

SOME SPECIAL SUBUD WORDS!!

Latihan, or latihan kedjiwaan: This is the Core of Subud and its special contribution to the lives of modern men and women and, possibly, to the world at large. I have never come across anything quite like it anywhere else! It seems to involve many of the elements of religious worship from all over the world and across the centuries, too – and more! In my own experience of the Latihan, I have spoken and sung “in tongues”; danced and chanted like an American Indian; prayed what were clearly Christian prayers (about “God the Father, Son and Holy Ghost”, for example); felt as if I were calling the world to prayer like a Muslim; and chanted in what seemed to be in various Eastern voices as well as like a Western monk! I have even felt as if I were from another nationality – French, German, for example! (I have always felt more compassion towards those nationalities as a result). My voice has, in fact, been used in just about every conceivable way. I have even danced and exercised in the Latihan: the former being especially surprising because believe me I am no dancer (usually!). I have also shouted, screamed and made hideous, ugly, horrible noises and physical movements. What does it all mean?

Two explanations are usually given. First, the Latihan can give modern, confused people the experience of religious worship. This may well be something that established religion has not been able to give them and may, at first, have no meaning for them. I have found this aspect absolutely delightful! I have experienced, through the Latihan, an exuberance of feelings that have given life a whole new dimension which is one of Happiness, Harmony, and even Satisfaction: I have felt secure and ecstatically happy: I have even felt closely connected (at one?) with the people around me and that is always especially uplifting. Second, the Latihan is said to be about the “purification” of the personality, so a lot of the Latihan experience is about one’s own life and development. For me, the Latihan has been a real Force for change in my own life, changing both my personality obviously for the better, and also changing the situation around me (several times, in fact!) I have also experienced the Latihan stimulating and guiding my understanding, too, and sometimes I have been so grateful for the greater perspective the Latihan has given to many situations in my life. I have also understood people around me better because of the insights the Latihan has given to me.

I also believe that the Latihan is not just about oneself but is a “spiritual impulse, or force”. Therefore, I believe it is closely connected with the people and the world around us as well. This explains to me some of the

apparent chaos of noise and movement that may be experienced in the Latihan. I believe that may be, not just the chaos we all carry in us, but also something to do with the chaos so common to modern life. If that is so then I am hopeful that there may be some help for our oh, so precarious world...

The Indonesian word **latihan** cannot adequately be translated into English. The nearest equivalent is probably training. It is often referred to as “exercise” although that carries with it the idea of some set form of work in which the will plays a large part and this is the very opposite of what happens in the Latihan where we simply surrender to the process. The training then given does not come from any intentional actions of our own. It is recognised that the Latihan comes from beyond ourselves in the sense that it is beyond what we normally experience as ourselves – that is our “normal” thoughts, feelings, wishes and wants. In “Concerning Subud” John Bennett says: “Indeed the sense of being alone in the presence of a great Power is the strongest and clearest element of the whole experience. It is that Power that gives new life to the soul, and not ourselves, nor anything that we do.” (p. 104)

Kedjiwaan or kejiwaan: is usually translated as spiritual.

Although the action of the Latihan Kedjiwaan seems to be largely an *individual matter*, some experiences seem to be common. A striking example is given of this in Bennett’s book: “Witness”. Here Bennett writes of the chaos that faced him when he went to Australia for the first time as Bapak’s representative. He was greeted at the airport by crowds of reporters asking him absurd questions (like “was Bapak the promised Messiah”!) and he was given a too heavy schedule of lectures and latihan to attend. He writes thus: “...I was uneasy, even miserable. Pak Subuh was seven thousand miles away, and we were alone. My faith in Subud and all confidence in myself had been drained away by the absurdity of our reception...Seething with inward revolt, I walked in (to the Adhyar Hall) and found about three hundred men and women filling the hall and waiting for me to speak. I have no idea what impression I made. I spoke for twenty minutes, and probably told them that it was not the explanation but the experience that mattered. With great trouble and in growing confusion, the hall was cleared...I could not get a moment to sit quietly and bring my disturbed and revolted feelings into some semblance of calm. After forty minutes, I went into the hall with the men. There were not far short of fifty (Elizabeth, his wife, went into another room with sixty to seventy women).

