



Thoughts from Luke...

Sophia Hughes writes from Bristol with "Thoughts from Luke Penseny (WSA Chair) that have stayed with me."

This comes from Luke's visit to the Bristol Group in June this year, and subsequent conversations I have had with him.

Luke spoke first about the importance of intention, and as he spoke I realised that to be truly awake to the intention of your soul is to live powerfully. So often we lack the clarity so we don't move forward - and you can apply this to the life of the group and to Subud as a whole.

Luke then said Bapak encouraged us to ask if there is more for us to receive, and we can ask for a latihan to give us the true strength of our intention.

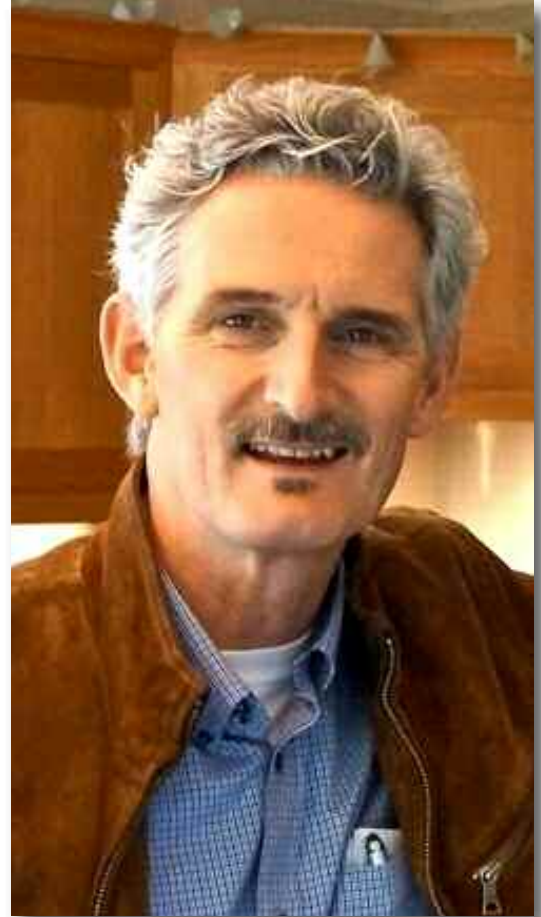
Out of this came possible tests:

- What would God have my intention be at this time?
- Is there anything more in my latihan I should be receiving at this time?
- How is it when I face the One Almighty God with my whole being?
- How is it when I follow what the One Almighty God would have me do?
- May we receive a short latihan that heals us inwardly and outwardly of the hurts and difficulties that are holding us back.
- How is my inner courage? How would God have it be?
- How is my outer courage? How would God have it be?

Luke spoke of the problem of waiting for a powerful indication/receiving before moving forward – what Ibu Rahiyu called 'wilful waiting', as she said you can wait a very long time! People may think they are being diligent in their latihan but are really asking God not to stretch them beyond their comfort zone in any way. (Are you going to latihan for comfort and reassurance, or to really grow?) This is where the inner and outer courage is needed if we are to move forward.

He then spoke of Subud in the world - how our activity in the world is clean, so it can act as a catalyst - be like a homeopathic remedy that is needed by the vast dark corporate giants to enable them to take the right path. They sponsor us because they need us. It is so important that we engage materially like this.

Two examples: 1. Kalimantan Gold, the Indonesian Subud Enterprise that has been going for at least thirty years. Freeport, which is the largest copper and gold mining corporation in the >



Luke Penseny (WSA Chair).

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world recognised that Kalimantan Gold were amongst the best in the world and so want to use what we have to offer. The geologists on both sides have high regard for each other and because Kalimantan Gold retains its integrity Freeport wants to continue to work with them. 2. In the Congo a large mining company developing a humanitarian arm found Susila Dharma, and now a partnership with Susila Dharma is evolving well, using what they know works.

In contrast to this, Luke landed in one country and he had the image of three generals dressed in black laughing at us - Subud was no threat to their material power there because it was not properly engaged with reality. We are no threat to the darkness if we are not truly living by the latihan. (The image had gone by the time he left.)

And each time I have spoken to Luke it has come down to the courage and the strength of the latihan. We need to be connected to it at all times, not just twice a week. As Haryono (Bapak's son) said, the small latihan is twice a week but the big latihan is our everyday life.

I would like to add a personal note. Talking with Luke I was aware that he really listens, reading the present moment and the wider situation at the same time, with a big heart and an astute mind. Being at ease in himself he has true enthusiasm in his deep caring for Subud, as well as being great for a laugh - never taking things too seriously!

“
He
really
listens...
”

Group photo of the World Council meeting at Poio in Spain 2013.



Support Subud Voice

Do you think it was good that someone went to the Susila Dharma Conference and wrote it up in such lavish detail?

Would you like that sort of thing to continue? Then send us some money.

You can do that quickly, easily and safely by going to the PAYMENTS button on the left-hand side of the homepage and sending us a donation by credit card. We are suggesting that people send \$50 which was the old subscription rate.

We have been going for 26 years now and would like to continue for another 26. Think what a hole it would be in the Subud world were we to disappear. No more reliable, Subud-supporting, independent news magazine coming to you regular as clockwork on the first of every month.

Over the last few years we've exhausted all the available avenues of sponsorship.. Now it is down to you, our readers, if you want us to continue providing this service to the English and Spanish-speaking worlds.

So, just over there on the left-hand side – PAYMENTS. We are suggesting people send \$50 which was the old subscription rate, but you're welcome to give more... do it now while it's on your mind...

THE SUBUD VOICE TEAM

A glimpse of the bigger picture

And Lucette Dybowski writes from Lewes...

Notes from a meeting with Luqman (Luke) Penseneay (our WSA chair) in Lewes on the 9th & 10th of June.

Luqman outlined some of the major issues facing us in Subud at this time. Clearly after fifty or more years of Subud in the west we are in need of renewal of our commitment and realization of Subud in our lives.

