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## THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF PSYCHIATRISTS

### SPIRITUALITY AND PSYCHIATRY SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP

#### Newsletter No. 3, March 2001

Dear Member

Welcome to the third newsletter of the SIG, a full edition we hope you will enjoy reading.

Thank you for the positive feedback we have received about the newsletter, which is encouraging. Besides the reports of meetings, we are glad to include book reviews and notices you have sent to us. Please do send in your comments and views as we are aiming to make the newsletter both informative and "interactive" for members.

Again, please remember to return the reply slip at the end of the newsletter if you are able to come to the meeting on **May 4<sup>th</sup>, 2001** on "**Engaging the Spiritual Mind.**"

Warmest good wishes

Gillian Broster, Daphne Wallace, Andrew Powell (*editors*)

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## **Report of meeting of SIG on 26.1.01 on "FORGIVENESS AND RECONCILIATION"**

The meeting was chaired by Professor Andrew Sims and Dr. Andrew Powell. There were three speakers in the morning, the afternoon being used for questions and discussion. This was the first time that guest speakers had been invited who were not members of the SIG. It was an extremely informative and thought-provoking day with the morning talks giving rise to a very stimulating and wide-ranging discussion in the afternoon. All three speakers kindly provided abridged texts of their talks, which we have reproduced for the newsletter

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### **'Forgiveness and Reconciliation'**

By J Dominion F.R.C.Psych

I start with a resume of my psychiatric training and work because it forms the background of my paper. I started my psychiatric training at the Maudsley in 1958, achieved my D.P.M. in 1961 and became consultant psychiatrist at the Central Middlesex Hospital and Shenley in 1964. After qualifying, I had a Jungian analysis but did not proceed to an analytical training. I read extensively the dynamic literature and in the last forty years have proceeded with an eclectic therapeutic approach, which includes a great deal of psychotherapy. My main specialised interest has been marital pathology and marital therapy, and it was with reference to my marital work that I became interested in forgiveness and reconciliation, apart from its centrality to the Christian faith to which I belong.

At the heart of forgiveness is the reparation of a broken relationship and as such it is crucial for human relationships and for those between states. It is in the interpersonal relationship of marriage and other intimate relationships that I am familiar with conflict, forgiveness and reconciliation. From the start of marital work, I was struck by the difference between couples who angered one another and yet resolved their conflict quickly and completely, and couples who, after a quarrel, sulked for days and weeks and who could not forgive.

Dynamically, I was, and am attracted by object relations theories and at the heart of these stands Melanie Klein. As some of you will be aware, central to her work are two early positions, covering the first six months of life. The first three months she calls the paranoid-schizoid position. Klein postulates that the baby goes through a range of good and bad feelings, identified with the full and empty breast. When the baby is fed and satisfied, it feels good and its anxiety abates. When the breast is empty, the baby too feels empty and bad. Klein postulates that the baby deals with its bad feelings by projecting them outside itself, hence the term paranoid, from whence the baby feels persecuted. At this stage the baby does not know what to do with these persecutory feelings.

In the following three months the baby experiences the breast and thus the mother as a whole and can tackle its bad feelings with reparation. The young child experiences repeatedly persecution, loss, guilt and reparation. I know many question the validity of Klein's theories on the early months but we can see it in adult life with the persistent projection of bad feelings in paranoid people and the capacity in mature people to deal with anger and hurt by making reparation.

For me, this Kleinian theory is at the root of one explanation of forgiveness. The young child, but all of us, have to juggle with the mixture of good and bad feelings in us

and, on the balance between the two, emerges our self-esteem. With the word self-esteem, I come to the main dynamic proposition of my understanding of forgiveness. Our capacity to forgive, the ease, speed and endurance of our forgiveness are related to our level of self-esteem. The more we love and accept ourselves, the greater is the psychological room inside us to adjust to the hurt, compensate for it and to forgive. The lower our self-esteem, then the room for compensation and adjustment is less, the bad feeling more intense and our capacity to forgive reduced. Self-esteem is the key to forgiveness in the sense that the balance of good and bad feelings within us determines our ability to accept hurt without being overwhelmed, and to have sufficient resources to support our ego.

Klein was not the only contributor to our understanding of self-esteem. Winnicott, her contemporary, stressed the nursing couple and the baby's experiences of being touched, held, caressed, talked to, fed and cleaned as a powerful source of good, affirmative feelings which enhance the child's self-esteem. Erikson described the second and third years as the autonomy phase when the child learns to talk, to feed and dress itself, to walk, all of which, if properly encouraged and executed, add to self-esteem.

Finally, I come to my own hero, John Bowlby, whose theories of attachment have revolutionised our understanding of the personality. Bowlby dismissed the libido theory and instead placed attachment at the heart of the child's growth. The mother is the secure base from which the child gradually separates, always returning to her for solace and comfort at times of distress. The security of attachment is a powerful source of self-esteem.

I have no doubt that this view will stand the test of time and will become one of the cornerstones of dynamic psychology. Self-esteem also grows at the cognitive level of progress at school and later on at work. We can surmise that self-esteem and the capacity to forgive is an amalgam of dynamic growth and intellectual development at school and at work.

I have concentrated on the positive development of self-esteem but we are all familiar with the many ways in which things can go wrong with this growth. The commonest pathology that influences self-esteem is of course depression, which affects one in four of us at some time in our lives. There is an intimate link between depression and anger. Anger can turn inward with an attack on self-esteem, leading at the extreme to the complete lack of forgiveness of self, an overwhelming sense of guilt and finally suicide.

In the Christian tradition, we are told to forgive in an unlimited way. What we are not told is that forgiveness is not enough. This can be observed in couples that are constantly arguing and then forgiving each other without examining the reasons for the conflict. Beyond forgiveness and reconciliation is the need to understand the underlying roots of the conflict and to do something about them. What spouses, partners and friends can do, and all therapists try to do, is to heal the underlying wounds.

I close my paper with an example that I wrote up as a book, entitled "One Like Us", a psychological study of Jesus. In it I postulated that the upbringing of Jesus in the hands of Mary and Joseph was so loving that, humanly speaking, the personality of Jesus was the most loving one the world has ever known. His love of himself was so complete and so was his self-esteem that He had a profound capacity to forgive and, from the cross, He forgave those who crucified him in a total act of forgiveness and reconciliation.

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## **'Forgiveness: Psychological and Religious Aspects'**

By Dr Fraser Watts, Starbridge Lecturer in Theology and Natural Science,  
University of Cambridge.

There is now a widespread programme of empirical research on forgiveness (see, for example, *Dimensions of Forgiveness*, edited by E L Worthington, Templeton Foundation Press, 1998). A central purpose of this paper will be to evaluate this programme, to see where it helps us to understand forgiveness, and where it may be missing the point. Forgiveness is only one of a series of religious practices that have been raided by the contemporary consumerist world for their practical efficacy. Transcendental Meditation has similarly been taken out of its original context of yogic teaching and general life-style. I will thus concentrate here particularly on issues about forgiveness that arise at the interface of theology and psychology.