As I faced them, I said to myself: “They cannot possibly be opened. It is all wrong. I have no right to be here in this state.”

I pronounced the formula usual at the opening, asked them to keep their eyes closed whatever might happen, and commended myself to God. At that very moment, the hall was filled with a sense of Presence; an immense peace descended on me and I ceased to be aware of the others who were before me.

After ten or fifteen minutes, I opened my eyes and an extraordinary sight met them. Nearly all the men in the room were already responding to the *latihan*. More had happened in a quarter of an hour than I had seen in England in a month. In that moment I became convinced beyond all doubt that the Power that works in Subud has nothing to do with me or with any other person. I could no longer question its real – that is, its objective – presence. None of the men in the room had ever seen a *latihan*, nor heard any description of the reactions they might expect. And yet I saw them responding in just the same way as I had seen men in England and Holland, in Germany and America.

...Elizabeth and I compared notes. Her experience had been identical with mine.” (p.332)

Opening: simply the first Latihan that one attends. I have written of this in the text. Van Hien writes of this in: “What Is Subud?”

“Pak Subuh has explained that at the “opening” some form of vital contact is made which enables the soul to awaken, or which opens up a channel to the soul. When awakened it can develop and bring us into contact with the Spirit, which, if we will let it, will once more guide us into the way in which we ought to live. We will, that is to say, come to be guided by something higher than ourselves – “from above” instead of “from below”; from inside rather than outside.” (p.44)

The opening can take place in any room, in hired hall or private house (perhaps with the furniture pushed back) that is big enough.

It is important to realise that no one can induce the Latihan in oneself or another. Yet, it does seem most often to make itself known in the presence, or even just the proximity, of other people in whom the Latihan is already working. It maybe that other people can help us to prepare the necessary conditions *in ourselves* for the process to begin i.e. to help us to relax, be surrendered and suitably attentive for long enough. This may just depend on the individual’s own inner sensitivities and, if so, then there can be no hard and fast rules here.

It is said that most people are at first aware of nothing at all and then patience and persistence may be important. It may **eventually** be useful to

try some of the practices and suggestions given in the chapter on “Yesterday’s Latihan” further on in this book.

Here is part of an opening Statement suggested by van Hien:

“When presently we do the Latihan it is advisable to remove your watch, your spectacles and any hard objects in your pockets. There is no mystic reason for this. It is a purely practical measure to prevent these objects from being broken or hurting you.

When the Latihan commences you should stand quite relaxed with your hands at your sides. It is a good thing to close your eyes so as to be distracted as little as possible by what goes on around you. You should not try “to think” and you should not try “not to think”; in fact, you should do nothing but relax and receive what comes to you.

Now as to what may happen in the Latihan. Some people make movements of the head, the body, the arms or the legs. Some people walk, some dance, some run and some lie down. Some people make noises, some talk, some shout, some sing, some laugh and some cry. These are only a few of the possible *outer* manifestations.

Most important of all is to remember that some people just stand and may feel nothing; some have been known to go like this for as much as six months or even longer. If this should happen to you, you should in no way be discouraged. There is no merit or non-merit in movement as such and you should on no account try to copy others. Each of you will in due course receive what is best for you.” (p.46 “What Is Subud?”)