He first mentioned Ibu Rahayu's recent comments about the role of WSA chair (in a letter clarifying the roles of the World Subud Association and Muhammad Subuh Foundation) that covers three aspects of what Ibu describes as a 'difficult job': maintaining the unity of the Subud membership; visiting groups/being close to the members and ensuring the good name of Subud is protected wherever Subud is registered.

Ibu has pointed out that times are not easy and we are on a fine edge and need to be aware of it. "...Indeed I feel the members need something to stimulate the awakening of the soul at this time..." (From her letter to Paloma de la Vina re being invited to attend Zone 3/WSC Gathering in Poio June 2013)

On one hand we need to rely and stay close to our latihan and put it into practise in our lives, as well as (she advises) being more aware of and following Bapak's words. On the other hand, Subud is an alive, dynamic organization and we need to allow space for it to evolve, adapt, and adjust. (This came up for discussion in the context of avoiding establishing government backed but restrictive heritage status for Subud and Wisma Subud in Indonesia.



Luke Penseneay, Annabella Ashby, Elias Dumit and Osanna Vaughn.

A Global Overview

Subud is at this time present in 74 countries, 52 of which have registered Subud at a national level. The global Subud membership is appreciatively 11 000/12 000 according to the last census that took place before the 2010 international congress in Christchurch. A quarter of Subud members are Indonesian members, Americans are a sixth of it and UK members perhaps a tenth.

Luqman also told us about a letter from Ibu Rahayu to the Subud USA congress in 2010 in which she told members they have been through hardship and difficult times especially with past international project failures.

"As time passes the economic pressure we face increases, so it is time for the committee to reawaken enterprises to fund Subud's activities. It is true that enterprise is hard to do and in the past created trauma in Subud circles. But when are we going to start again? Even if we pray all the time, we will achieve nothing without effort, as it is only then that God will provide the way..." (Ibu letter to SUSA June 2010)

But that now (2010..), it's time to let go of it, to move on, to return to our focus on worship and work and to look at our inner/outer development with fresh eyes. For Luqman the word that came up since then was rebirth.reawakening

Let our lives & organisation supporting us be born again, and he got this feeling of rebirth from visiting >



Hussein Dickie, David Anderson and Luke Penseneay. Hussein Dickie and David Anderson are, together with Annabella Ashby (Chair of Lewes), among those strongly committed to the St Annes project in Lewes

all the different groups. He also received that this is what is needed and gradually happening. This rebirth providing new courage and confidence to members...

He notes from Bapak's Talk in Sydney May 1982 that we can ask God (especially if we feel stuck) if there is more for us to receive – to help build our inner understanding & courage. But we do need to ask!

He also said something about unity, and what it means to move forward “together”, using the image of a boat race and the crucial point when all the boats have got to cross the line together. And your speed can only be the speed of the slowest boat so that we are all together when crossing the line.

[The Situation in Lewes](#)

As the discussion shifted to our situation here in Lewes, there had been perhaps a thread of negative feelings and doubt about Subud's future that comes up sometimes as we see the membership growing older globally or we meet difficulties in our organization.

After some circumlocution it seems there was an answer from Luqman on the lines of although we all sometimes lose hope or perspective, it's very important that we keep having faith and learn to work together with trust, as doubting is like opening the breach to fragmentation...

He was good at incarnating this hope, vivid energy, potential that we can reach if we manage to overcome the different obstacles on our way.

[A Story from Edward MacKenzie](#)

Edward Mackenzie then told us the story of a young man from a Subud family. When he was seventeen he asked if he could be opened. Edward suggested to him that Bapak had recommended young people to wait until they finished their studies at school, so he did.

He came back with the same question when he was eighteen, and Edward suggested perhaps he should wait until he finished his studies at university. A few weeks later they met again and the young man looked Edward straight in the eye and said, 'I want to be opened'.

Edward said, 'OK, give me a couple of days to organise some helpers.' The next day Edward got an email from him saying how he had stood up in his bedroom that morning and tried to let go and receive.

He received the latihan. It started by his being spun one way and the other, then experiencing a feeling of love for Almighty God and then a series of movements, which he recognised were part of Islamic prayers. In that first latihan this young man had received the core of the Subud experience: we receive it; it is from Almighty God; and we have to be diligent.

Edward recalls how joyful he felt hearing this as it illustrated for him that if it is the will of God that people receive the latihan they will do so. 'It was clear to me that this young man had 'knowings' inside him that it has taken me forty years to come to.

Bapak sometimes referred to those who were opened in the early days as being the 'doormats' for the Subud members who will follow, and I'm delighted to be a doormat'.

[The Future of Subud](#)

This story from Edward came as a nice answer to some of the worries about the future of Subud. The observation that the new generations don't start from the same place, in the spiritual realm, as those who came before them.

Edward also reminded us that we, as an organization, are going through a big transition, which has to do with being from a patriarchal model when Bapak was alive to a different one now and it takes time to make that transition.

Luqman found that Subud Lewes remains an example of a group whose enterprising members have established a unique reality and profile for Subud in a non Subud community. This is evident through the evidence of the New School, Pelham House and now the potential of the St Anne's Project.

I met Maya who attended the meeting the next day and asked her how it was for her. She said it was good to meet Luqman. It reminded her about the bigger picture that we tend to forget when we get very involved with our local projects, gave her a feeling of connection with the rest of the membership and refreshed her interest for the international congress next year as we evoked it at the end of our meeting.

(A big thank you to Luqman, Edward, Anabella and Maya for their comments and for editing the text. This article wouldn't be here without them!)

“*Incarnating hope
and a vivid energy*”

Mardiyah Tarantino: Writer

Melinda Wallis writes...

Mardiyah earned her master's degree from the University of Hawaii. Her essays, stories and poems have been published in newspapers, reviews and anthologies. She currently lives in Cathedral City, California, where she is a member of the Palm Springs Writer's Guild and the National League of American Pen Women.

Melinda Wallis: Can you start with a little bio of yourself.