Many current therapeutic applications of forgiveness take a cognitive approach and see it in terms of re-framing. There is nothing novel in this, and Bishop Joseph Butler, in his sermon on forgiveness of injuries advocated something similar. He suggested that, if we could achieve a 'due distance' and see the other person's actions as arising from 'inadvertence and mistake' rather than 'malice and scorn', we would find that 'the indignity or injury would almost infinitely lessen, and perhaps at least come out to be almost nothing at all'. It would be hard to find a clearer statement of the principles of attribution therapy in the classic Christian Literature. As I have argued elsewhere, prayer provides a good opportunity for such Christian re-framing of attributions. However, valuable though cognitive aspects of forgiveness may be, they do not exhaust its psychological components. Some, especially Everett Worthington, have stressed the value of empathising with the person to be forgiven. There may also be a place for emotional ventilation, for re-appraisal of costs and benefits, and for other elements.

Some have reacted strongly against the current therapeutic application of forgiveness on theological grounds, and none more so than L.G. Jones in *Embodying Forgiveness* (1995, W.B. Eerdmans). In his view, forgiveness in the New Testament refers solely to the forgiveness of sin and to forgiveness by God. However, it is helpful to bear in mind that there are two quite distinct words for forgiveness in the New Testament. What Jones says may be true of the main words for 'to forgive' in the Gospels (*aphiemi*), but the Pauline concept, to deal graciously (*charizomai*), though often also translated as forgiveness, is clearly broader in its scope. Also, the Lord's Prayer very specifically links God's forgiveness of humanity with people's duty to forgive others.

A more fundamental issue, in my view, is how far forgiveness can be taken out of its original moral context and still be efficacious. It seems to be an empirical fact that people with no religious commitment can practice forgiveness, and to good effect. What is more doubtful is whether forgiveness remains equally helpful if it is practised out of deliberate self-interest. It has been said, as Professor Sims quoted in his introduction to this symposium, that forgiveness 'is not just altruistic, but the best form of self-interest'. But what effect does forgiveness have if it is practised in a blatantly self-interested way? My hunch is that if forgiveness is to be helpful to the person who practices it, that person may at least need to believe that they are acting altruistically, and to believe in the rightness of what they are doing.

Finally, I want to draw attention to some of the dark aspects of forgiveness, and to try to draw the boundaries between where forgiveness is helpful and where it is not. Though forgiveness is frequently helpful, it is not a universally applicable panacea. There can be considerable dangers in pressing people to forgive if they have no inclination to do so. Especially if people have suffered abuse, to press them to forgive before they are ready may be felt almost as an additional form of abuse.

There are various ways in which the conditions necessary for effective forgiveness may be lacking. If the person who forgives has no positive feelings towards the person they are forgiving, it is doubtful whether it can be helpful. Equally, if there is no sense of penitence on the part of the transgressor, forgiveness may not be helpful. There is also a danger that premature forgiveness may encourage people to flip too quickly into an up-beat mood before they have done the inner work necessary for the benefits of forgiveness to be felt. As James Hillman points out in his book, *Suicide and the Soul* (1964, Hodder & Stoughton) there is a 'soul-making' that comes from allowing distress to run its natural course. Forgiveness has both inner and outer aspects and it is unhelpful for them to become dissociated. If they do, forgiveness becomes either silent, or empty.

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### **'Forgiveness and Reconciliation'**

By Femi Oyebode F.R.C.Psych

*'Grace is getting something you don't deserve; and mercy is not getting something that you do deserve.'* Francis Bacon

In this paper, I will set out a view of what I believe forgiveness to be and then go on to talk specifically about how African conceptions inform our understanding of forgiveness and reconciliation.

One of the much-quoted psychological definitions of forgiveness is that developed by Enright and the Human Development Study Group. It proposes that:

'Forgiveness is the overcoming of negative affect and judgement toward the offender, not by denying ourselves the right to such affect and judgement, but endeavouring to view the offender with benevolence, compassion, and even love, while recognising that he or she has abandoned the right to them. The important parts of this definition are as follows: (a) one who forgives has suffered a deep hurt, thus showing resentment; (b) the offended person has a moral right to resentment but overcomes it nonetheless; (c) a new response to the other accrues, including compassion and love; (d) this loving response occurs despite the realisation that there is no obligation to love the offender'

In this definition, forgiveness is not set within a larger conceptual framework. It is a secular definition. It fails to explain why human beings should find themselves forgiving others at all. And here I am not referring to *post hoc* explanations, for example, that it does the individual good to forgive, or that the emotional well being of someone who forgives is enhanced. What I mean is that the definition fails to hint at the counter-intuitive magnanimity that forgiving another person often entails, except for the reference to the idea of love. I must confess that on my first reading of this definition, I was immediately reluctant to accept that forgiveness required 'loving' the offender. In other words, I thought that it was quite possible to forgive and yet not to use the language of love. The people one offends most often, on a day-to-day basis, are people whom one already loves. Therefore, the question of love preceding or being the ground on which forgiveness is founded on a daily basis. In the situation where there is a relationship of

victim and perpetrator with a stranger, one may question whether love enters the dynamic or not. Compassion definitely does.

There are psychologists who hold the view that mature forgiveness is not a replacement of negative and hateful feelings with loving feelings. So, for example, Gartner, who holds this view, would claim that it is the capacity to hold an integrated and realistic view of the perpetrator that counts. In a sense, this response evades the crucial issue of love. The questions that definitions of forgiveness raise include 'what is the groundwork on which forgiveness is built? What role does compassion play in this situation and what is compassion anyway? What is love in this context?' I will return to these issues later on.

Enright's definition eschews any reference to religious or theological framework. It is obvious that forgiveness in the religious context exists within the context of our relationship to God and within the boundaries of the problem of sin and evil. Thus, in a theological analysis, it is impossible to consider the forgiveness of another person outside of the context of God's forgiveness. Our own readiness to forgive others lies in relation to God's willingness to forgive us. 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive others their trespass against us'.

It could also be argued that what are being forgiven are not mere acts of trespass but evidence of sin and evil. Thus, the forgiveness of these sins or acts of evil prepare the ground for healing, that is, act to transform both the lives of the forgiving and the forgiven individuals. For Patton, human forgiveness is:

'Not doing something but discovering something – that I am more like those who have hurt me than different from them. I am able to forgive when I discover that I am in no position to forgive. Although the experience of God's forgiveness may involve confession of, and the sense of being forgiven for specific sins, at its heart it is the recognition of my reception into the community of sinners – those affirmed by God as his children'

Patton's description emphasizes the fact that we are ourselves undeserving of forgiveness and, therefore, not in a position to forgive others. Thus, the mutuality of sinfulness is underlined even though the specific offence or sin in question may not be shared; we all share in the certainty of being equally sinful in the eyes of God. In this description, my forgiving another is as much about humbling myself in the recognition of my own need for grace.