How then do you go about being opened? You contact your nearest Subud group, or member, or the National Office, presently at: 7 Grafton Close, Malvern, Worcestershire WR14 1PA or see the web: www.subud.org.uk You will be asked to wait three months usually before you attend your first Latihan. This is a time for you to meet as many Subud members as possible, ask as many questions as occur to you and to read some Subud literature to make sure that you know something about the Subud experience before you start. Van Hien sees this waiting time as largely to “deter the large number of people who are merely curious or impulsive” (p.38 “What Is Subud?”) Bennett writes that the wait is designed to “protect those who with the impulsiveness of ignorance are ready to ask for what they cannot understand, and to give confidence to those who have realised something of their own limitations.” (p.96 “Concerning Subud”) Both agree that the waiting time is not meant to be *inflexible*.

Testing: This is where a question is asked just before receiving the latihan in the hope of receiving an answer. Questions can be about anything and usually reflect a search for guidance in everyday life: about jobs, marriage, sex, friendship, children and so on. A normal way to start is to ask after a full latihan: How do I receive the answer “Yes”? and then just see what happens. This is usually followed by asking: “How do I receive the answer “No”? and once again just allowing the latihan to answer. Otherwise, one just asks questions of the Latihan and allows the Latihan to follow, as it will. The Latihan may respond in a variety of ways to the question asked: through a feeling of what is right, through bodily or voice responses which may carry feelings with them, or no strong feelings at all but more a simple knowing. I have sometimes received answers through seeing clear images in my mind after asking a question and starting Latihan. So, the answer does not usually come in words but in a sort of code, which Jacob Needleham describes as “the language of the individual’s own latihan, be it bodily movements, sounds, gestures, or simply a quality of perception. It is experienced as an inner feeling coming from beneath the usual inclinations and patterns of thought and the individual must be prepared to accept whatever appears, even if nothing appears.” (p.118: “The New Religions”)

Amazingly, I have had the experience of being totally clueless about the meaning of my receiving and have just given up trying to find an answer – only to find that the problem mysteriously solves itself. One memorable example of this is not mine at all but involved a friend who was having a lot of worrying problems with his eldest son. He “did not usually go in for testing”, preferring to solve problems “in the normal way” but this had not worked in this instance. If anything, the problems had got worse and they had been so long standing that my friend was feeling somewhat desperate. So, we tested and the responses were not clear to us and we were very disappointed. A week later my friend came to the latihan mightily relieved. Two days after the “testing” there had been a remarkable change in his son’s behaviour and things now “had never been better!” And the problems never returned. Suffice to say, my friend is now a convert to testing!

There are also some worrying aspects to testing, however. I have seen instances where the practice has led people to make some highly dubious decisions, to say the least. I have seen people test about their work so that they have given it up, no less, and then later bitterly regretted it! Clearly, mistakes have been made here. This has led to some Subud members refusing to have anything to do with it, in fact.

Testing has been invaluable in my life but I think it is always wise to have some checks on it. It seems too great a claim to make to say that one can, at any time, receive Guidance from the Highest part of ourselves that is untainted by those all too familiar personal elements of hidden, or not so hidden, wishes and preferences, for example. The usual Subud way is to test with a group rather than simply to trust one's own receiving. That has been helpful to me but, again, there have been instances where previous prejudices and judgements are clearly present in the group. I have sometimes got round this by testing blind as it were, along the lines of: "How would it be for me if I did what I am now thinking of?" and then I am the only one who has a clue as to what we are testing about! This has often been more convincing to me than the conventional way in which everyone knows what the test is all about (and can therefore – consciously or unconsciously – make up their minds beforehand). I do not like the current practice, which seem to be common now, of talking about the problem beforehand for the same reason. I think it is right for the individual to do this **outside of the testing situation** because that itself may solve the problem, especially if it is talked over with someone level headed who can clearly see the issues involved. I would sooner the testing be kept *pure* of all this opinion and talk, however.

For myself, I think there are a number of issues here which need to be clear, if the testing is to be as useful and effective as it can clearly be:

First, I think **attitude** towards the testing is crucial. I think it is necessary to go to the testing with an attitude of really wanting to find out the *right* and *best* thing to do for *all* concerned OR to have the attitude of really wanting to know: "A Higher Will here, rather than just my own".