Mardiyah Tarantino: I was born in Providence, Rhode Island, of a French mother and a father from old New England stock. At one point when my parents went to Europe, I was left at a French Convent for a year. Otherwise I was brought up in New England. Then we moved to Ohio when I was 14, and from there we went to California where my father taught at Stanford University. I've lived in France twice, in Indonesia at Wisma Subud, and in Hawaii for 20 years. I taught at the University of Hawaii — it was a big chunk of my life, getting that Masters degree at age 55 and then teaching at the University of Hawaii.

I've travelled to Spain, Morocco, and Uzbekistan. I have six children, fifteen grandchildren and three great grandchildren.

Whew! I know you are a painter as well as a writer — and a published author at that. But let's just focus on you as a writer. Do you remember when you started writing?

I've written for as long as I can remember. For any little occasion, I'd write a poem. When I was seven, I wrote a true account about crossing the Atlantic and seeing an iceberg. French was my first language, but I was bilingual from childhood and later would write in French and English.

But I could always write. It was a natural thing to do. I noticed that even when I was sick, I could write. I would forget that I was sick if I started writing something — poems, birthday poems, little speeches for special occasions.

Was there a moment when you started to think of yourself as a writer?

No, because I was always doing other things as well, such as painting. I never said "I'm a writer." It was something I always did. I just wanted to express myself, or entertain others. I like to entertain people! And I do like to write with humour and lightness, which is true to my nature.

Well I think it's good that you wanted to make people happy. Was there a particular form of writing you like best?

Prose. I've written poems, but I think only one good poem.

Have you ever had "writer's block"?

I've never had writer's block. But I HAVE written a lot of trash that had to be rewritten! I'd just let it flow out. I don't get blocked by my thoughts. I'm not a constipated writer. But I've learned to be careful with the finished piece. I wasn't always.

By nature, I'm a sloppy person, but here's a story about a lesson I got from Bapak:

At one point I was working in The Secretariat in Cilandak, working with translations of Bapak's talks. Once when I took him some completed translations, he taught me an important lesson. He sat me down and went over every little error I had made in the Indonesian and chastised me, making the point strongly that I needed to be more careful! I felt like I was being slapped by an angel! So — it was a good lesson.

Ibu Rahayu said "the human soul also touches human thought." She also said that "Bapak hoped that through SICA, Subud members who had a talent in a particular field would create something truly new or different, something that would touch other people, meaning people who are not in Subud, people outside Subud." So after you joined Subud, did you experience a change in your writing?

I have felt a widening in what I put on paper. I'm required to be more responsible for what I put on paper. The change comes in the way I use words. I learned from Bapak that words are powerful. There's a difference in words that come from the head, from the heart, and from the inner. It's our job to write words that are guided by the inner so that we can have a positive influence on others.

Before Subud there was just the words, after being in Subud, the words had content. >



Mardiyah Tarantino

An example: After Ibu Siti Sumari died, Bapak had us read the Holy Qur'an all the way through. (In Indonesia, it's customary to read the Qur'an out loud after someone dies.) The Indonesians would chant it in Indonesian, and then the English speakers would read the translation in English. I felt very moved and felt the content of it so deeply as I read. I experienced the power of the meaning behind words.

Was the change in your “depth of writing” gradual? Or does something new emerge all of a sudden? That “aha!” moment...

I do feel that! It's like a series of ahas! I'm aware of when that's not happening.

I know you also interview people and write about Susila Dharma USA projects. Do you feel that you are getting inner guidance when doing that? Or that you are guided TO do it?

I feel that this is something that I CAN do for SD. I can't do finances for them, God knows, but I CAN write for SD. It's important for SD projects to have witnesses. When I interview someone, I have a feeling that I can put myself in their shoes, I feel empathy for that person.

Tell us about your three books and what you went through to write them.

1. [Life At the Café Berlitz: A Memoir of Paris](#)

This book is self published. I wrote it in 2004. A part of the description from Amazon.com reads: "Life at the Café Berlitz is about the 'other' ex-patriates who lived in Paris in the 50s. These quirky and colourful characters ... were the author's 'bodyguards' during a decisive period of her life. They lived against the backdrop of post WWII France, when the Algerian war and existentialism were at their peak, and shared the Paris atmosphere with prominent personalities of the time — some of whom the author knew personally. This entertaining book is written with humour, pathos and a touch of the spiritual."

I was writing about the period of my life right before finding Subud. It was a time when I went through a major transformation. The last sentence in the book says: "I did finally join this latihan experience, as Subud people call it, and what happened after that, was like the swing of a compass needle back to true north."

2. [Marvelous Stories from the life of Muhammad](#)

This book was like a gift from my deceased daughter, Harlinah, who died when she was three months old, on Idul Fitri.

I was pregnant with her when I was travelling with Bapak and Ibu — six months pregnant.

I learned the Islamic prayers while she was alive during those three months. It was as if her spirit obliged me to learn the prayers. I wrote the book when I came back from Indonesia after thoroughly research the life of Muhammad, but it was a gift from her. It was published by the Islamic Foundation. Harlinah was my 6th child.

This was a major transforming event in my life, my journey with Harlinah.

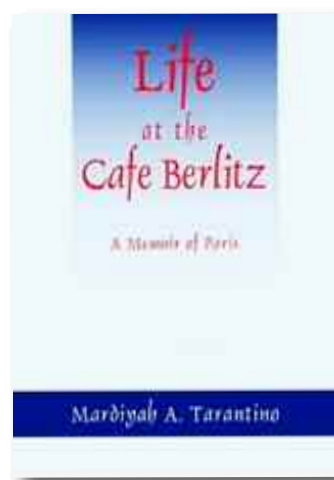
3. [Alice on the Home Front](#)

Being a child in the 40s had a strong impact on my life. I was inspired by the unity and solidarity which swept over the land during World War II. We children willingly joined in the sacrifices made by our parents on the home front for the soldiers at the war front. So that was my inspiration.

Alice is on Amazon on paper and Kindle. It's been advertised in the New York Review of Books and is in a collection housed in the World War II museum in Louisiana. It's also going to be in the Los Angeles Book Fest. It's doing well.