To summarise, forgiveness can be defined as a response to a moral wrong in which there is restraint from pursuing resentment or revenge. It is the response of one single person to injustice suffered.

*'Ultimately we must concentrate on forgiveness and reconciliation because if we concentrate on retribution, I am fearful that the spiral of violence, resentment and payback will never end'*

**Desmond Tutu**

There is nothing in the foregoing that is specifically African, either in perspective or conception. In searching for a uniquely African dimension to the experience of forgiveness and reconciliation, one must be careful not to imply that there are categorical differences in how human beings perceive the world. In other words, we must be careful not to seek to reify the particular as if the accentuated difference of the particular, confirms difference of temperament or constitution. There is also the danger of thinking that there is a uniquely African perspective to anything. I have argued elsewhere, that Africa is so disparate that to attempt to classify African cultures or values, as uniquely

African is doomed to failure. The reverse is also true: borrowing or dependence. It only underlines the fact of the strength of our common humanity. In other words universal concepts and values do exist. My final caveat is that what this very particular African has to say can only ultimately be true for Nigerians who are Yoruba, indeed who are Ekiti Yorubas, born into a Christian home. Culture is not a crystalline structure, set and immobile, but a growing and dynamic entity. Often, what is described as African is a fossilised value or practice from the 19th century or early 20th century, commented upon by academics, regardless of the fact that no such pure practice currently exists.

My starting point is the situation in South Africa of the extraordinary Truth and Reconciliation Commission. This was South Africa's response to its history. In his foreword to the Final Report, Desmond Tutu wrote: 'Having looked the beast of the past in the eye, having asked and received forgiveness and having made amends, let's shut the door on the past – not in order to forget it but in order not to allow it to imprison us'. This statement draws attention to why Tutu thinks forgiveness and reconciliation are so important, that is to free us from history. In Chapter 5, Volume I, the conceptual framework of the commission's work is discussed. The Commission saw reconciliation as a goal to help people come to terms with painful truth and to help reconcile victims and perpetrators. Thus, the commission stated that 'the Commission's quest for truth should be viewed as a contribution to a much longer-term goal and vision. Its purpose in attempting to uncover the past had nothing to do with vengeance; it had to do, rather, with helping victims to become more visible and more valuable citizens through the public recognition and official acknowledgement of their experiences'. The Commission goes on, 'the road to reconciliation requires more than forgiveness and respectful remembrance .... reconciliation requires not only individual justice, but also social justice'. The Commission is identifying a distinction between forgiveness, reconciliation and justice.

It is probably worth exploring the nature of this distinction. At an ordinary level, to forgive is already to forgo punishment or vengeance. To forgive is to pardon an offence or offender, or to cease to resent, or to remit a debt, that is to give up one's claim against a debtor. In this respect, justice is not done; it is abrogated, if justice is to mean restitution or punishment. To reconcile is to restore what is out of harmony. It may entail forgiveness or not. The restoration of concord may entail no more than open acknowledgement of harm caused and experienced by both parties respectively as prerequisite for reconciliation.

How does justice relate to these concepts? Retributive justice is the idea of seeking to balance an injustice by rectifying the situation, or by regaining equality that the injustice overturned. It is most simply summed up in the principle of 'an eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth'. Rectification suggests taking from the offender and giving to the injured party, whereas retribution at least acknowledges that this is sometimes impossible, but embodies the idea that an offence may cry out for punishment and that the moral order is out of balance until this is administered. This suggests that a *real world* concept of forgiveness may encompass retributive justice. In other words that the individual who has suffered harm may forgive the individual who has caused the harm, but the sufferer may still have rights of restitution and the perpetrator may still be punished, all at the same time that both parties are reconciled. This issue was recognised by the Commission. The Commission went on to say that restorative justice demands that the accountability of perpetrators be extended to making a contribution to the restoration of the well being of their victims; furthermore that those who have benefited and are still benefiting from a range of unearned privileges under apartheid have a crucial role to play by contributing to the present and future reconstruction of society.

The examples of rare acts of forgiveness from the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Hearings are worth hearing: Desmond Tutu gave an example of the former head of Ciskei Defence force and four officers giving evidence in relation to the Bisho massacre. This was in the presence of a packed hall full of people who had either been injured or had lost loved ones. One soldier turned to the audience and said 'Please forgive us, please. The burden of the Bisho massacre will be on our shoulders for the rest of our lives'. He was white and the three other soldiers were black and he went on to plead, 'Would you please receive my colleagues back into the community?' Desmond Tutu reported that 'It was unbelievable, unexpected. You could sense the presence of grace right there, because that audience, angry as they had been, almost immediately turned around and broke out in applause. Here were people who were limping, who were shot, some had lost children or other loved ones, and they could applaud'.

In another account, Pumla Gobodo-Madikizela wrote about Eugene de Kock who is currently serving 212 years for his role in the murder of the apartheid government's enemies. He asked for a private meeting with widows of the victims who died in an incident he had organised. He said 'I wish I could do much more than say I'm sorry. I wish there were a way of bringing their bodies back alive. I wish I could say 'here are your husbands'. But, unfortunately, I have to live with it'. One of the wives said later 'I was profoundly touched by him, especially when he said he wished he could bring our husbands back. I didn't even look at him when he was speaking to us. Yet, I felt the genuineness in his apology. I hope that when he sees our tears, he knows that they are not only tears for our husbands, but tears for him as well. I would like to hold him by the hand and show him that there is a future and that he can still change'.

These examples challenge us to reach some kind of understanding of what makes ordinary people act with such genuine compassion and selflessness as to be able to reach across a gulf, despite personal suffering and anguish, and to touch someone who has caused great harm. In responding to the question 'Why was such a process as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission possible in South Africa?' Desmond Tutu remarked that it was because of the concept of ubuntu (we are people through other people). He explained that this meant that 'my humanity is caught up in your humanity, and when your humanity is enhanced – whether I like it or not – mine is enhanced as well. Likewise, when you are dehumanised, inexorably, I am dehumanised as well'. He concludes. 'So there is a deep yearning in African society for communal peace and harmony'.

