

TALKING STICK



Winter/Spring 2003

War and Peace

by Medicine Story

The attention of the world has again been focused on war for many months. The polls showed that a majority of Americans supported war to get rid of Saddam Hussein while the vast majority of the rest of the world opposed it.

On March 26 representatives of the indigenous peoples of the Americas gathered in Ottawa issued a Declaration to Condemn the American Invasion of Iraq. 35 organizations signed this statement, which said in part, "As indigenous peoples we do not condone war, violence, or any other conflict that destroys our Mother Earth. On the contrary we promote dialogue as our principle and we do not reject peace."

Everyone I know opposed the war, but once it started there was no stopping it, and all we could do was pray it would be over quickly and have few casualties. So we can rejoice now that the worst is over,

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To Be Human Again - Camps for Peace and Love

by Medicine Story

The increasing inspiration of the international summer camps and of the response we are getting from the web sites (mettanokit.org and circleway.org), as well as the Tamera Summer University in Portugal and the "meeting at the bottom" in Christiania, have all contributed to my growing wish to see our work expand into a truly global organization. For this I take as a model the world community of Re-evaluation Counseling. This organization currently involves many thousands of people all over the world and has touched and improved conditions for millions of others.

That's not bad for an organization just over half a century old. It all began when a labor organizer, Harvey Jackins, brought home a suicidal co-worker to care for and support him. Harvey found the only useful thing he could do for this man was just to be with him, to give him undivided attention, to listen sympathetically as the man discharged his inner turmoil. The success of this attention led Harvey to try it out with other acquaintances.

It worked so well soon there was a large community of people in Seattle experimenting with this listening, exchanging attention with each other. From what they learned theories and postulates began to develop, augmented, altered, refined by further experiences as they reported them to each other. A journal was published to share these findings, and the discoveries began to expand down the coast to California, across the country, up into Canada and eventually around the world.

The communities were organized into areas, which combined into regions, each with a reference person to oversee the functions and growth of the organization, and with an international reference person and alternate keeping track of the whole community globally. Liberation groups were formed against every known oppression, each with an international liberation reference person to guide and coordinate, and in many cases a liberation journal for that oppressed group. Other literature began to

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while still being deeply saddened by the casualties of the Iraqis who bore the brunt of this murderous violence. For we must remind ourselves always that war is about killing people. We may talk of broken agreements, resolution violations, regime change or whatever, but when we decide for war we decide to kill people, as many as it takes for our side to win.

I am afraid that both Americans and Iraqis will think of this as a victory. It is not a victory. It is a failure. A failure of human beings once more to solve their problems without resorting to force and violence. The base problem is that people do not believe that we can have peace without resorting to force and violence. I believe we can. I know we can.

I know it because the Houdonsonie, the People of the Longhouse (known to the world as the Iroquois) have shown this for centuries. Before the Europeans came these five, and later six nations adopted the Great Law of Peace by which they agreed to solve all conflicts among them with words instead of weapons. This has kept the peace among them since that time. They have offered to the world that any nation can join in their Great Peace. In the 1920s the Mohawk statesman Deskaheh went to the League of Nations to share the Houdonsonie experience, but they would not let him speak. After the UN was formed many native people tried to speak there, but no one has listened.

It is my belief that all people really want peace, but many think it

is hopeless and most think they have no power. President Eisenhower said that when the people of the world really decide they want peace, the governments better get out of the way and let them have it. We must do more than want it. We must decide to have it. We must tell each other, tell everyone that peace is possible. We must agree to forswear physical force and violence. To let the weapons of war rust and decay from disuse as we patiently resolve our differences with our dialogue and creative thinking.

The best thing about this failure we have just experienced is that so many people all over the world spoke out against it before it began. My email has been full every day with wonderful thinking about ways to achieve peace from many people. We all need to be thinking together about this, to gather in groups, in circles and listen to each other, and to publish our best thinking far and wide. I myself will continue to think and write more about this - I have too many thoughts to fit in this small newsletter.

Let us join with the Hopi Nation in mourning the loss off one of their people, Pfc.Lori Piestewa, the first Native woman to be killed in a US war.

