

## IS THIS THE TIME FOR A SUBUD RENEWAL?

As well as writing these articles, I had decided I could also engage once more with the larger Subud community around me. First meeting coming up is the Regional Kejiwaan Day: a time for all members and helpers in the region to get together and to focus on the latihan and testing problems, concerns, current issues etc. Yes, this seemed a good place to start. I am pleased that there are no formalities required in order to attend: I can just turn up unannounced and join in. Great!

The meeting is due to start at 11 am. I arrive at 10:40 and the place is deserted! 3 other men eventually turn up- one looking as if he has just got out of bed! I later learn that there were several more ladies but I do not see any during the whole time I am there. I am told, on another occasion, that there are usually less men at these *Regional* Latihans than at an ordinary group latihan here during the week! Thankfully, my latihan is really strong and beautiful- it is the saving grace of my visit. Then after latihan, the men relax for what seems like hours (one lying on the floor- is he really snoring?!) We all look tired and in need of this sleepy time. Gradually, someone gets up and leaves; I say a few words to one person...and the day is over. I have driven 50 miles for this!

Well, I certainly feel that things have deteriorated since I last attended a Regional Kedjiwaan Day several years ago! Then the day began with about 20+ men and women sitting together in a large circle with some talk about the day ahead or some sharing of news of the wider Subud world. Then there would follow the latihan and general testing about things that concerned everyone ( a test that Bapak had done, eg, or a test about understanding something that concerned us all etc) After lunch there would follow time and space for personal testing which left some others free to chat or explore the locality. After this, everyone got together in the circle again to share their experiences of the day or anything else of interest. The day would end late afternoon with a few minutes of latihan again before everyone left for home. What a contrast! Now a handful of men turned up for a latihan and some testing (if anyone could think of any!) and then left. The men and women did not seem to want to get together at all and so barely even saw each other.

When the next Kejiwaan Day arrived, I took my thoughts and concerns into my morning Quiet and wondered whether I should go again or not?

Within minutes I again experienced the annoying, strong feeling that *renewal was needed in our region*. Slightly annoyed I wondered what I could do with this feeling? Share a strong latihan came to me, firstly. Yes, hopefully I could do that. And then came a surprise: the Region “needed a “get-together” somewhere central to the Region.” Now that made me sit up: yes, that seemed a good practical step, I thought. The only problem was I was loathe to take any sort of lead and suggest it- probably because nothing I had suggested in the past had been positively received. So, I made up my mind that I would go to this meeting again but I was not going to initiate anything without a prompt from somebody else! I was clear that the lead would have to come from somewhere, or someone, else.

I now began my hour+ journey feeling interested!

Well, the day started just as the previous one. There were 4 men there this time. Again, we had a long “doze” to start and then a strong, beautiful, uplifting latihan. Afterwards, a quiet sleepy period followed again. I waited for something to be said now that would spark off some testing. After my feelings this morning I was sure something was going to happen this time. But what was this?! One man got up and left the room; then another behind him. They were having a chat in the room outside the latihan room when the remaining man and I began to talk. We talked about days like this “years ago” and we were reminded of some of the tests that were done then. He mentioned testing about the “state of our region and what the region most needs at this time” Suddenly, he had a burst of energy.

“We should do that test now,” he said and ran out of the room to call back the men who had left and were now walking out of the garden to their cars. He succeeded and soon we were standing in a little circle, ready to test. True to my word I said nothing ...until one man said quite clearly that he felt that what the region needed was –and I use his exact words- “a get-together, somewhere central to our region” You could have knocked me over with a feather! Was he really saying this? Yes! And the talk now was where that “somewhere central to the region might be”? And here comes the next part of this rather amazing story...

It seemed that my group was, in fact, the most central of the groups in the region, so I was asked if I would look for a Hall that would suit us. I had no hesitation in agreeing- well, that lasted until I was hurtling home on the A11! Then it hit me just how difficult that might be! I remembered how much trouble we had had finding premises for our little group to use and now I was to look for a bigger place that would –and here was an added difficulty- be available on a Sunday. (Regional meetings were always held on Sundays when church halls like ours were obviously not available) Oh dear what had I taken on? Oh well, I decided, I would first of all ask around and see if anyone I knew had any ideas. I was on my way to my daughters now so I wondered about asking her. I did not think she would be able to help. She was not a particularly sociable type of person and anyway she had enough to do looking after her three young boys! Nonetheless I did ask her and once gain a feather would have been all it would have taken to knock me down.

“Well, that’s funny,” she said, “I have just become Bookings Officer for our local hall! Yes, I thought I would like to do something for the community and this is what they asked me to do.” I could hardly believe what I was hearing! Anyway, I went with my daughter to see the hall. It was ideal for us: it had a huge room, two other smaller latihan rooms and all the usual facilities. It was also set in a beautiful part of the Suffolk countryside with fields all around. And close by was a brand new children’s playground! So, on the same day as the test about finding such a hall, I had a hall booked! So it all could not have been easier for me!

We have now had several happy meetings here, including times when we have been able to have our picnics sitting on the grass by the play area, looking across the fields up to the horizon. Best of all, no-one has had to journey much more than an hour to get here and this has allowed two more groups than usual to send members because they had found previous meetings just too far for them to travel.