The risk of this kind of talk is that it implies this is something peculiar to African societies to the exclusion of other societies. I do not, for once, agree with this view. Nonetheless, it is worth reviewing what it means to become a person through others. This particular proposition is clearly set out in Martin Buber's 'I and thou.' For Buber, Man becomes an I through a You. He distinguishes relating to an It, in other words to an object, from our relationship to a You, another subject of experience. Of course, Buber's world is dyadic whereas the world that Tutu is conjuring up is a multifold world of subjects constituting the world and giving life to the individual. The individual's existence in this conceptual realm, is dependent on the harmony of the larger group. Here we are not referring to the idea of a faceless, anonymous crowd as Elias Canetti describes in *Crowds and Power*. For Canetti, the attributes of crowds include the desire to grow in size, the equality of all members, the love of density and the need for a goal and so on. However, it is important to note that Canetti is not referring to a group but a crowd. In contrast, we are referring to a very definite, palpable reality of a people living coherently and giving sustenance to the meaningful individuality of the one, in other words to a group. In a group, our individuality is given sustenance and solidity whereas, in a crowd we lose our identity, the singularity of our individuality, in a formless pooling of egos. In this conceptualisation of life, to be unaccounted is to suffer anguish because integration

within the whole is central to the existence of the individual. But in the same way, it is a deep hurt in the life of the whole to deprive itself of one of its constituted parts. The sorrow felt is both for the unfulfilled self as it is for the diminished group. In talking about this issue, Segun Gbadegesin, a Yoruba philosopher refers to a common saying, 'I am because we are; I exist because the community exists'. He goes on to say that 'a high premium is placed on the practical demonstration of oneness and solidarity among the members of a community. Every member is expected to consider him/herself as an integral part of the whole and to play an appropriate role towards the good of all. Everyone is expected to be the keeper and protector of the interests of others who are, by extension, theirs too'. He concludes that 'all the above point to the value that traditional Yoruba place on community and communal existence, with all its emphasis on fellow-feeling, solidarity and selflessness'.

Extending this argument, Kwasi Wiredu, a Ghanaian philosopher discussing the role of reconciliation in African societies, referred to the relationship between consensus and reconciliation. Although he does not make this point explicitly, his intention is to distinguish between Western democratic principles, where one individual or a group may determine the outcome to the exclusion of a minority, and African traditional political principles that rely on consensus. The question is, of course, what advantages accrue on account of consensus? In my view, the underlying value is the importance attributed to a harmonious community. The Yorubas have a God, *Ela*, of whom Bolagi Idowu says, 'He organised earth's affairs and set things in their proper places. He is even described as the one who made all things, in the sense that it was through his agency that all things have their being. To him is credited the main functions of peace making and of reconciliation wherever there is discord, and the restoration of order wherever there is chaos'. Consensus building is part of the art of politics. It involves being careful not to exclude any opinion or section of society and it emphasises the reconciliation of difference. One of the verses referring to *Ela* in the *Ifa* corpus reads, 'It is he who puts things right for the people. / When day turned into night in the town of Okerekese, / And the sages of the place were baffled, / It was he who came to the aid of Oluyori, it's king, with a remedy; / Whenever *Elegbara* plans to turn the world upside down / It is he who obstructs him; / He receives no money / He receives no kola-nuts / Yet it is he who rectifies unhappy destinies.'

The foregoing illustrates how important it is in African communities for there to be a sense of visible harmony within society. The South African Truth and Reconciliation Commission is, in my view, the visible expression of the wish to create a harmonious society. That is not enough to explain the readiness of ordinary people to forgive and to move towards reconciliation despite great privation.

For the Yoruba, the highest accolade is to be described as *oseniyan*, 'knowing how to make a person', that is how to constitute a person. This idea, which is untranslatable into English, sits somewhere between the idea of being humane, sociable, and human. One cannot say it of oneself and when it is said of one, it denotes how one relates to others. It is as if one defined what it is to be human solely with being humane. This definition ascribes our humanity on the basis of our capacity to act well towards others. This, fundamentally, underlines what it means to forgive others. To forgive others is to enter into human commerce with them, to have compassion for their position, and to see the world through their eyes and all this, despite the fact that they may have caused us great and irreparable harm.

You may remember my initial disquiet at the notion of love, and how love enters into what forgiveness is about. However, if we define love as the ability to see the other as oneself, and to recognise the vulnerability of the other and his innate inclination to sin as no different from one's own, then we are facing the other with the attitude of love, no matter that this idea is uncomfortable.

In conclusion, I have sought to argue that forgiveness is a fundamental and pervasive (that is, pervasive across all cultures) human response to a moral wrong that we suffer. It depends on our capacity to recognise in the other, mutual moral worth, frailty and vulnerability to sin. In the context of societies or nations, where it takes the form of reconciliation, it depends on our wish to promote a particular kind of harmony, underlining our need to inhabit a world of equilibrium. The South African experience demonstrates not only how much need the human spirit has for forgiving harm suffered but also what depths of compassion and reservoir of grace ordinary people possess.

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In the closing plenary, Professor Sims concluded that reconciliation and retribution should not be seen as alternatives and that both are needed. The model of marriage had been a very useful one to discuss issues of reconciliation and forgiveness, both in professional and personal life. He made the point that forgiveness as a technique without the religious/spiritual aspect could be of questionable benefit. He also made the point that within a group, all are united. Forgiveness can lead to the healing of a group and without healing and reconciliation, the group is damaged.

Professor Sims also added, by way of appreciation, that despite having spent a good deal of time in the council room at the College, he had never previously heard words being used like love, God and forgiveness in these surroundings.

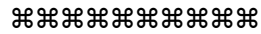
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**Chairman's Corner:**

The length and content of this newsletter speaks for itself and so there is little I need to add. Our group continues to grow apace – we now have 350 members. But please do come to our meetings in the College when you possibly can. The feedback we get is very positive, the meetings are informal yet the content is always thought-provoking and enriching and we have no shortage of topics! You will see from the 'further meetings notices' that we are co-hosting a residential conference in August on Meditation. This is bound to be over-subscribed, so if you are interested, contact the office of the Scientific and Medical Network as soon as possible. The final programme is going to the printers shortly and it will then be forwarded to you. We are also very pleased to be contributing fully to the College Annual Meeting. Our guest speakers will be addressing research in the field of Spirituality and Mental Health, a subject that is important and timely.

The range of interest of the membership of the group is wide and deep. As you will know, the Patron of the College is the Prince of Wales and with his kind permission, we reproduce here the BBC text of his 'afterword' to the 2000 Reith Lectures on Sustainability, which we see as being very much in line with the spiritual ethic of the SIG.

With all good wishes, Andrew Powell



**Presenter: James Naughtie:** Good evening from Highgrove in Gloucestershire – the home of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales, and welcome to this special programme to mark the end of this year's Millennium Reith lecture series. With me are the Prince of Wales and the five Reith lecturers, who over the past few weeks have dealt with our theme of sustainable development. They've travelled from all around the world to join in this discussion and we hope that our lecturers, an American scientist, and Indian academic, a European politician, a world businessman and the Director General of the World Health organisation will pool their ideas and speak tonight of practical things. What can be done to keep the world safe for the generations still to come? But first let's hear the thoughts of His Royal Highness, the Prince of Wales.

**Prince Charles:** Like millions of other people around the world I've been fascinated to hear five eminent speakers share with us their thoughts, hope and fears about sustainable development based on their own experience. All five of those contributions have been immensely thoughtful and challenging. There have been clear differences of opinion and of emphasis between the speakers but there have also been some important common themes both implicit and explicit. One of those themes has been the suggestion the suggestion that sustainable development is a matter of enlightened self-interest. Two of the speakers used this phrase and I don't believe that the other three would dissent from it, and nor would I.