And let us join Chief Arvol Looking Horse, Keeper of the Sacred Pipe of the Lakota, as he calls for all people everywhere to go into their sacred places every year on the summer solstice, June 21. A time to honor the Sacred Sites of Mother Earth and to pray for peace among all peoples. ☺

Talking Stick Change

Another Place, Inc., the non-profit entity which has contained and supported the activities of Mettanokit Outreach for over 20 years, is dissolving and will no longer be financing this newsletter. We are now engaged in exploring options to determine the nature of a new organization to continue our work with the native prison program, and other groups as well as the workshops and camps.

Meanwhile we will continue to honor orders for books and recordings by mail as before. Your membership subscriptions and donations continue to be welcome and needed (please make them out to Medicine Story), but during this period of transition cannot be tax deductible.

Dr. Medicine Story

During the past year Francis Medicine Story Talbot earned a Ph.D. in Religious Counseling from the American College of Metaphysical Theology. He received his Masters in Education from Lexington University in 1974 and his BA in Creative Writing from Cornell University in 1954. Medicine Story is presently at work on several new books, about peace, community, and the teachings of the elders.



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grow: books based largely on talks and workshops, as well as pamphlets, audio and video recordings.

One of the many brilliant concepts of Harvey Jackins was to encourage people to create their own wide world organizations. People were invited to stay part of his growing counseling community, to use it for resource and inspiration, while creating their own organizations. At the time I heard that, in the late seventies, I had already begun to help create community and to go out into the world to spread the teachings of my elders, and in that Harvey was for me a great personal support and inspiration. He would counsel me and encourage me and always asked me to send him all my books and articles, which he insisted on paying for. With that model, I wonder how I can better encourage our own communities to further coalesce and grow into a true global organization.

Here I should say something about the connections and distinctions between RC and our organization (as yet without a name: I'd like to hear thoughts of people about a name that could fit us and show us to others. "Mettanokit" is too localized and says nothing about us. Lately I have been thinking about "The Circle Way" with Circle Way networks, regions, communities and villages. What do you think?).

Re-evaluation Counseling is an organization which has a one-point program, to assist each other in becoming completely human, by freeing all persons of their emotional distress, including chronic patterns

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SCHEDULE 2003, MANITONQUAT & ELLIKA

Date	Place	Phone Contact
MARCH		
14-25	International Rainbow Gathering: BRAZIL	
MAY		
2-4	Spring Moon Ceremonies: Assonet, MA, USA	
16-18	"Your Life as a Healing Story", Bochum, GERMANY	(49) 0 234 958 6098
23 -25	Workshop: "The Circle Way", GERMANY	(49) 0 3308 753883
29 - 1 Jun	Community Workshop: Heckenbeck, Germany	(49) 0 5563 6170
JUNE		
6-8	Workshop: Toscana, ITALY	(39) 02 348 2261999
27 - 2 Jul	Family Workshop: Umeå, SWEDEN	(46) 90 29066 or 070 604 0309
JULY		
4-7	Workshop: Tanum, SWEDEN	(46) 525 41011
19-20	Workshop: Öland, SWEDEN	(46) 471 50450
AUGUST		
30 Jul - 10	"WELCOME HOME" International Summer Camp, GERMANY	(49) 4256 9830008
19-21	Mundekulla Music Festival, SWEDEN	(46) 471 50450
SEPTEMBER		
12-14	Workshop: Extertal, GERMANY	(49) 0 5262 992133
19-22	Workshop: Graz, AUSTRIA	(43) 3117 2948
26-28	Workshop: Trumsdorf, near Hof, GERMANY	(49) 9283 898 733
OCTOBER		
11	Harvest Moon Powwow: Middleboro, MA, USA	
25	MCNAA Benefit: Sharon, MA, USA	
NOVEMBER		
2	MCNAA Powwow: Sharon, MA, USA	
15	MCNAA Powwow: Lincoln, MA, USA	



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and bad habits. Of course, as people become free of these they generally also seek to transform the social structures that create and re-enforce those distresses and patterns, and create a more truly human society.