"In Providence, Rhode Island, at the height of World War II, feisty and intrepid eleven-year-old Alice, whose father and uncle are fighting in the war, is determined to make her own contribution to the war effort. Despite her mother's disapproval, Alice dreams of gaining recognition as an airplane spotter." — *Google e-book summary*

"A strong-willed, patriotic young girl growing up during WWII dreams of being a war heroine in Tarantino's heartwarming tale . . . a story for children and adults, full of historical details and humorous >



The cover of Mardiyah's book Life at the Café Berlitz.

“ *Before Subud there were just the words, after being in Subud, the words had content* ”

anecdotes." — *Kirkus Review*

Do you have any advice to give to budding writers?

Write as much as you can. Listen to what people say about your writing, and don't be offended by it. You may not agree with them, but listen. Younger people: write about anything, write all the time, get words on paper. My advice is to join a critique group that may be attached to the Writer Guild of your locale. It is so useful.

News from Orgiva

Andrew Bromley writes...

The year started with a mini invasion of members from the UK but with others from Greece, Zambia and Spain, and included three zonal reps. This unplanned gathering was to result in an unexpected and radical shift in our plans for the future.

Subud Alpujarra is based around a complex created 15 years ago which comprises 7 apartments with swimming pool and Latihan hall known as Portal de Jaramuza. Since that time 7 or 8 adjacent pieces of land were bought by members who built their own houses. We take this community for granted but what our visitors showed us was that it gives us a special character which is very nurturing for visitors.

And combine this with the ancient olive groves, the snow topped mountains, the ever present sound of running water, you have somewhere that is ideal for meetings, gatherings, holidays etc. Already there is an enterprise using two of the Jaramuza apartments as a Retreat Centre and 4 members of the group have holiday rental cottages close by.

In a very Subud way it became clear that the way forward was through extending our existing capacity for hosting gatherings and developing the Subud facilities.

We would aim to hold two main gatherings a year - a winter gathering when members from northern Europe could find some warmth in the 325 days of sun we get a year, and an end of Ramadan gathering as this is currently in mid summer.

This last was organised and well attended and we had 12 to 15 members at every night of power and 30 for Idul Fitri. For the nights of power we showed videos of Bapak's and Ibu's talks with subtitles in English, French and Spanish using a digital projector and 2 additional laptops. Already we have three bookings for the winter gathering. In addition we have been asked to host the Zone 3 meeting in 2014.

A group of the Orgiva members have been working all this year on proposals to extend the Latihan hall facilities. We currently only have the one hall which has a small kitchen, plus the possibility of using another, smaller meeting space a few hundred yards away.

So there is no 'social' area and no effective possibility of simultaneous Latihans. We have identified 2 local possibilities for creating the spaces we need, one is a piece of land with planning permission for the size we need and one is an existing house which would give us the required spaces with minimal conversion.

More details of the Alpujarra group and the possibilities here have >



Group meal at Orgiva.



House for sale at Orgiva.

been put on a Power Point presentation which has been shown at the Zonal gathering at Poio in northern Spain and the UK congress in Malvern. One result of the meeting in Poio was that it was designated a Zonal Project and a budget was agreed to support its promotion.

Since the January meeting 2 more families have moved to Orgiva and three of the Jaramuza apartments have been bought by members (from the UK). Plus an adjacent property with 5 houses has been offered to us if we can find buyers. From the Poio and Malvern meetings we have 7 or 8 people interested who will come out shortly to see the properties. One interesting suggestion has been that some of the apartments could be sold to groups of people. The cost of each will be about €150,000 so if 5 got together it would only be €30,000 each. Reynold Ruslan Feldman is looking at putting together a group - could this be of interest to you?

For more information contact Andrew Bromley at andreworgiva@gmail.com

“
A radical shift
in our plans
for the
future

Ramadan plus in Orgiva

Robiyan Easty, Zone 4 Rep, writes...

With immense gratitude to the team that has shown tremendous dedication in subtitled Bapak's and Ibu Rahayu's talks in at least 5 languages so far (available from www.subudlibrary.net).

Alhumdu Lillah, by the Grace of the Creator of all that exists, I had the good fortune to spend 6 weeks, bracketing Ramadhan, in Orgiva (near Granada) with the Alpujarras group.

In January I visited Orgiva for the first time. I went in my role as a zonal coordinator, following a clear feeling. I went with the general aim to foster greater links and movement between the two European zones and in particular to promote our enterprise venue at the Z4 meeting in Wolfsburg.

That gathering grew to include all three Area 2 zonal coordinators plus the chairs of Spain and Britain and other visitors. It turned out to be mainly about the group projects which had been on the table for some time and was instrumental in catalyzing the implementation phase which is now ongoing.

Testing at that time gave a strong and clear indication that it would be good for me to spend time in this magical place, so I later made the intention to go directly to Orgiva from the WSC/Zone 3 meeting in Poio in northern Spain and stay until after Ramadhan, having for many years wanted to do the fast in a peaceful setting as I used to back in England and in my visits to Cilandak.

I didn't know how this could happen, but it became a reality with the help of my dear brothers Muctar Nankivell, who lent me his house and Andrew Bromley, who has done so much of the 'coalface' work to make the Alpujarras group into what it is now.

My accommodation was a very cool and spacious house with a big patio and garden, right next to the latihan hall and about 70 metres from the swimming pool jointly owned by the residents of the little Jaramuza complex.

Swimming is a basic need for me, as is latihan in a big space, so this was close to paradise on earth. The therapeutic music of water running in the intricate system of channels built by the Moors many hundreds of years ago was omnipresent, still running right into August from the snow melt in the Sierra Nevada mountains,

Harvey Peters, zonal coordinator for English-speaking Africa, has left Zambia and will now be living in Orgiva. Between myself, Harvey and Bachtiar initially, and later Paloma and Carla, we had many sessions sharing our understanding of Bapak's vision for Subud, whether we have seriously drifted off track and what we could do better.