Second, there seems to be a need to always be prepared to test lots of questions, rather than just the beginning one. I have lost count of the number of times we have begun with "I would just like to do a quick test about..." and then we have found ourselves testing a series of related questions for a LONG time before we really get the convincing answers we were looking for! So, obviously, there are often lots more to the questions that we test than we may realise at the time and we have to be prepared for that! It might be that "in-depth testing" is needed to get a properly balanced, or fully comprehensive, understanding.

Third, I think it is best *if possible* to test with people whose receiving one feels a respect for. Some of the effects of the Latihan are very easy to see: it may be that one can partly judge from how committed these people are

to their Latihan – by what they say and even how often they normally turn up for the Latihan! It may be that their past testing has been confirmed as insightful, or useful or true (that alone does not mean this time will be, of course!) What evidence, in other words, is there to suggest that the testing of these people, let alone yourself, is to be trusted? If there is none, or very little, I would not rule it out but I would certainly proceed with caution. I would not rule it out because the latihan is always capable of surprise. It may have something to do with the depth of a person's need as well as the sensitivities of those taking part. I remember testing about whether my wife should have an operation on her throat, which even the specialist seemed unsure about. We tested about it and the most convincing response came from a member who only decided to come to this latihan at the last moment (because he was only having one latihan a week at the time) and he himself was amazed at his own receiving: "I don't usually receive like that, or as clearly!" he said. I came away happy that I had my answer, my wife had her operation and all went very well for her.

I would wish also to apply the same "tests" to my own receiving as to other people's before I would give it much, if any, credibility with my own problems. It may be that we have to be receiving at a certain level before testing can really be helpful, at least consistently so. Questions about the strength and conviction of my own Latihan and the results, if any, of past tests would seem to be appropriate here. It maybe that one should work on deepening one's own Latihan before doing anything more than experimenting with testing, especially where the lives and well-being of other people are involved. I would encourage lots of testing as a means to try, as Bapak has said, to "get used to God's will" in our lives but I am sure that uncritically following our receiving, or worse that of other people, is not a good idea. Therefore, I would not agree with the idea often put about in Subud that you should not test about anything unless you are prepared "to do what the testing says". I think it is right to go into testing with a preparedness to follow all of the possible alternatives. I would still be reluctant, however, to follow anything suggested by the testing unless it is really convincing - i.e the testing FEELS convincing and helps one to see the problem more clearly and objectively. For myself, I am always reluctant to go by testing alone, unless clearly no damage can be done, to anybody or anything. When I am really up against it: when all the thinking, talking and planning in the world is getting me nowhere, I have found that a request that an outer sign, or guidance, be given to me has been effective. Sometimes that outer guidance has not been what I have wanted at the time but is proved to be right later. I think my present illness may be in that category. No

one wants to be ill but sometimes it may be the best option open at the time.

Crisis: a frightening- sounding word this one! It is, of course, not an uncommon phenomenon in the world's literature of religious experience (in the lives of the Christian Saints, for example). In Subud, a crisis is usually explained as being the result of spiritual greed, of trying to go "faster than God", perhaps by having more than the recommended number of latihan a week, or by mixing other practices, spiritual and others, with the Latihan. The latter is easily avoided by keeping all such practices out of the Latihan time. The first is a little more difficult. The safest way I suppose is to stick to Bapak's advice and have just two group latihan and one solitary latihan a week while at the same time welcoming the Latihan should it come spontaneously at other times. I think this is something that individuals can find their own way with to some degree, at least. Perhaps one of the best safeguards is the attitude that the will of the Highest in oneself be paramount. From my Jungian reading, I have come to respect that a crisis may actually be a *good thing!* It may, in fact, be the means "to force a person onto a new level of awareness"; it is seen as "an opportunity to become conscious, that is, to wake up to who we are as opposed to who we think we are"; it is "a challenge to see what is going on inside". Jung, himself said in 1959, talking to a group of Doctors in London, that a crisis was "an attempt of the self regulating psychic system to restore the balance, in no way different from the function of dreams – only rather more forceful and drastic." (All these quotes are from that extremely readable book: "The Survival Papers: Applied Jungian Psychology" by Daryl Sharp pp. 9 onwards). Finally, Daryl Sharp writes that a nervous breakdown, or crisis, "is often a necessary prelude to a more meaningful and satisfying way of life." (p.9) It may, in fact, be more useful to have such a crisis than to be "stuck" and unaware of any growth in oneself at all!