Self-interest is a powerful motivating force for all of us, and if we can somehow convince ourselves that sustainable development is in all our interests then we will have taken a valuable first step towards achieving it. But self-interest comes in many competing guises – not all of which I fear are likely to lead in the right direction for very long, nor to embrace the manifold needs of future generations. I am convinced we will need to dig rather deeper to find the inspiration, sense of urgency and moral purpose required to confront the hard choices which face us on the long road to sustainable development. So, although it seems to have become deeply unfashionable to talk about the spiritual dimension of our existence, that is what I propose to do.

The idea that there is a sacred trust between mankind and our Creator, under which we accept a duty of stewardship for the earth, has been an important feature of most religious and spiritual thought throughout the ages. Even those whose beliefs have not included the existence of a Creator have, nevertheless, adopted a similar position on moral and ethical grounds. It is only recently that this guiding principle has become smothered by almost impenetrable layers of scientific rationalism. I believe that if we are to achieve genuinely sustainable development we will first have to rediscover, or re-acknowledge a sense of the sacred in our dealings with the natural world, and with each other. If literally nothing is held sacred anymore – because it is considered synonymous with superstition or in some other way "irrational" – what is there to prevent us treating our entire world as some "great laboratory of life" with potentially disastrous long-term consequences.

Fundamentally, an understanding of the sacred helps us to acknowledge that there are bounds of balance, order and harmony in the natural world which set limits to our ambitions, and define the parameters of sustainable development. In some cases nature's limits are well understood at the rational scientific level. As a simple example, we know that trying to graze too many sheep on a hillside will, sooner or later, be counter-productive for the sheep, the hillside, or both. More widely we understand that the overuse of insecticides or antibiotics leads to problems of resistance. And we are beginning to comprehend the full, awful consequences of pumping too much carbon dioxide into the earth's atmosphere. Yet the actions being taken to halt the damage

known to be caused by exceeding nature's limits in these and other ways are insufficient to ensure a sustainable outcome. In other areas, such as the artificial and uncontained transfer of genes between species of plants and animals, the lack of hard, scientific evidence of harmful consequences is regarded in many quarters as sufficient reason for allow such developments to proceed.

The idea of taking precautionary approach, in this and many other potentially damaging situations, receives overwhelming public support, but still faces a degree of official opposition, as if admitting the possibility of doubt was a sign of weakness or even of a wish to halt "progress". On the contrary, I believe it to be a sign of strength and of wisdom. It seems that when we do have scientific evidence that we are damaging our environment, we aren't doing enough to put things right, and when we don't have that evidence we are prone to do nothing at all, regardless of the risks.

Part of the problem is the prevailing approach that seeks to reduce the natural world including ourselves to the level of nothing more than a mechanical process. For whilst the natural theologians of the 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> centuries like Thomas Morgan referred to the perfect unity, order, wisdom and design of the natural world, scientists like Bertrand Russell rejected this idea as rubbish. 'I think the universe' he wrote 'is all spots and jumps without unity and without continuity, with coherence or orderliness. Sir Julian Huxley wrote in "Creation a Modern Synthesis" – that modern science must rule out special creation or divine guidance.' But why?

As Professor Alan Linton of Bristol University has written – 'evolution is a man-made theory to explain the origin and continuance of life on this planet without reference to a Creator'. It is because of our inability or refusal to accept the existence of a guiding hand that nature has come to be regarded as a system that can be engineered for our own convenience or as a nuisance to be evaded and manipulated, in which anything that happens can be fixed by technology and human ingenuity. Fritz Schumacher recognised the inherent dangers in this approach when he said 'there are two sciences – the science of manipulation and the science of understanding.'

In this technology-driven age it is all too easy for us to forget that mankind is a part of nature and not apart from it. This is why we should seek to work with the grain of nature in everything we do, for the natural world is, as the economist Herman Daly puts it – 'the envelope that contains, sustains and provision the economy, not the other way round.' So which argument do you think will win – the living world as one or the world made up of random parts, the product of mere chance, thereby providing the justification for any kind of development? This, to my mind, lies at the heart of what we call sustainable development. We need, therefore, to rediscover a reference for the natural world, irrespective of its usefulness to ourselves – to become more aware, in Philip Sherrard's words, of 'the relationship of interdependence, interpenetration and reciprocity between God, Man and Creation.'

Above all, we should show greater respect for the genius of nature's designs, rigorously tested and refined over millions of years. This means being careful to use science to understand how nature works, not to change what nature is, as we do when genetic manipulation seeks to transform a process of biological evolution into something altogether different. The idea that the different parts of the natural world are connected through an intricate system of checks and balances which we disturb at our peril is all too easily dismissed as no longer relevant.

So, in an age when we're told that science has all the answers, what chance is there for working with the grain of nature? As an example of working with the grain of nature, I happen to believe that if a fraction of the money currently being invested in developing genetically manipulated crops were applied to understanding and improving traditional systems of agriculture, which have stood the all-important test of time, the results would be remarkable. There is already plenty of evidence of just what can be achieved through applying more knowledge and fewer chemicals to diverse cropping

systems. These are genuinely sustainable methods and they are far removed from the approaches based on monoculture which lend themselves to large-scale commercial exploitation, and which Vandana Shiva condemned so persuasively and so convincingly in her lecture. Our most eminent scientists accept that there is still a vast amount we don't know about our world and the life forms that inhabit it. As Sir Martin Rees, the Astronomer Royal, points out, it is complexity that makes things hard to understand, not size. In a comment, which only an astronomer could make, he describes a butterfly as a more daunting intellectual challenge than the cosmos!

Others, like Rachel Carson, have eloquently reminded us that we don't know how to make a single blade of grass. And St Matthew, in his wisdom, emphasised that not even Solomon in all his glory was arrayed as the lilies of the field. Faced with such unknowns, it is hard not to feel a sense of humility, wonder and awe about our place in the natural order. And to feel this at all stems from that inner heartfelt reason which sometimes despite ourselves is telling us that we are intimately bound up in the mysteries of life and that we don't have all the answers. Perhaps even that we don't have to have all the answers before knowing what we should do in certain circumstances. As Blaise Pascal wrote in the 17<sup>th</sup> century, 'it is the heart that experiences God, not the reason.'

So, do you not feel that buried deep within each and every one of us, there is an instinctive, heart-felt awareness that provides – if we allow it to – the most reliable guide as to whether or not our actions are really in the long term interests of our planet and all the life it supports? This awareness, this wisdom of the heart, is maybe no more than a faint memory of a distant harmony rustling like a breeze through the leaves, yet sufficient to remind us that the Earth is unique and that we have a duty to care for it. Wisdom, empathy and compassion have no place in the empirical world, yet traditional wisdoms would ask, "without them are we truly human?" And it would be a good question. It was Socrates who, when asked for his definition of wisdom, gave as his conclusion, "knowing that you don't know".