Very quickly I realized how useful the tools of RC would be in my own circle work, and that a counseling session of only two or three people was also a circle. But although we use these tools and find them extremely effective for our circles, we are not an RC organization and do not refer to what we do as re-evaluation counseling. For those interested to pursue those lines we provide information about RC and how to connect with that organization. Those who do find it very useful in their lives and work.

I also try to stay connected to our area when I am at home, to attend at least one regional workshop and one liberation workshop a year, and to devour the quarterly journal PRESENT TIME and other literature,

all of which give me inspiration, insight, information and support for my work.

But our organization does not have a one-point program. We have not yet distilled a mission statement into words (we have now a circle committee to work on that) but what we have seems to have not only a strong personal and relational healing component, but also continues to seek and create spiritual expression, as well as alternative living modes based on the circle way of equality, respect, closeness and mutual caring and sharing. A major element of that spirituality is our devotion to the earth and the natural world and all our fellow creatures.

I happen to believe that these interests central to our circle work are what all people with hope for their futures would adhere to. Most of us would agree that the obstacles to being able to live a truly human existence are the structures of oppression institutionalized and enforced by our governmental and economic systems. The majority

would probably like to effect change in those systems from inside while still supporting them financially with taxes and consumer spending. A small number would like to replace these systems with their own, which has in the past meant merely replacing one power group with another (exchanging Czars for Commissars, etc.).

In this regard our Circle Way would support anyone seeking change by humanizing the current institutions, but it would also encourage all so inclined to withdraw their energies from the dominant system as far as possible. By grouping together in cooperative, sharing communities people can satisfy all their basic human needs with a fraction of the income it takes to survive individually, and these communities can be further strengthened by bio-regional networking and trading. The more self-sufficient we become the less we contribute to the military and prison industrial complexes and to the oppressive economic injustice of obscene wealth and wretched poverty and the destruction of the environment by our consumerism.

These goals are what I have derived from the teaching of my elders about the Original Instructions for human beings, to live respectfully in a circle of equals and devote ourselves to the care of our children, our elders, and all people of earth, including our plant and animal relatives, our Mother Earth, and all the coming generations.

I have been at this work for thirty years, joined by many people, my beloved partner Ellika, all those who assist in the prison circles and who take leadership in organizing our



Medicine Story with Swedes and Germans, 2002 Camp



camps and workshops. I think I have come quite close to the limit of what my time and energy can do to expand this work further into the world. I have taken Harvey Jackins' example in encouraging leadership in general. Perhaps it is time I begin to ask for more people to begin thinking about this circle way as an organization, to make it their own, to

woman who is helping to create an alternative healing center and ecovillage (see web-site: alternativbyn.com). Someone gave her my book *THE CIRCLE WAY*. BiMi said, "My, this is just the way I have been working for many years." This is good work and a good connection, the kind we want more and more.

So I'd like to see people taking

move ahead at summer camp.

Last year we were able to extend ourselves to two summer camps. The first, a Nordic camp in Sweden, organized by Kai Westling, who organized the first two camps at his place, with his partner Anja, was a close and joyful circle of individuals and families, around 70 in all, for two weeks. It was so warm and wonderful, so supportive and affirming of all our goodness and humanity that the glow continued through the dark and frozen winter.

The big international camp in Germany was also a wonder, but of course differently. Situated where it was in the north, quite a few of the 300 people spent some days or weekends, left and returned later, so it was not an unbroken tribal experience for all. But it was packed with excitement and creativity, with growth and learning about our needs for closeness and loving natures, about paying attention and doing our best for our young people, about the steps we must take to move with greater dispatch to free, just equitable and completely free society.

There were wonderful classes taught by Emmy and Anne and Ellika, and the most creative talent show I've ever seen, fantastic music including blues and jazz from our young people's band and a community chorus led by Roland and Carola. The clans were the heart of camp and made imaginative ceremonies, there was a fine men's group with their own tipi and sweat lodge, and the women tell me the womenspace was better than ever as they all took leadership to make it



Organizers Circle, 2002 Camp

take leadership in growing some aspect of it. We want folks taking more leadership in creating circles and communities, in creating regional networks of circles and communities, in connecting with other existing networks, and organizations in all parts of the world, in organizing and creating new camps around the world. I would like to have facilitators thinking about people's needs for connection and information, for parents, for young people, for elders, for any oppressed group, coordinating outreach for justice, for basic human needs and rights, and for the environment.