Subud: This is simply a contraction of three words: Susila Budhi Dharma. Susila means "right living"; Budhi refers to the "highest powers and capacities latent in man himself"; and Dharma means "submission to the Will of God". Taken together, they mean "Right living according to the highest that is possible for man in submission to God's will."

The Subud emblem: This is seven golden circles transacted by seven radial lines to represent seven levels and seven qualities, making forty-nine different states, stages or conditions (!) John Bennett says that this was revealed to Bapak as the symbol for the Subud Association, although it is not a new symbol, being "familiar in the Kabbala and elsewhere" Its

purpose is to “serve as a constant reminder of of the aim and the way that we follow”(p. 113 “Concerning Subud”) The circle is, of course, an ancient symbol of wholeness and endlessness.

The seven forces or powers: The highest three are said to be completely beyond the apprehension of the human mind. The four lowest can be described in words and images. First, is the material force i.e. the power of material objects; the second is the vegetable force, sometimes described as the “force of desire”; third is the animal force: the source of character (“some men have the character of a dog, others of a bull or a pig or a tiger. These characters are hidden by the external form and ...especially the mind.”); fourth is the human power. This explanation comes from Bennett’s “Concerning Subud”pp.112- 124) A fuller one is in Bapak’s book “Susila Budhi Dharma”.

Helpers: This was the name Bapak gave to those people who were to be his representatives because it was simply impractical for him to be everywhere, when needed, to explain about Subud and to “open” people who asked for it. It would seem to be a simple role based on practicality, not spiritual one-upmanship. Alas, in my experience, the way it works in practice leaves a lot to be desired. It often seems to become the very thing it was not meant to be. Bapak seems, at times, to have been aware of this and he could be quite critical of the Helpers, blaming them for not being a good example and not doing their job properly. He once told them they were not real Helpers- just “emergency Helpers” because people were needed to organise latihan and openings all round the world and there simply was no one better to do the job. That still seems to be so. I think it is time now to either take this to heart by stating the fact over and over again – in publications and meetings – that being a Helper is a simple and clearly defined role with NO spiritual authority whatsoever. I honestly doubt whether even this will work and that is why my own solution is to abandon the structure altogether. Latihan, openings, giving the basic information, attending larger meetings, about Subud could be done by each *willing* member in turn if necessary!

Perhaps not surprisingly given the possible - and misplaced! - status of the job, there is no shortage of people wanting to be Helpers (unlike the other jobs – treasurer, secretary, Chairperson, e.g.) This seems to have required the advice, late in Bapak’s life, to be more specific about the requirements of the job. It began as simply as this:

“Usually after a few months, (any) difficulties have been overcome, and trainees understand clearly that their freedom of choice is never for a

moment removed from them and that there is no danger at any time of losing consciousness. They also become convinced that the action in the latihan comes from within themselves and not from any other person. When this stage is reached, people are authorized (!) to continue the latihan alone in their own homes. Usually, they can then become helpers for others.” (p. 107: “Concerning Subud”)