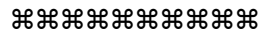
In suggesting that we will need to listen rather more to the common sense emanating from our hearts if we are to achieve sustainable development, I'm not suggesting that information gained through scientific investigation is anything other than essential. Far from it. But I believe that we need to restore the balance between the heartfelt reason of instinctive wisdom and the rational insights of scientific analysis. Neither, I believe, is much use on its own. So it is only by employing both the intuitive and the rational halves of our own nature – our hearts and our minds – that we will live up to the sacred trust that has been placed in us by our Creator, - or our "Sustainer", as ancient wisdom referred to the Creator. As Gro Harlem Brundtland has reminded us, sustainable development is not just about the natural world, but about people too. This applies whether we are looking at the vast numbers who lack sufficient food or access to clean water, as also those living in poverty and without work. While there is no doubt that globalisation has brought advantages, it brings dangers too. Without the humility and humanity expressed by Sir John Browne in his notion of the 'connected economy' – an economy which acknowledges the social and environmental context within which it operates – there is the risk that the poorest and the weakest will not only see very little benefit but, worse, they may find that their livelihoods and cultures have been lost.

So if we are serious about sustainable development then we must also remember that the lessons of history are particularly relevant when we start to look further ahead. Of course, in an age when it often seems that nothing can properly be regarded as important unless it can be described as "modern", it is highly dangerous to talk about the lessons of the past. And are those lessons ever taught or understood adequately in an age when to pass on a body of acquired knowledge of this kind is often considered prejudicial to "progress"? Of course our descendants will have scientific and

technological expertise beyond our imagining, but will they have the insight or the self-control to use this wisely, having learnt both from our successes and our failures?

They won't, I believe, unless there are increased efforts to develop an approach to education, which balances the rational with the intuitive. Without this, truly sustainable development is doomed. It will merely become a hollow-sounding mantra that is repeated ad nauseam in order to make us all feel better. Surely, therefore, we need to look towards the creation of greater balance in the way we educate people so that the practical and intuitive wisdom of the past can be blended with the appropriate technology and knowledge of the present to produce the type of practitioner who is acutely aware of both the visible and invisible worlds that inform the entire cosmos. The future will need people who understand that sustainable development is not merely about a series of technical fixes, about redesigning humanity or re-engineering nature in an extension of globalised industrialisation, but about a re-connection with nature and a profound understanding of the concepts of care that underpin long term stewardship.

Only by rediscovering the essential unity and order of the living and spiritual world – as in the case of organic agriculture or integrated medicine or in the way we build – and by bridging the destructive chasm between cynical secularism and the timelessness of traditional religion, will we avoid the disintegration of our overall environment. Above all, I don't want to see the day when we are rounded upon by our grandchildren and asked accusingly why we didn't listen more carefully to the wisdom of our hearts as well as to the rational analysis of our heads; why we didn't pay more attention to the preservation of bio-diversity and traditional communities or think more clearly about our role as stewards of creation? Taking a cautious approach or achieving balance in life is never as much fun as the alternatives, but that is what sustainable development is all about.



**Intimations of Immortality – The Nature of Near-Death Visions**  
by Dr Peter Fenwick

*Synopsis of talk given to the open meeting of the SIG at the  
College Annual Meeting 6.7.2000*

A number of phenomena connected with the process of dying are poorly understood and have not been adequately researched. The two aspects of the dying process that I would like to discuss both raise interesting philosophical and spiritual questions.

In 1972 Raymond Moody published his book *Life after Life*, which opened up the near death experience (NDE) for research in the West. There have been numerous retrospective studies and anecdotal accounts of NDEs. Broadly, these fall into two groups, the fear of death experience (FDE), when the subject is in a death threatening situation such as an impending car crash, and feels they are likely to die but in which their physiology is in no way disturbed. The second group are those in which the process of dying has started and major changes in physiology are likely to have occurred. The psychological FDE and the physiological NDE are similar in their phenomenology but quite different in their cause. I shall deal only with the physiological NDEs.

In the University Hospital of Southampton, Dr Sam Parnia and I have carried out a prospective study in the coronary care unit. Over the course of a year, 60 people were able, after their cardiac arrest, to answer questions about the experiences they had when they were unconscious. They were given the Greyson scale and four people were classified as having a near-death experience. Two had some of the features but did not achieve the Greyson score necessary to classify them as near death experiences, although the phenomenology led one to believe that they were indeed true near death experiences. One person had a confusional experience that was quite different.

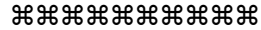
The phenomena of the near death experiences which we obtained were those reported in the literature for Western populations; the progress through a tunnel to a light and the 'Being of Light', a meeting with dead relatives, entrance into a heavenly English country garden with intense colours and an abundance of flowers, a border which if crossed would lead to death, and a decision to return. All patients were treated with the same resuscitation protocol, and after an audit of the medical notes, the only physiological factor which distinguished the two groups (too few for statistics) was higher oxygen saturation in the NDE group.

The point of interest is that the patients attributed the time of the occurrence of the experience to when they were unconscious. Several studies of the EEG in patients whose hearts have stopped either spontaneously or during cardiac version have shown that with 16 seconds the EEG is flat. There are also studies to show that a flat cortical EEG is accompanied by electrical silence in the depth of the brain. If the patients accounts are correct, then this would imply that from the point of view of our current neuroscience, the experiences occurred at a time when all cognitive structures that created the experienced world would not have been functioning. The experiences could have occurred as consciousness was being lost, but from the experience of people who faint or have seizures, cognition continues to the point of the onset of the event but then consciousness is rapidly lost and there is no elaboration at that point. During the experience, the EEG is flat and cognition is therefore impossible. They could have occurred on recovery, but all recovery from a severe anoxic episode is confusional and these patients were no exception. The near death experience, which was clear and lucid, with a marked narrative component and containing intense positive emotion that was integrated into the experience, could not have occurred in a confusional setting.

Anecdotal accounts from patients who had had out-of-body experiences during the near death experience point to them obtaining information about the resuscitation process that would not have been available to them where they were lying through ordinary sense transmission, and thus raise the question of whether mind and brain are necessarily absolutely linked.

In the 24 hours before death, nearing death experiences occur in a proportion of patients. This is a poorly researched field and only one major study exists in the literature. This study found that deathbed visions, similar in many respects to the phenomenology of the NDE, occurred during this time. I have questioned a number of caregivers who were with their family in the 24 hours before a family member's death and they report accounts that confirm the previous study. One caregiver's daughter reports such a family member moving between the near death experience world and this world in a perfectly lucid and clear way. Although clearly more information is required, this suggests that the phenomena of the near death experience precede death and raise questions about the epistemological significance of these findings.

With our current neuroscience, which is based on the Galilean subject/object split and a dead matter universe in which consciousness is created by the brain, any theory that postulates a mind/brain split is impossible. However, with post-modern science and the concept that consciousness may in some way be a distributed function of the universe, splitting of brain and mind becomes a theoretical possibility.



**The Annual Conference on Religion & Psychiatry, November 23<sup>rd</sup> 2000**  
**Mediation / Medication – Culture / Control:** reported by Daphne Wallace

This was the tenth Annual Conference on Religion and Psychiatry, held at the Institute of Psychiatry. It was organised jointly by the Institute, The South London and Maudsley NHS Trust and the Bishop John Robinson Fellowship in Pastoral Theology & Mental Health.