I have recently met a Swedish

leadership in communication, in recording our gatherings, creating articles, books, audio and video and film presentations, and disseminating information to the public and the media. For instance, I have many audio and video cassettes about our work which could be edited and reproduced. If someone has that skill and interest.

I'd like to get any thoughts you may have on these matters by email or post or telephone or whenever we meet. We have these websites circleway.org and mettanokit.org where I can post this newsletter and perhaps stir some dialogue. It would be good to have enough reaction and thought from people to

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Meeting at the Bottom

by *Medicine Story*

From 12-15 December, 2002, the European Union held a summit meeting in Copenhagen. During that time 10,000 protesters marched in the streets and gathered in the squares, from many countries in Europe and beyond. They were making their feelings known against economic imperialism, racism, injustice against indigenous peoples, and destruction of the environment, as well as Bush's planned war against Iraq.

At the same time a four-day meeting, Bund Møde, was held in a large tent on the "Peace Meadow" in Christiania, the famous "free state" of 900 alternative squatters on an abandoned military post in Copenhagen. Here, in a community called Børneengen (Children's Meadow), Ellika moved in 1979, and she and I have kept her house for our European base of operations since 1984.

People were welcomed to this "meeting at the bottom" (in contrast to EU's "meeting at the top") by the Julemand (Santa Claus) who invited me to assist, whereupon I opened the proceedings by joining all together in the Longhouse Greetings and Thanksgivings. I also introduced the concept of the talking stick and set up circles where all could be heard.

During the four days there were stimulating presentations by indigenous people, Greenlanders, Sami, South American Indians, Africans, Gypsies and Eastern European peoples. There were meetings on Nordic cooperation

against privatization ("Our World Is Not For Sale!"), and for global democracy. There were discussions about economic oppression, homelessness, poverty, a universal minimum income, and the eco-village network. There were reports from many organizations such as the IWGIA (International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs) here in Copenhagen. Sunday night we closed the proceedings as we had begun them. There were prayers by representatives of all religions (including a touching Hebrew hymn sung by a Jew, a Christian and a Muslim together). Native North Americans were honored with a round dance, Africans drummed and sang, Gypsies danced, the Nordic world serpent Ygdrasil represented by a 50 kg python was carried aloft by the crowd, and I closed all with the Longhouse prayer once more.

At this "meeting at the bottom" we heard many stories the world media do not tell, stories of the struggles, the poverty, the injustices, the fear and violence confronting most of the people of the world and caused by the economic autocracy of the multi-nationals, globalization and the colonial governments. Let us be heartened by this show of unity and protest without violence and let it energize us to work harder to spread the word of the good work and good thinking that is being done. Violence, from the top to the bottom, alienates us from each other. Listening to each other, hearing and telling our stories, singing and dancing with each other, these bring us together, and only when we are together will we change the world and construct a truly human society. ☺

In Memoriam

We were quite overwhelmed in March to learn within a week of the passing of four people close to members of our family here.

Samuel David Dills, father of our Donna Dills

Caterina, mother of our dear friend Piero Baio

Lise Beth, actress, married to *Medicine Story* from 1954-67

Tish Bustamente, long time Rainbow sister, wife of Mocking Bird



Tish Bustamente

Consolations to all friends and family members.

Next month we will have ceremonies here to spread the ashes of our old friend and Mettanokit member **Jim Romick**, on this land, one of his last requests. Our sympathies go out to daughter Kayla and to his wife Elaine, with grateful thanks for her support of our outreach programs.



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just as they wished it to be. The youth had a cabin to themselves, and a number of support groups met, including, a first in camp, a group for Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transsexual support. The bonfire in the meadow as directed by Jose was grander than ever, and there I told my annual Story of the World, the adventures of humankind and how it got into the fix we are in, and a vision for the future coming from all of us.