Now it is recommended that Helpers should be a number of things: experienced in the Latihan (sensible but, alas, often just simplified to mean being a Subud member for seven years!); of good character (surely preferable!); really loved by the members and can pay attention to the needs of others (a difficult one but again surely preferable); a member who is really willing to keep watch over the unity of the members under his care (All from the “Helpers’ Handbook” p.29). Unfortunately, unity is often interpreted as maintaining the mainline view and seeking always to be “harmonious”. The latter deteriorates, all too readily, into no “healthy” debate or outer change but rather the maintenance of what a friend of mine calls: “that unmistakable and common saccharine cream of Subud harmony!” The bit I like from Bapak’s advice, as given in the “Handbook”, is: a Helper should be a member “who promises he will not give explanations that are contrary to the experiences he obtains from the latihan kedjiwaan of Subud” (p.29) *His* experiences are important then? Well only if he does not “deviate from the regulations established...such as practising some spiritual teaching and mixing it with the latihan...and giving members advice which deviates from Subud” (p.37) If he does not “submit” to this, then he can be made “inactive”. Fair enough, huh?!

The whole Helper structure is even more complicated than I have said earlier in this book because as well Group, Regional, National, International Helpers there are also “Zone Councillors” and “International Councillors”...all this for such a small organisation!

Prihatin: a touch of asceticism here: a cutting down on “eating and sleeping, marital relations and all kinds of pleasures” seen as “very necessary...to obtain an improvement in one’s fortune in life” (p.89: “Helpers’ Handbook”). This is, of course, a common practice in most religions. Bapak and Subud members speak a lot about the Muslim fast of Ramadhan and, occasionally, someone talks of the Christian Lent which Bapak has also spoken of as having real importance, too.

Bapak: a Javanese term of respect for “father”. Used in Subud for its founder, an Indonesian called “Pak Subuh”. A man who seems to have had some amazing and important experiences which led, eventually, to

the founding of the whole world-wide Subud organisation. The following facts I have gleaned from the various Subud books already mentioned:

He was born in 1901 and was first named “Sukarno” but this was changed when a wandering beggar declared it to be the wrong name for him and that he should be called: “Muhammad Subuh”. The name was changed and the sickly child became healthy! (Such is the importance of the right name, huh?) He was born a Muslim and stayed a Muslim all his life. He seems to have had “powers” like “clairvoyance” from early on.

There was a prophecy that he would die at 24 or 32 and this led to his seeking spiritual guidance from various teachers, all of whom seem to have said that they could teach him nothing and that he would be taught directly by God.

Between the ages of 24 and 32 there occurred a series of happenings that were to clarify the purpose of his life. “One dark, moonless night in 1925 he was walking outside with some friends when a ball of light more brilliant than the sun seemed to enter him, filling him with radiant light and vibrations. It is recorded that others, too, from far away observed this extraordinary light and made enquiries the next day as to what it could have been.

There then began for Pak Subuh, during a succession of about 1,000 nights, the experiences we know as the “Latihan” – a purifying and cleansing process which (in his case) allowed him little sleep at night but nevertheless gave him the strength to carry on with his work the next day.

He did not understand what all this meant, and was, if anything unhappy at the thought of receiving something which was not available to others.

It was not until his thirty-second birthday... that he received ...a revelation...that it was to be his mission and task to transmit to others the same inner working of the spirit that he had received. He was not to go anywhere unless he was invited and he was not to give this “contact” unless he was requested to do so. It was to be given to all who asked for it.”

Soon afterwards, all the pupils of a Sufi teacher came to him asking for this contact which they said their master had told them to request. This is how Subud began.

Bapak then gave up his worldly work as a book-keeper, much to the dismay of his family. Interestingly, the result of this was that Bapak and his family were to be better provided for than even his severest critics who were naturally worried about how Bapak and his family were going to survive!

As early as 1932, Bapak knew that there was to be another World War and afterwards he would be required to travel around the world to spread what he had received. Quite by “chance” the first Westerner, Husein Rofe approached Bapak for spiritual knowledge and he was opened. From him

the Latihan went to Cyprus and then to England. Again, by “chance” there happened to be an international seminar there and that is how Subud became an international organisation!