There were four speakers who each addressed the theme **Truth & Reality** from a particular perspective. The first, John Rowan, spoke to the Spiritual aspect. He gave an account of the work of Ken Wilber and his concept of Transpersonal Psychology and Experience. He emphasised the transpersonal is not extra-personal, nor religion, right brain, spiritual or new age. He outlined the maturational concept of pre-personal, personal and transpersonal spirituality. He emphasised that spiritual emergencies may be confused with psychotic mental illness, yet are not the same. He said that these emergencies arise in a situation when a person reaches the transpersonal area too soon. He gave 10 examples of this situation, which included near death experiences, shamanism, UFO encounters and spirit possession.

The second speaker, Dr Sean Spence, considered **Psychiatric Truth & Reality**. He highlighted that of necessity this had to be third person, external and objective perspective. Psychiatric treatment needs an evidence base. We face 'impossible' questions such as the distinction between hysteria and feigning, criminal responsibility in psychosis (meta-responsibility), whether psychopathy should be a case for psychiatry at all and how we cannot predict what free agents will do. He discussed research into areas of the brain from scanning and work on EEGs that have implications for the relationship of consciousness and brain physiology, the EEG changes taking place *before* the conscious wish. Religious and spiritual experiences seem to be linked to temporal lobe function.

After lunch, David Lorimer spoke to the **Cultural** aspect of the theme, presenting a diagram with four quadrants to demonstrate the relationships between the individual and collective, interior and exterior. The individual, interior quadrant (meditation) had been represented by John Rowan and the individual, external quadrant by Sean Spence (medication). He saw his own contribution as representing the interior, collective quadrant, (culture), while Pat Bracken's final contribution would represent the exterior, collective quadrant (control). He then traced the development of our modern understanding of the cultural context from its roots in Aristotle's nominalism and Plato's realism, through William James to the birth of anthropology, the development of scientific thought and the 'new metaphysical foundations' of modern science. The primary observations of (material) qualities are from the outside looking in, while secondary (objective) studies include those of consciousness/mind. *Yet consciousness is needed for study, therefore objectivity is always dependent on subjectivity.*

An earlier bias towards giving the primary role to the material is now shifting towards also valuing the subjective and intuitive. As programme director of the Scientific and Medical network, David Lorimer drew our attention to a forthcoming publication on 'Beyond the Brain' (Floris Books 2001) by the Network, which is a manifesto for an integral science of consciousness. He then addressed the relationship between science and epistemology. He quoted Einstein's assertion that epistemology without science is an empty scheme while science without epistemology is at best muddled. Returning to consciousness he reminded us that we need a vehicle for the existence of consciousness to be visible. However, if consciousness is primary, it need not be

dependent on brain processes (one interpretation of the phenomenon of near-death experiences). Looked at in terms of Wilbur's four quadrants, the NDE could be described as a brain disturbance (individual exterior), death but with consciousness continuing (individual interior), finding acceptance socially (collective, exterior), or culturally (collective, interior).

Pat Bracken ended the presentations with **Social Truth & Reality**. He looked at psychiatry and its origins in European enlightenment and the development of the 'Age of Reason', with its emphasis on the importance of the individual. He pointed out how this had led to blindness to the importance of context. Prior to the 'Age of Reason' there was no concept of mental illness. There was a move away from religious revelation towards bureaucracy, capitalism, science, literacy and colonialism. Those who did not conform were incarcerated, eventually in asylums. This social exclusion eventually involved the gaze of medicine but originally only in relation to treatment of physical conditions and provision of moral advice. Social seclusion led to increased stigma. Ironically, the specialty of psychiatry had only come about through the act of social exclusion.

Simultaneously there had been the rise of phenomenology and psychoanalysis. In the latter's focus on self and the search of individual truth, combined with the emergence of biological approaches, we see the roots of psychiatry today.

Dr. Bracken appealed for a radical rethink. He suggested four main areas of concern:

1. Post-modern thought – 'science can silence as well as liberate'
2. Post-modern culture with its acceptance of multiple realities
3. The rise of the User Movements
4. Government policies – National Framework for Mental Health.

He emphasised the importance of rebuilding community and communal activity, instancing how PTSD, for example, tends to see trauma as an individualised experience, taking the individual away from family.

This challenging approach brought to a close the stimulating presentations of the day. Discussion was wide and varied, reflecting the thought provoking content of the presentations. Answers were not the message – rather a challenge to our pre-conceptions and assumptions in our psychiatric practice. Altogether a very rewarding day.

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**Book Review** by Dr Sunil Raheja: "**The Road Less Travelled**" (Arrow p/b £5.99).

This book gets its title from lines in the poem by Robert Frost '*The Road not taken*'. Scott Peck himself is a practising psychotherapist who has been medical director of New Milford Hospital Mental Health Clinic and psychiatrist in private practice in New Milford, Connecticut, USA. His book is subtitled "A new psychology of love, traditional values and spiritual growth" and has had a profound influence around the world. Since its publication in 1978 it has become a number one international best seller, bringing Scott Peck much worldwide acclaim.

Perhaps in recognition of this, in 1992 he addressed the American Psychiatric Association in Washington as Distinguished Lecturer on the subject of 'Psychiatry's Predicament with Spirituality'.

The genius of Scott Peck's writing is his willingness to admit that confronting and solving problems is a painful process which most of us attempt to avoid. He is also careful to point out that he makes no distinction between the process of achieving spiritual growth and that of achieving mental growth. He presents a powerful case of how the two are inextricably linked.

The tone of the book is set from the first page as he starts with the first of Buddha's four noble truths that "life is difficult". He goes on to lucidly describe how avoidance itself results in great pain and an inability to grow both mentally and spiritually. From here he draws on his professional experience as a psychiatrist to suggest ways in which facing our difficulties (and suffering through the changes) can reach a higher level of self-understanding. He goes on to explore the nature of loving relationships in terms of how to recognise true compatibility, distinguish dependency from love and in the process how to become one's own person and a more sensitive parent.

All in all a powerful book that goes beyond so many of the glib answers that are so prevalent in our day and age.

Readers may like to see the poem by Robert Frost, which we have reproduced here (eds.)

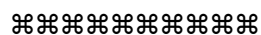
#### THE ROAD NOT TAKEN

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that, the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I –  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.



## Notices and Forthcoming Events

1. **NEXT SIG ONE DAY MEETING – Friday, 4<sup>th</sup> May 2001**  
**‘Engaging the Spiritual Mind’.** *Please see attached programme and be sure to return the reply slip if you are able to come.*
2. **RESIDENTIAL SUMMER MEETING – August 23<sup>rd</sup> – 26<sup>th</sup>.**  
**‘Scientific and Spiritual Perspectives on Meditation’**  
Co-hosted with the Scientific and Medical Network, the Infinity Foundation and the British Psychological Society, to be held at Ripon College, Yorkshire. David Lorimer, programme director, writes:

**Beyond the Brain IV** will build on the success of the first three conferences, held at St. John’s College, Cambridge. These conferences examined respectively new avenues in consciousness research, frontiers in consciousness and healing, and the possibility of existence before birth and after death. At the heart of central questions in consciousness studies is the nature of the self in our experience of altered states. This year’s meeting will be more experiential in addressing the topic of meditation from a scientific and spiritual angle.