And shortly after the end of Ramadhan, the group, joined by Carla and Sergio's son Constantinos and Salvador, the current chair, had discussions about the projects the group is embarking on.

“
Sharing our
understanding
of Bapak's
vision”

Nights of Power and Subtitled talks

The Alpujarras group organized a programme for the 'Nights of Power' in Ramadhan with a mixture of >

Bapak's and Ibu's subtitled talks together with listening to the singing of Susila Budhi Dharma in High Javanese. We would phonetically follow in the book and then take turns to read out the explanation in English and one evening in French. Group latihan continued as usual because not all members were doing the fast.

We had French speakers and Spanish speakers whose English was not advanced enough to follow in a relaxed way, or at all. Accordingly, we had 3 screens. The main screen (projector) was with English subtitles, while we had a computer for the French and another for the Spanish (just 1 to 3 viewers on each, so laptops worked fine). The voice of Bapak or Ibu came through separate loudspeakers fed from the main screen and on the count of 3,2,1, go all three screens were started simultaneously.

The arrangement was a great success. For many of us it is if Bapak is talking directly to us. Even the asides to Sharif are captured and printed.

I have heard the view (though not in Orgiva) that the subtitles do not allow us to close our eyes and relax. Well, firstly, these subtitled versions are not replacing the traditional version, so we have a choice. This project started as a way to help second language members who previously had to sit through Sharif's translation and then hear a translation in their own language, something that put some members off watching talks at all. The time length of such a talk has now been cut to considerably less than half. Awesome!

Remember, too, that if you are watching at home and you can close your eyes and stop reading, you can then rewind and repeat what you missed.

There is another huge advantage to these subtitled videos which has not been stressed enough. You are getting the full authorized translation.

In the not too distant future we will have subtitled versions in every language in which an authorized translation exists. Maybe eventually we will have a drop down menu with a choice of subtitle language.

So once again. Bravo, bravo, bravo to the Team: Raymond Lee and all the translators, Raimundo, Elisa coordinating, Leonard at SPI for supporting the project and Vernon Contessa, the creator and administrator of the online library. ●

Beauty and order

Harris Smart writes...

Emmanuel Williams has produced a new anthology of Subud poetry entitled *The God's Eye*. Emmanuel is of course also the compiler of that marvellous collection of stories about Bapak, *An Extraordinary Man*. Someone had to do it sometime and he did it, He's also done lots of other books. There's one about sex, for example, "how to avoid it when it's not right!" or "don't do what I did!"

There are 63 poets in the book, I think. Isn't that a wonderful mystical number? Some think 7 is a mystical number, some think 9. 7x9 must be very special. Emmanuel says he did not choose this number deliberately. It was just what came in. No one was rejected.

This is what he has to say about this project...

This is the third Subud poetry anthology I've edited. The process has followed a familiar pattern: I put the word out using all the channels I can reach. I name the deadline, December 2012 in this case, and wait. The poems start arriving. The deadline passes, and they keep arriving. This week, well into April 2013, no new poems have arrived along with the recommendation that I contact so-and-so because "she's really good".

It's a joy. I love reading new poems by writers who are familiar to me, and I love reading poems by writers I've never read before. We're getting better at what we do, we Subud writers. There's a lot of really good poetry in this collection and I am pleased to have had the chance to bring it together.

This is not a literary magazine. Everyone who sent me poems was accepted. I decided to limit each poet to two poems. I asked for brief bios but received very few so I abandoned the idea.

Many thanks to SICA International for sponsoring this anthology. Profits from sales will be donated to the SYA International travel fund for young members hoping to attend the next World Congress. >

And thank you all Subud poets for sending your poems. Please forgive any mistakes I've made

How to choose some examples, some special bits? It's hard to choose from more than 120 poems by different authors. I know, I will open the book at random and see what lines my eyes fall on. This is what I got.

[Love's response to September 11th 2001 and beyond](#)

By Sept 26 2002

terrorists attack; death of thousands

I will fill my word with love

called unpatriotic

I will fill my world with love

deemed by ignorant voices, unrealistic

I will fill my world with love

“ A book to
keep by your
bedside ”

That is the opening of Norman Mitchell-Babbit's poem. To see where it goes from there, buy the book. Other poems in the book also address the significant events of our time. Emmanuel Williams himself has a poem about the Sandy Hook massacre.

As many people know, Kadarijah Gardiner has suffered for many years from a very serious illness. I decided to look at Kadarijah's poems to see if she had something profound to say about this profound experience.

She concludes her poem "Dying by Degrees" with these lines...

..... So they keep on working
Always working for more than
Eighty years! Poor things, all of them
The veins, tissues, arteries, lings, heart and all of them,
I don't blame you for conking out occasionally
But you see, we will have to move on soon
So we had better (much better!) sort ourselves out
Now and get to our proper place, all of us
So we can really "go home" all of us, by
God's Almighty Grace.

These lines seemed to me to show a fine attitude of what we in Subud call "acceptance". While you are at Kadarijah's poems, you might flick the page to read the two excellent poems about Summer and Winter Solstice by her husband Sharifin.

What I liked about the anthology is that the poets are really sinking their hands into life up to the elbows. They are dealing with real situations and tough feelings about the world and themselves. These are not vague gauzy "spiritual poems". These are about wrenching beauty and order from the often painful, confusing and intractable stuff of life.

This is a book to keep beside your bedside table and dip into again and again, sampling new poets, the people you know, and those you don't. Of course, it's always special fun to look up the poems of people you know and get new insights into what's going on inside them. So, that's what she's really like when she lets her hair down and exposes her innermost soul! ●



*Amelia and Emmanuel Williams.
Emmanuel has edited a new anthology of
Subud poetry.*

Self correction

A Talk by Mr. John Bennett given on 11th October 1959 (Series 111, No. 8) at Coombe Springs, Kingston, Surrey, England. We include it here because of its historical interest and because it is referred to in David Likas' article about helpers in our last issue...