What a man! What a leader, too! A man who had a wealth of experience of the Latihan far beyond anyone else, it seems – experience that was not only to do with his own personal life but also with the setting up of the Subud organisation as a vehicle for the spread of the Latihan. As a leader of such a movement he was so obviously without those awful traits that seem to have been part and parcel of so many “Guru-figures” of modern times. He was a religious man; a moral man. He has never been accused of exploiting anybody for gain, financial or otherwise. He was obviously sincere in his wish to follow the will of God as it was revealed to him, so much so that he gave up the security of his job, believing that “from now on God would provide”, and travelled from Indonesia on request to a completely different world where he found himself in the company of clever, intelligent, intellectual people from all over the world. Suddenly, he found himself being looked up to, respected by, so many of these “strange” people! I feel a tremendous respect for this man who had undergone so many special experiences, who did his best to do the will of God rather than simply his own and was able to cope so impressively with a world-wide audience in this way! I think the history of religious movements, especially in recent times, makes it clear that Subud could so easily have had a much less honourable, respectable and admirable a leader than Bapak.

The Bapak I like the best is not the one mentioned in the same breath as “the prophets” because, like a lot of Westerners especially, that does not mean anything to me, nor does it impress me. I am won over by the Bapak who makes no claims for himself, except to be a normal person “like all of you!” and who simply has the job of making the Latihan available to anyone who requests it. Anything more than that becomes, to my mind, an unnecessary complication, fraught with dangers, both to Bapak himself – there must have been the very human temptation at times, at least, for him and his family, to see him as Someone more Special than anyone else: a case, then, of what might be called “ego-inflation” – and to ordinary members who so easily can become over-dependent on a father-figure and by so doing regress, psychologically speaking, to a less mature state which consequently holds back the needed growth and “self-individuation”! My plea is: let’s get back to Bapak, the ordinary man who had some extraordinary experiences that gave him his uniqueness and the right to be listened to, yes, but not

uncritically or mindlessly followed; nor must it be allowed to stop us from finding that all-important “Inner Guide” for ourselves.

Enterprises: This is a very important word in Subud and is mentioned in just about every talk Bapak ever gave. Back to the “Helpers’ Handbook” again:

“And so we come back again to this one thing that Bapak always advises us – to work in enterprises, which means anything that is work, that is movement, that is life, that uses our heart and mind and all our faculties.” (p.129)

It is quite clear that Bapak sees Subud as being an *active* force in the world and that Subud members will be “out there” energetically involved in the world’s business. Success here is seen also as a means of funding Subud’s progress in the world: in providing the finances for owning more Latihan halls and funding social and charity works and the expenses of travelling Helpers and others.

Yet, enterprises are not seen as just money-making concerns “but rather they are a training ground to get Subud members used to receiving the guidance of God Almighty, both in the kedjiwaan and also in their outer life. So that to do enterprises for us is not only for the purposes of this world – it is also to be able to carry out the word of God, or the command of God in this world.” (p.130)

Bapak can be both realistic and practical about all this, recommending, for example, that problems in enterprises be, not taken to Helpers for testing, but rather to “experts” in the field.

What an exciting idea this is: to live with the Guidance of God, as discovered through the Latihan, in one’s worldly work and life!

Unfortunately, Subud has had, at best, a very limited success with this: “So then why is it that in your enterprises you always fail? When you do Subud enterprises very often, not always, the enterprises go downhill. And Bapak says the reason for this is very simple.

“It is because you still try to do your enterprise with the kedjiwaan. You think that in doing your enterprises you must still use the kedjiwaan to work with. Bapak says that is completely untrue. If you do your enterprises you must use your heart and mind, and not mix it with the

kedjiwaan... You do not use the power of God to succeed in your enterprise.” (p.129 “Helpers’ Handbook”)

There seems some confusion here. One moment Bapak talks of receiving guidance for “both the outer and inner lives” and enterprises are carrying out “the word of God in this world” and the next he seems to be saying keep the outer apart from the “kedjiwaan”.