One place that I would like to see improved this year is in the initial impact of people arriving at camp. In this camp, so accessible to people, many came later than the beginning and there was some difficulties for some people finding out how everything worked and getting settled in. Since we will be in the same place this year we should think about and prepare for this. One friend of mine had many difficulties coming in and finally left without getting the wonderful benefit of our closeness and mutual support. I think we could do more thinking about how we welcome new people to camp, at the beginning, and continually throughout the camp. It has seemed to work well to welcome newcomers at midday circle and ensure they have clans, but what if people leave before they ever get to circle?

At Rainbow gatherings there is a "Welcome Home" stand where people who are knowledgeable about the camp and its customs greet and assist newcomers in finding what they need. Also serving them tea and good vibrations. In our case that might also involve finding a clan and

attention for a "mini" session. Besides giving information, they might provide a map of the camp or at least directions to camping areas, circle areas, food and toilets and so on. We have also the experience of people with special needs, physical difficulties, children, people who have come a long way and are tired, and it would be great if there were some of our angels around to help carry or set up, to give tea and a sympathetic ear, maybe a mini session on the spot. I would like it if everyone's first experience in the camp were very positive, warm and friendly and concerned. That's who we are, after all, when we are able to be out of our distresses. Probably in this center there would be a lot of listening and discharging going on, but also music and just socializing.

Welcome Home!

Anyway, I think my friends will try again next year and give us a chance to redeem ourselves. I am sure we will have figured out how to do better.

A wonderful occurrence at camp was a big pelting storm that had folks dancing joyfully naked in the rain, then hastily coming together to dig trenches to divert the flood that threatened the buildings. I began every circle reminding everyone that they are completely good and was rewarded at the farewell circle by hearing so many report that the highlight of camp for them was learning how completely good they were born and have always been.

After the high of every camp, workshop and circle there is always the let-down of re-entry into the distressed dominant culture. Therefor we should take it as a valuable service to continue to

remind each other at all times how loving and caring, how intelligent and creative, how completely good we always are under the masks of our distress patterns (which we now know how to discharge). ☺

Two books I have read lately I want to recommend to everyone. The first is *SMALL WONDER*, in which the absolutely wonderful writer Barbara Kingsolver shares her excellent thinking, poetic sensibility and big heart with us in a way that makes you feel close to her personally, lets us see deeply into things that expands our own thinking and feeling about really huge issues of peace, beauty, and justice/ compassion for our fellow creatures. I think you can't help but love this book, and if you are not familiar with Kingsolver, I also recommend heartily her beautiful novels, *THE BEAN TREES*, *PIGS IN HEAVEN*, *THE POISONWOOD BIBLE*, and *PRODIGAL SUMMER*.

The second book is *THE BIOLOGY OF TRANSCENDENCE*, by Joseph Chilton Pearce, author of *THE CRACK IN THE COSMIC EGG*, and *MAGICAL CHILD*. It's not quite such easy warm reading, but it is more important than anything I have read in years and well worth your effort. His thinking so much reinforces my own and expands it, that it will be a great support for the next things I am writing. I only wish everyone in the world could get these ideas and this science in some form. So read it, distill it, and pass it on in your own way.



The Next Focus

As I have said elsewhere in this issue, I think it is time for us to pull ourselves together and become a global organization that affects the course of history and the quality of living on earth. I think we have an essential contribution to make. We don't have to have solved all our problems to make a beginning. But there is one area I would like us to focus on as our next step. More and more, every year, the conviction has grown in me that, although we are all profoundly loving beings, we find our love confounded and compromised by old patterns of hurt and negative thinking.

The realization I would like us all to have is that love is who we are, it is our nature, and that we would be loving every other person we know every minute if it weren't for these patterns of hurt we all carry. This is so essential to our lives, to our growth, our health, to our future, to our evolution as a species, that I suggest we all make it our single priority. That we stop worrying about whatever we are worrying about, stressing over whatever we are stressing over, stop whatever else we may be doing or thinking and take as our sole work the elimination of whatever it is that keeps us from completely loving everyone and every thing in the world, including ourselves, every moment of our lives.

