

AND NOW?

The honeysuckle this year is really fiery! I am almost spellbound as I look at its little pink, red and yellow fingers filling the bush that is directly outside my window. It overhangs an arch that leads into the little wilderness that is my garden; a garden of overgrown and well-established bushes and trees. Now that the house has been painted and decorated I suppose the garden will have to be tidied up and sorted next. I have grown especially fond of this honeysuckle bush. It has obviously been here a good few years – bushes like this take a fair while to get so large and striking. And it has been positioned so as to dominate the view outside of this little room which doubles as a dining room and my study. So I have watched the honeysuckle slowly emerge from the total greenery of early Spring into this eye-catching shower of beautiful colour that it is now. I notice many birds visiting it and pecking its little flowers, sometimes emerging along the stems with specks of red or pink all over their tiny bodies. The birds, I am sure, discover this bush to be both friendly and happy-making as they dart all over it; sometimes they notice me watching them but, so wonderful is their world that they pay me no heed whatsoever! For two weeks this bush looks enchanting: full and even vibrant. How sad I find it when the glory passes and my bush becomes ordinary again and I have to wait another full year for all this colour to reappear.

I have lived here for more than fifteen years now. I have seen another two children grow up and become independent with their own careers and families; I have seen a third marriage blossom, fade and end. I feel immeasurably grateful for all of this.

For the past four years I have lived on my own. All my adult life previously, I have lived with a family around me. Amazingly, I have taken to this solitude like a duck to water! When I was younger this would have been unthinkable for me but now in the latter part of my life I am mostly positive about it. I wake up about 5 a.m and spend the first hours of the new day sitting in a Quiet that is peaceful and undistracted. Completely alone I feel content and, within moments, happy! I watch the beauty of the light which is always changing and which brings both beauty and uplift into my life. Yes, the emphasis of my day has

completely changed. Previously, it would be dominated by people and activities with some, usually brief, pauses for Quiet and latihan. Now it is the other way round: hours of Quiet and moments of latihan are interspersed with a few people and necessary domestic and practical jobs. Yes, the focus of my life has changed so that the outer (of people and worldly activities) becomes permeated by the centred contentment of the Inner. And there is inspiration in it, too. And this inspiration has recently taken me completely by surprise...

For some time now I have been plagued by thoughts (and feelings!) about Subud. How strange this is!

For years now I have made a distinction between the latihan and Subud and seen myself as apart from the latter, though as keen as ever on the former. Indeed, I even stopped going to my little group for awhile and simply latihanned here alone or with just my wife. I returned to my "group" later but that consisted mostly of just myself and my best friend! In all this time I had very little contact with the wider Subud world: it did nothing to support my latihan and I was not sympathetic to its ideology or its practices. So to feel repeatedly now – often in my many times of Quiet as well as in my latihan- that Subud was ***desperately in need of a renewal*** was both surprising, and intriguing.

Why, on earth, should I be feeling this? What could I do about it? I asked myself these questions just about every time these inner "prompts" occurred to me. I found no answers. I was reminded of that time when I kept getting those thoughts that I should change my doctor which led to my being diagnosed with dangerously high blood-pressure. I remembered how glad I was that I acted on those "prompts" and these seemed every bit as insistent. So I decided I would have to do something....but what on earth could I do?

In the end I finally decide that one thing I could do was to check out Subud as it is now- and my feeling that it needs ***renewal*** – by doing what I have not done for years: I will go again to some of its meetings; talk to members outside of my local group i.e I would get involved a little again- after so many years- in the Subud community.

I could also write some articles for the Subud Journal which would be received by members nationally (at least). I will begin with 6 of the articles that were published...