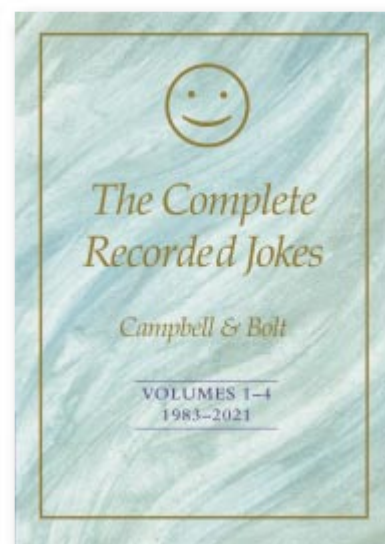
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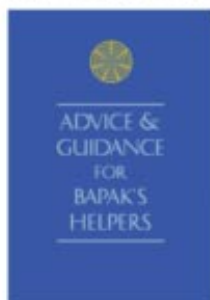
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