What would your life look like if you loved yourself completely, without reservation, every single moment? What would it be like if you felt complete, unconditional love all the time for everyone you

know? What would it feel like if everyone you know showed their complete, unconditional love for you all the time? And if you were so in love with everything in Creation that it dazzled and tickled and amazed you all the time?

Wait a minute - isn't that exactly what Jesus was talking about? And might that not be another way to express the ideas of Krishna, the Buddha, and all the prophets and sages and poets through the ages? Okay, I'm sure we all like the idea. These holy people have been inspiring us for three millennia. But we haven't yet figured out how to do it. How do you love yourself and everyone else and all Creation all the time?

First thing I suggest is hang out with a very new little baby. No one could convince me that little baby is not perfect. We all started just like that. We are perfect to our core. The things we don't like about ourselves now are just the results of the hurts and negative conditioning we have received. And as we now know those can all be discharged. They cling to us, but they are not us. We can love ourselves completely and hate our patterns. To enhance this loving attitude, start thinking about and owning the wonderful things about yourself. Learn self-appreciation and practice it often.

The second thing is to realize that everyone you know is just as perfect as you are, and the things you don't like about them are only their patterns which are not who they are but results of the ways they have been hurt. You can love them completely and hate their patterns. To enhance this attitude start looking for the wonderful things about

everyone you know, and express your appreciation openly to them.

Remember that at every moment people are only doing one of two things in relation to you: they are either showing how they love you or they are showing you how they have been hurt. If we really begin to live all our lives in an appreciation circle, if we look for the strengths and the intelligence and the beauty and the love in ourselves and in each other, express that to one another, and remind each other always how completely good we are and have always been - what a difference we could make! ☺

Where Will You be When the Sun Rises?

In 2000 187 tribal nations gathered in Tuscon, Arizona to greet the rising sun in the world's largest Native American media covered event called "Thunder in the Desert". Peter Jennings told his audience that only among indigenous people do we see men holding hands with other men to bring in the New Millennium during our midnight friendship round dance. The elders and the indigenous communities have asked for it to be repeated an additional three times to fulfill the sacredness of the number four, and these will be in 2004 from December 31st to January 11, and 2008 and 2012. Information at www.usaindianifo.org, or by telephone 520.622.4900.



World Rainbow Gathering

In March the third World Rainbow Gathering was held in Brazil, (the first two were in Australia and Zimbabwe). Ellika and Tashin and I joined Diamond Dave from California, Felipe and George from Wisconsin, and George's daughter Cedar Rose from North Carolina and flew to Salvador, capital city of the state of Bahia, (a delight for people of color, as almost no one is white, all mixed Indian and African and Portuguese, sweet, lively, musical folk). We then drove a rented van to the Brazilian highlands over the crudest mountain roads to the site near Chapada Diamante National Park. High in a beautiful secluded valley over two thousand people from 48 countries gathered to pray for peace and to celebrate life.

It was the end of summer in a climate rather like Arizona, and when the sun was out it was blistering hot! We ate better than at any gathering, with mango, papaya, pineapple, banana and passion fruit, and many Brazilian melon and other fruits totally unknown to us. Groves of trees were sparse and shade was at a premium. There was a lovely river, warm for swimming, several waterfalls and beaches and a sweat lodge was set on one of them and carefully protected. There were cacti and many interesting plants and colorful flowers, swarms of tiny humming-birds, the Brazilian word for which means "kiss the flowers". Ellika also discovered little monkeys in the mountains the size of gray squirrels!

One night I told the story of the Rainbow, the origins of the

gatherings, with assistance from other old-timers, and told everyone that this was the first gathering I knew of where the local town actually fought to have us come there! It seems another town wanted us too! The people of Brazil are so outgoing and friendly, so tolerant and easy-going, they were a joy and a lesson to us all. The townspeople sang and performed for us, and when we arranged with them to come down and do a show with theatre and music and circus acts, the whole town turned out with a great feast they had prepared only for us! The man who owned the neighboring land said if we had to leave we go to his place, and if Bush started the war we could all just stay!

