

Awaiting My Opening

...with patience and growing awareness

By David A.

The opening process may be long and mysterious to newcomers. This was certainly the case with me.

Twenty-five years ago when I moved to Indonesia, I knew nothing of Subud. Even though I was surrounded by Subud influences for four years, I didn't feel any draw or natural pull.

I lived in the Jakarta suburbs near the Cilandak Subud Compound—only minutes away. My business partner lived on the compound that entire four years. Bapak gave talks on the compound and I attended. Wherever I travelled in Indonesia I was introduced to Subud mainstays, including Mark Week who became our company director and my personal mentor. And still I didn't feel any urgency.

Only when I decided to leave Indonesia did my interest in Subud grow. Those last six months brought an all-new unfolding interest in personal discovery. So finally, the Cilandak helpers met to test whether it was my time for opening.

Amazingly, they said 'not now'. Even with my enthusiasm, something wasn't right. So I left that four-year experience in the hotbed of Subud unopened.

I arrived in the San Francisco Bay area and slowly found members, and continued being a businessman. After more months, a few helpers again convened to receive whether I should be opened, but the answer again was 'not now'.

Only much later, after even more travel and business and reflection, I finally connected with Palo Alto members. And finally they tested my time, and this time it was 'now.' And that's when I knew the difference between those earlier receivings of 'not yet', when I could feel the growth that had taken place in me. Then I understood why 'now' had waited.

What's the optimal time for opening? Or place, or country? It's a mystery to me, and perhaps many others who want to explore Subud. What I know is that a certainty became clear to me just before being opened, when I recognized a potential within me for connection with my inner and God. Perhaps that's what finally was revealed to my helpers.

For newcomers to Subud, can this process of opening be better explained so that it's a contemplative and reflective time? The awakening of latihan can be abrupt and disruptive so shorter waiting periods are not the answer. How we explain the opening process seems critical to Subud's growth.