I think what is meant is that any work, enterprise or action in the world is to be carried out in the normal way, using thinking, feeling and the necessary skills needed as fully as possible. In other words we should not work less energetically, thoughtfully, wilfully etc. than other people in these things. *We should not expect the latihan to do everything for us: we have to use our talents, hearts and minds in the normal way.* So, how then are these enterprises different from what the most worldly and non-spiritual of people are doing? ***Because the Latihan may be actively supporting them:***

- simply by its strong presence in the people concerned and this requires members to stay “close to the latihan in their daily lives” (see Appendix 2) and
- by giving the necessary initial inspiration and then ongoing guidance which the heart, mind and will then have to implement. I think one of the reasons for failing enterprises is the underuse of the Latihan in these two ways! I see this as being at least as important as using the normal faculties as much as possible. I think the two should go together in a Subud enterprise. Bapak says the two should be kept separate; he does not say that either should not be involved.

The latihan is the heart of Subud: I believe the idea is that it becomes the heart of our whole lives: that we learn to live close to the Latihan and try to remember It as often as we can. So I come back to the main point of my difficulty with present-day Subud: the real need is for all of us to seek to focus more on our Latihan and to try to deepen our experience of It. ***I think the more we do this then the more we may have the experience of the Latihan guiding more and more of our lives, even when at its most mundane. It can certainly give guidance and, sometimes miraculous, support in our work, or enterprise, in life.***

I can see that it has certainly done that for me in my career! And I believe what happened with me is a good illustration of what is meant by

“enterprise” and “using all of our normal faculties”. Before Subud came into my life I had concluded that I had gone as far as I could in my career and I expected things to stay that way. But my latihan had different ideas. I had one memorable latihan in which the image of an old-fashioned sailing ship dominated so that I was forced to take it seriously and to think about it. As I did so, I realised that this ship symbolised my career which was presently “on the rocks”. I felt sorry because it was such a beautiful and intact ship. Then I realised that if it stayed where it was then the ship would go into decline and eventually sink without trace- *just as my career would if I did nothing about it!* I then saw that I could easily get the ship out of danger because I had all that was necessary already to do so: I simply had to use what I already had: my talents, heart and mind! I had to DO something; I had to make efforts ie act in the normal way. When I did this the way became clear to me and much to my surprise I was promoted (twice!) and now feel that my career has been the clearest evidence I have of the inner and outer coming together. This was to involve testing, inner prompts- inside and outside my latihan- intuitions, the wherewithal to act and – as this book shows- a fair amount of outer opportunity and synchronicity!

I believe the Latihan was involved in my career as soon as I was opened: it gave me, through the sailing ship image, understanding that I had the necessary skills and qualities to go for promotion, that I had to USE those skills and MY WILL, otherwise my career “would sink without trace” (the Latihan would not do it all for me: I had to use what I already had but was not then using fully!); then the ideal outer opportunity was “coincidentally”, or fortuitously provided; then indications were given to me about the job – in both my latihan and in testing sessions – and, more importantly, the power to carry out those receivings was given to me, even when I, myself, doubted that they would be! I see that the latihan was probably closer to me and more actively present in my work than perhaps anywhere else in my life.

I have just, by chance, read one of Bennett’s early comments about Subud that seems very apt here:

“Indications are often received in the exercises that show what is necessary for one’s inner and outer lives” (“Concerning Subud p.54)

I would say that if such “indications” are not being received then what we are about is NOT a Subud enterprise: it is no more than what the whole world is already up to, sometimes succeeding, sometimes failing, with

little, or no concern for the rightness of it all, or the meaning of it all beyond making money or a profit. Subud is plainly about more than that!