In Bapak's book there are many references to the need for correcting oneself. The Indonesian word is *mengoreksi*. It simply means 'to correct', but really this is something which is the cause of very much confusion and misunderstanding. For example, people ought to correct their faults, but they cannot, and these faults come between what they ought to do and what they can... And we expect from one another things that we cannot do ourselves.

We say "So-and-so ought not to do that, or "Surely he could do this and refrain from doing that". Then we learn and come to understand that because both we ourselves and other people are really dominated by forces that are not our own selves – that have invaded our own selves – we cannot do what we ought, and that therefore we can't make the same demands of ourselves and of other people as would be justified, if we really could do what we ought – that is, if we could really be in command of ourselves, if we could really be the master in ourselves.

But when we know and begin really to see that this is not the situation – that I am helpless because this self of mine has been invaded by forces that are not human – when we see all this, then the question begins to arise: "How can we speak about something and what does this really mean?" And I think we all know that this has caused confusion to people in Subud, because they have been told – and have really begun to see for themselves – that we cannot change ourselves, but that what we require is a process of purification that does not depend on our action but on our non-action, on our accepting. And it seems, therefore, that the correction is something that has to be done for us by the action of the exercise.

That is why I wanted to speak about this, because it seems to me that we should learn to distinguish between purification and correcting. Purification is what has to be done in us and for us by the action of the exercise, in which we really can do nothing except to allow this action in us – an action which will put these lower forces back in their right place and enable the real self or the real "I" to become the master inside, and that master to be able to receive direction from what is beyond; that is, from the Spirit of God.

We have to distinguish between that action of the exercise and correction. That Bapak shows the necessity for correction is quite clear, both from his book and from many things he has said. It is also clear that correction is our responsibility and therefore must be something that we CAN do, because we should not be responsible for it if it is not within our power.

About correcting; one thing that must be clear is that we can't correct one another. We can't help one another in regard to correcting. You have heard, and may have even seen for yourself, that Bapak and those Indonesian helpers who have been with him will not correct people or point out mistakes or faults in them, except in the very rarest cases – either when it has become a necessity because of harm done to others, or when the person really wishes and is ready and able to be shown something.

People have asked – and I myself have asked Bapak about such and such an action – and Bapak has said, "No, that is not a right action, but this person who is behaving that way can't be shown or told about it, because they will lose the possibility of correcting themselves". This is because they can only correct themselves when they themselves see, and I believe that this is really really the secret of understanding about correcting – that it is something that can only come when we are able to see.

Being Shown and Seeing

And being shown is really an obstacle to seeing. That is why, as I have said, Bapak and other people with >



John Godolphin Bennett.

experience will not show people their faults, and very, very seldom, even when asked to, will they tell them anything about this. If we just grasp that – that people are not helped towards correcting themselves if they are shown that something is wrong with them – then we do begin to understand something about the difference between purification and correcting.

We all of us see something about ourselves, most people who have been following the latihan for some time begin to see as they never saw before; that is to say, they are followed the whole time by an awareness of their own faults, and they become very sensitive to the fault that they have in themselves and in their actions towards others – and with that, they have a possibility of correcting them.

I was trying myself to see what Bapak had shown us about correcting and I then remembered one particular example, I don't know where it was, but it was like this – it was a question that had come to Bapak about being critical of other people and of the faults and mistakes that other people make and isn't it necessary for us to see these things in other people – not to hide them from ourselves – and Bapak said, “No, we should not see other people's faults. If you begin to notice other people's faults, you must correct yourselves at once, so that you stop seeing people's faults”.

And a little bit later after that, I remember how one morning – I remember now more vividly – Ibu came down to visit me and Elisabeth at the Lodge and Bapak came a little bit afterwards and we sat together for a little time. Before Bapak came, Ibu spoke of this; how, if one sees that one is observing a fault in another person, one should stop this in oneself – and not see this fault in the other. She said also that if we begin to see the faults in other people then it makes it more difficult for us to see our own faults and then we lose the power to correct ourselves.

If correcting, then, is something which we are responsible for and which is possible only when we see our own faults, and if seeing our own faults depends upon a certain attitude of being really concerned with what is wrong with us and not what is wrong, or may be wrong, with others – then the question is: what is the correction that is required? To me it seems like this – that our real power is to keep ourselves close to the exercise; to remember that if we haven't got the exercise to protect us we come under the forces from which we wish to be free,

We may see that there is such a thing as fault-finding with other people. Very few people are really free from this. We may not even accept that this is a fault or a weakness; we may think that this is necessary – to be what we call objective towards people and not hide their faults from ourselves. We may even think that it is sometimes necessary to show other people their faults, in spite of everything Pak Subuh has said about this,

But then we may begin to feel that it isn't so, and that everyone of us is concerned with our own faults and not with other people's faults. Suppose we begin to feel like that, then how are we to correct this tendency that comes from within us and that, when we get experience in the exercise, we can always trace to some lower force in us?

A False Self

As Bapak has given us many times to understand, this kind of thing comes from animal forces in us that wish to dominate over others, or wish to be better, or to put ourselves in a different position compared with others. So we have a kind of false “I” or false self, which really belongs to the animal forces and not to the human, but which yet feels to us as if it were “I” and human.

We may begin to see this; that the really human self never compares in this way – that I am right and he is wrong – or something like that. As we begin to see something of this sort, we recognise that such an impulse is coming to us from lower forces; that it is not a human impulse to find fault with someone, or anything of this sort. That is the moment of correction, when the exercise will give us the choice to move one way or the other – either to be free from this or to go along with it. We either go into that line, which will bring us under the action of this particular impulse, or we go out of it.

Most people already know quite well and what is that change, which direction one has gone, and can see that that's really the point of the moment of correcting, that correcting is something that happens here >

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*We should not
see other
people's
faults*
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inside myself, not in what I say or what I do, because that will follow afterwards quite spontaneously as long as I have corrected this tendency to ‘fall down’.

I took just that one example of the tendency to find fault with people because it happens to be the one both Bapak and Ibu have spoken about. But of course it applies to all the things that one sees coming from the action of lower forces in us, To take an example, there is the tendency to care about things and to allow oneself to be influenced by things, when again one can see that at that moment there can be correction, so that one is not influenced in all the ways that are described in Bapak’s own book – such as being dominated by clothes, let us say, or by ornaments or something of this sort.