Since the 1970s scientists have taken an interest in brain wave patterns associated with meditation, and many of these investigators are themselves long term meditators. They can thus take both a first- and third-person view. One of the critical questions relating to the emerging science of consciousness is whether science can investigate consciousness only from its traditional third-person view, or if it is necessary to supplement this with first-hand experience that involves the scientist directly and may even lead to a transformation of consciousness.

All our speakers at this conference have extensive experience of meditation in addition to their scholarly expertise. This makes it an exciting occasion where there can be a true meeting of outer and inner in a spirit of open exploration. We will have communal meditations together and make time for contemplative walks, especially to the nearby ruins of Fountains Abbey, perhaps one of the most beautiful and peaceful places in England. Speakers include:

Z’ev ben Shimon Halevi: *Kabbalistic Metaphysics and the Ascent of Jacob’s Ladder*

Dr. Ram-Prasad Chakravarthi: *Consciousness and its Transformation: the Role of Philosophical Analysis in Classical India*

Dr. Peter Fenwick: *Subjective Correlates and the Neurophysiology of Meditation*

Prof. James Austin: *Zen and the Brain*

Prof. Jon Kabat-Zinn: *Clinical Applications of Mindfulness Meditation*

Dr. Andrew Powell: *Dreams and Desires of the Unquiet Self*

Prof. Guy Claxton: *Buddha’s Brain: the Neuroscience of Mindfulness*

Dr. Alan Wallace: *First-Person Methods of Exploring Consciousness in Tibetan Buddhism*

Sr. Jayanti: *Exploring the Realms of the Soul with the Vehicle of the Inner Mind*

Elizabeth West: *Meditation in the Christian Tradition: Opening the Way to Unity*

Prof. Arthur Zajonc: *Phenomena as Theory: Goethe, Steiner and the Encounter with Consciousness*

Prof. Jonathan Shear: *Third-Person Research on Meditation: Can it Ever be Really Significant?*

Dr. Bisong Guo: *Daoism and the Esoteric Art of Qigong*

Prof. David Fontana: *Meditation as Transpersonal Experience*

For further details, contact: The Scientific and Medical Network, Lake House, Vann Lake Road, Ockley, Surrey RH5 5NS Tel: 01306 710072 email: info@scimednet.org and also Website: www.scimednet.org

**3. COLLEGE ANNUAL MEETING London 9<sup>th</sup> – 13<sup>th</sup> July 2001**  
**The SIG is contributing workshops and lectures.**

**Monday 9<sup>th</sup>** 9.30 – 11.00 am. **Wisdom and Science, Compassion and Caring: Spiritual and Material Values in Psychiatry**  
4.00- 5.30 pm. **Meditation Techniques: An Introduction for Psychiatrists** (Workshops conducted by Dr. Larry Culliford and Dr. Sarah Egger).

**Thursday 12<sup>th</sup>** 2.00 – 3.30 pm. **Spirituality and Mental Health Care.**  
Guest Speakers: Professor Michael King  
Professor David Larson  
Professor Gerrit Glas

**4. Proposed Study Trip to India.** Dr. Kishore Chandiramani writes:

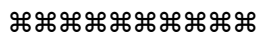
I am organising a study trip to India in October this year, which will offer an opportunity to the members of the SIG to learn about and experience an ancient mindfulness meditation practice called Vipassana. The trip would include academic events and visits to some of the historic sites in India. Further details and costings will shortly be available. **Would interested colleagues please contact me on 0121 4752149 or email me at [kishore.c@btinternet.com](mailto:kishore.c@btinternet.com).**

**Other Meetings:**

**"Human Rights, Sacred and Secular"** Sea of Faith Network Conference, on Date, Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> April 2001 at Friends' House, Euston Road, London. For information send s.a.e. to John Seargeant (SoF), 61 Fordington Road, London N6 4<sup>TH</sup> or access website: [www.sofn.org](http://www.sofn.org)

**The Buddhist Psychology and Psychiatry Group**

Formed in 1987, it meets once or twice a year in an informal setting to discuss the interface between Buddhism, psychology and psychiatry. There is no membership fee. However, a small charge of £12.50 is made for attending the meeting. The meetings are held usually on a Saturday from 10.00 a.m. – 4.00 p.m. The meetings consist of discussion on themes to share ideas, experiences and skills and also some presentations on selected topics. The next meeting of the group is on 31<sup>st</sup> March in Northampton and Dr Kedar Dwivedi would be happy to be contacted for details. Address: Dr Kedar Dwivedi, Child & Adolescent Psychiatrist, 8 Notre Dame mews, Northampton NN1 2BG. Tel 01604 604608. Email: [kedarnd@doctors.org.uk](mailto:kedarnd@doctors.org.uk)



**Editors note:** We hope you have enjoyed this edition of the newsletter. We are currently looking into the possibility of a desktop edition to follow the 2001 College Annual Meeting, which would include the presentations made there by the speakers and members of the SIG. May we encourage you to support the newsletter with any articles, comments and reflections you might like to contribute? This would enable us to open a member's forum, which we are sure would make interesting reading.

Gillian Broster  
Daphne Wallace  
Andrew Powell

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**GB@lbe-eps-avenue.demon.co.uk**

**SPECIAL INTEREST GROUP PROGRAMME FOR FRIDAY MAY 4th 2001**

Venue: Royal College of Psychiatrists

**'ENGAGING THE SPIRITUAL MIND'**

- 10.15 Coffee
  - 10.45 Preliminary notices Dr. Powell (Chair)
  - 11.00 Dr. K. Chandiramani 'Vipassana meditation as a tool for mental health'
  - 12.00 Dr. de Wet Vorster 'The Church and patients who are reluctant to engage with helping agencies'
  - 1.00 Lunch
  - 2.15 Dr. C. Holman 'Perverse Spirituality'
  - 3.15 Dr. S. Raheja 'Examining our Spiritual Spectacles: Dangers and Pitfalls'
  - 4.15 Plenary
  - 5.00 End of Meeting
- 5 CPD Credits have been given for the whole day programme

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*Reply Slip to be returned to Sue Duncan at the College*

I wish to attend the next meeting of the Spirituality SIG 'Engaging the Spiritual Mind' on May 4<sup>th</sup> 2001 **and enclose the registration fee of £10, payable to The Royal College of Psychiatrists** (includes morning coffee, lunch and tea).

Please ring your lunch preference: **Vegetarian / Non-vegetarian**

Name: **(Capitals please)**.....

Contact 'phone number:.....

*Please note the closing date for this meeting will be Friday, 27<sup>th</sup> April*