On a given morning the camp was silent until the midday meal to pray for world peace. By then we had learned that Bush had started his war with Saddam, but we got no details of it while we were in our mountain paradise. There was a huge cave nearby where we could escape from the sun and we could council there and have talking stick circles. We also had a wedding there, and at night a party with a wedding cake and the best Rainbow musicians playing until dawn.

On our way home we stayed one night at a little hotel overlooking the beach and the ocean in the village of Arembepe, where a lot of alternative folks are living in palm roofed primitive houses - in the 60's Janice Joplin stayed there with a local fisherman and Mick Jagger and other stars frequented. Ellika

discovered the little newly hatched turtles on the beach, many looking confused and disoriented, so she helped by carrying them one by one to the ocean where they swam happily away. On our last morning we went swimming in gigantic surf, I swam out too far to catch a wave and was caught in undertow. My son Tashin was keeping an eye on me and swam out to help me struggle back to shore - almost too much adventure, and we discharged heavily. Back in the snows of New Hampshire, Brazil seems like a dream now, but I know we must return to that beautiful land of beautiful many-colored, joyous and musical people. ☺

ENVIRONMENT

The United States Government has not only attacked Iraq, it has gone to war with Mother Earth and with all our plant and animal relatives that share her with us. This administration is undoing all the environmental protection laws that we worked so hard to get in place. So that the rich can get richer and our children will be robbed of their birthright. I urge all of us to support all environmental groups, such as the Natural Resources Defense Council, Defenders of Wildlife, the Nature Conservancy, and to write your senators and congresspeople of your concerns.



Owning Class People of Color

Every year I try to attend at least one co-counseling liberation workshop, and in November I was able once again to participate in a workshop led by Jo Saunders, liberation reference person for owning class people. I get to be included by virtue of being raised by my non-Indian owning class mother, educated at private schools and attending university. What is best about Jo's workshops is that she provides and supports one whole day prior to the weekend for people of color.

It feels so hopeful and so wonderful that people of color from many parts of the world can come together so quickly and find instant safety and closeness with each other, a result of the training and experience of re-evaluation

counseling. We were from India, several Caribbean nations, South and Central America, African and Asian North Americans, and me, sole representative of our First Nations. The warmth and intimacy and humor of this group and our support groups still linger and give us a light to carry in the world until we meet again.

Jo: "The source of all the world's ills can be tracked down to motives of profit and greed exercised and implemented by an owning or governing class. In global terms this is true of the white western economies, headed up by the US... The history of the US is one of building an economy by inflicting genocide upon the native peoples and then upon the enslaved peoples of Africa... nearly every

European country from which their citizens came had done the same!... When an owning class person is challenged to face and discharge what underlies the patterns of superiority, arrogance, and control, what emerges is not guilt but terror, not complacency or self satisfaction but the horrors of being disconnected."

The understanding that Jo insists upon as primary for us all to remember is that "each and every human being is blameless and so can take complete responsibility for present as well as past, from that position." She reminds us first, last, and always to remember our own deep abiding goodness. ☺

Prison Program News

After many years of our struggle in Massachusetts, the Department of Corrections will at last allow a Purification Lodge for the inmate participants in the Native Spiritual Circles at MCI Norfolk, North Central, and Souza-Baranowski in Shirley. The Directors of Treatment in these institutions have contacted us, and we are providing information and material support to proceed with building lodges and conducting ceremonies in each one.

18 years ago we built the first Purification Lodge in a state prison in New England at CCI Somers, CT. The program there has continued successfully since then and has expanded to five other institutions in Connecticut. The experience in all these has been extremely

positive and beneficial, not only to the inmate participants, but to the institutions as they provide strong physical, mental, emotional and spiritual healing, furthering the growth and rehabilitation of the prisoners.

We are hoping now that New Hampshire will follow and take the steps necessary to provide this powerful spiritual ceremony for the Native

Circles at NH State Prison and the Northern Correctional Facility. As we do in Connecticut and Massachusetts we offer our support in this project. ☺



Former prisoners come for a circle with Raven and Medicine Story.





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Medicine Story with children of Heckenbeck community, Germany.