The reason I wanted to speak about this is that I do not believe that it is always clear to people that Bapak really does distinguish between two different things – that is, Purification and Self-correction – and that self-correction is something for which we are responsible, and which is only possible if we see and if we make use of this means which is present in us of returning to the exercise. For my part, it seems quite clear that purification and self-correction are quite distinct in that purification is the work of God’s power within us and self-correction is the responsibility of our own power that is in us. It is just because it is the responsibility of our own power that one person cannot help another in regard to this.

We can see, for example, in Bapak himself, something very unordinary, very different from the way people tend to look at things. Many of us have seen how Bapak will allow something to go that is really not at all as it should be, or allow people to continue to act – even to the extent of getting Bapak’s approval to some action – and nothing is done to show a person he is wrong.

As I have said to you earlier, Bapak when asked about this, said that if a person is shown that he is wrong, this takes away from him the possibility of correcting himself. This shows that correcting must be something very important, if Pak Subuh is prepared to let quite a lot of difficulties arise – confusions and misunderstandings and even people going away, perhaps entirely, from the exercise, because of something that has been said or done or that they have heard about the action – and yet, rather than take away from a person the possibility of correcting themselves, Bapak allows all that to continue. If it is really as serious a matter as that, then we have to see for ourselves how this correcting must be something really important.

Varindra talks to Youth

A talk given by Varindra Vittachi to young Subud members at a Zone 7 gathering. Varindra was the Chairman of the World Subud Association, a job he held for thirty years, from 1963 to 1993.

The gathering, hosted by Subud Montreal, was held in the first week of July 1992 at a convention center just outside Montreal, Canada.

(Editor’s note: Because of sound problems in the tape, small portions of Varindra’s talk proved inaudible and have been left out of this transcription.)

A young member asked Varindra what benefits are brought about by doing the latihan.

In reply, Varindra said the following:

After years of doing latihan, when the latihan starts bearing fruit, then you ask yourself, for example: “What has happened to me within the last three years? Has the latihan been beneficial to me or not?”

While it may take a long time for a person to be sure that the latihan has been beneficial, you recognize that clearly something has happened to you. I will give you an example of that. I used to be terrified of public speaking. Now, I don’t mind talking to 10,000 or 20,000 people. But before that, before I came to Subud, I really was terrified of public speaking. As a newspaper reporter, I clearly had to do something about that. So I used to write my speech down, word for word, and then learn it by heart.

Then one evening, not too long after I came to Subud, I was putting on my necktie preparatory to making >



Varindra Vittachi.

a speech, the most important speech I had yet made in my life – I was giving the Prize Day speech at my college. I had been expelled from that college, but events over the years had turned me into a Distinguished Old Boy of the college.

Just before entering the hall, my wife said, “You haven’t prepared your speech, have you?”

“No, I haven’t, have I!”

When the time came to make the speech, I made the best speech in my life because the great burden of wanting to be good, wanting to stand first, had fallen off my shoulders. I no longer cared if people liked what I said or not; I didn’t have to be admired. That’s a fantastic release, you know – never getting stage fright, or anything like that. That was the first actual proof I had that the latihan had benefited me.

Is there any other question you would like to put forward?

Question: I would like to ask Varindra about the ways he has seen Subud change and the direction in which he sees it going (big question!). One of my concerns is why young people, unless they grew up in Subud, are not coming to Subud?

Answer: I am glad you asked that. It is a big question, as you said. So let me take a little time answering it. I have five children. Four of them do the latihan. Two of them never go to a group. They loathe going to a group. And yet they practise the latihan. And I have seen that Subud has made them really mellow at a very young age – mature, but not precocious.

One of my children evolved into a groupie. He is now a budding journalist. He likes congregation. In fact, at one stage while he was at school, he wanted to become a Christian minister. I know of no one, no priest, no clergyman, who knows the Bible better than he does. He is inclined that way; he understands the meaning, the value of congregation.

Many of us are not joiners. It takes a special kind of experience and a kind of need, I guess, for people to want to belong to a group. That is the way Subud grows. But the question you are really asking is, I think, why more young people don’t come to Subud? One of the simplest reasons is that many Subud young people don’t come to Subud – children of Subud members don’t come to Subud. One of my five children, my son, he stays out. He is a very sincere young man – 37 years of age.

He tells me things that indicate to me why he stays out. I don’t probe, but sometimes he tells me why he stays away from his local group. He thinks that his mother’s friends, some of them, are a bit barmy. All their dogmatic talk; they are absolutely sure of the dimensions of God, and that God talks to them every day. Of course, any young man would consider this absolute rubbish.

And why do two of my other children who do the latihan, why don’t they go to groups?

My daughter, who is of the younger set in Subud, was in really bad trouble with her first husband. He used to bash her around, you know, really maul her; she was in really desperate trouble. She didn’t tell me this. Instead, she went to the group helpers who gave her this stuff, you know – you must submit to your husband. That kind of stuff. As a result, she walked out and never came back [to the group]. She does the latihan [on her own]. “God gave the latihan to me,” she said. “I do the latihan [rest inaudible].”

These are the reasons why lots of people do not come to Subud. We can’t generalize: many helpers are very good.

I would really like to see all of us who call ourselves helpers to remember, to realize that Subud, as Bapak saw it, is not a hierarchy, meaning a vertical hierarchy, with International Helpers, followed by National Helpers, then Regional Helpers, and finally group helpers. It is not at all like that. Rather it is a matter of scale; it is a horizontal scale of responsibilities, with the local helper as a kind of general practitioner, the home doctor, who actually associates with people [inaudible]. It is absurd to think in terms of vertical hierarchies [inaudible]. The group helpers are the most important of the helpers because they actually deal directly with individuals rather than institutions.

The point is that none of us in Subud, and this is a point you young guys should perhaps appreciate, none of us in Subud has any authority whatever. Bapak was a great political scientist; he was a radical political scientist. One of the things he said was that Subud is not a teaching, that all the teachings that are needed have been given by the great prophets. As I understood it from him, Subud is not a teaching; rather, it is a great learning. >

What I learned from Bapak and his explanations is really that we have no authority, but we have a great responsibility.

During my thirty years in Subud [as WSA Chair], I have never had any authority whatever. I can't fire anybody, I can't demote anyone, I can't fine somebody. There is no authority in my position [as WSA Chair]. It is the same with the helpers. None of them has any authority. And if they claim authority, they are misclaiming it.

I have said two things there. I have said that the helpers have no authority, but they do have responsibility. I think that when responsibility is carried out well, really carried out well, it has an authority of its own. Responsibility that is carried out well gives that person credibility. Now, for instance, I am a journalist. When I was a very young journalist, I talked often about the freedom of the press, about my right – the freedom of a journalist.

It was only after a while that I realized I also have obligations. I have the responsibilities accrued to being a journalist, and that unless I carry out those responsibilities, I have no right to that freedom. If there is a helper who does not appear to be carrying out his responsibilities, he will be in a lot of trouble because he is claiming an authority that he may actually have spoiled. In Subud we really should have no occasions like that.

We can talk about it, we can test about it, we have ways to resolve problems between members and helpers and between helpers and helpers without resorting to all kinds of [inaudible]. There are ways to do these things in a way that does not hurt anybody. Why should we hurt people?

Question : You were talking about your son, that his intelligence made him skeptical about Subud. You asked how have we changed. I think it was that the era in which most of our parents joined Subud was a lot freer, and that there has been a lot more logic in today's generation. I mean the more human beings figure out the answers to mysteries, the harder it is to believe in God.

People believe in themselves more than they believe in God. And so the further along we go, the more logic comes into it, and less the supernatural or a higher being. And so I wonder [inaudible] if the older generation had a need for spiritual guidance, a need which seems to have been lost in our generation.

Varindra: I see we are now into theology. Let's see if we can handle this one. You see it is very easy to set up a straw man and then knock him down. That is what so many so-called scientists do. They set up an old gentleman with a white beard in the sky, and then they knock him down. Most of the arguments about God's existence or non-existence is a setting up of a straw man and then knocking him down.

Bapak once said to us that we look for God in the clouds, we look for God on mountaintops, in caves, in temples, in mosques, and in churches. We are so busy looking for God that when God knocks on our door, we are not at the door to receive Him. Think about that one. Bapak also said that God is nearer to each of us than the vein in our neck.

I was talking at a meeting at Oxford University a couple of years ago. On the same panel as me was Carl Sagan, the astronomer. He switched seats with the guy next to me, and he said, "I have never heard a journalist speak like that. Where does it come from?" And I said, "Subud". He said, "Is it a spiritual movement?"; and I said, "Yes". He said, "I have not heard of it". I replied, "It is the smallest international spiritual group in the world".

He went on to say, "That was very interesting, that talk; you can't be a theist, you can't be a God-believer." I replied, "I know you are an atheist, and that you are sure of your position as an atheist, but I am not sure about anything, I always question everything. I thought that was the scientific attitude, not to be sure but to question."

He saw the logic of that because I was talking at the level of his logic. So he asked me if I would speak to his class at Ithaca, which I did, and he was very surprised to find that many of his students were asking questions just like you [the audience] are; that they are now more open to the possibility of another kind of world, another kind of reality, than my generation, which claimed to know the answers to everything. And look at the mess we have made of our world by these absolute certitudes of ours. >

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No
authority,
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responsibility
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Once Bapak told me that when the universe was first created, there was nothing except emptiness. You don't know what this emptiness is, he said, because you have never experienced it. He said that in this emptiness there was no light because there was no darkness. There was this emptiness and God. He said that you will never be able to understand how there can be nothing – and something.

God created the light and designed it as a vibration. This is the primary vibration that we receive in the latihan. Now this vibrating light creates material things, vegetable things, animal things, and human things. And these secondary vibrations have their own vibrations.

As we progress in the latihan, we should be able to distinguish in us this primary vibration that I describe to myself as 'butterfly wings' – very, very gentle. And since we are composed of material things, straight out of the earth, these outer vibrations are relatively much closer; and those are the vibrations that lead to anger, jealousy, all those passions in us... [But] we need these lower forces, because without these material forces we cannot move, we cannot think, we cannot anything. We cannot make a table, etc.

All that is being done by the latihan is to arrange and re-arrange these forces so that they serve human beings, rather than overwhelm human beings and use human beings.

So that is why I explain to people that you cannot help the latihan by other things you do.

I think it is very important to realize that recently – two months ago – some astrophysicists gave a story that British newspapers really understood the importance of. Indeed, the Independent, probably the greatest English newspaper in the world, gave their whole page one to this story – the story that the astrophysicists had discovered the 'ripples', as they called it, that is, the vibrations that followed what they called the 'Big Bang'. Astrophysicists had been looking for these 'ripples' or vibrations all the time. This is the same story that Bapak told, which is now being discovered by scientists. The astrophysicists actually went on to describe how these 'ripples' created materiality. So now it appears that science and spiritual truth are coming together.

Question: My question is about the word nafsu. Some people say that they don't like to use this word, to talk about this word. [Rest of the question inaudible]

Nafsu means lower forces. You guys, chaps of your age, are coming into a really different Subud world than the one we inherited. You must remember that we lived in the age of Bapak, the age of Pak Subuh, the human being. We were very lucky in many ways.

Maybe you are lucky in many other ways. For us Bapak was a reality, a live reality that we used to constantly meet. Let me say something that for me is true, which is that I used always to wonder why a guy like me who by no means is any kind of saint or a holy man of any kind lived in the age of Pak Subuh. For me, it was like living in the land of Jesus, in the Palestine of Jesus, or living in Mecca with the Prophet Muhammad. It was like that for me.

To be continued...

Bad Film Comics *continued*

From Sebastian Hardy (UK)...



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