

Inner and outer: spirituality and activism

Turning the Tide *Workshop Notes - October 2009* by Hilary Cullen

Bob and Helen facilitated the workshop in October, with a mixture of one-year course and one-day attenders.

Our introduction included a brief overview of our day's programme. The notes written here are summarised from the written wall charts.

Programme: Inner and Outer: Spirituality and Activism

Welcome and Introductions

What is spirituality and activism for me?

Prior to the workshop we were invited to bring with us an object that had some special spiritual meaning to us.

Sat in a circle, we each spoke about the object and about our understanding of spirituality that it signified – or reminded us of.

These objects – various and personal – were set in the centre of the circle.

Bob described how this sharing of our 'spirits' was taken from the practise of the North American native 'sweat lodge' culture.....

Invited to add comments on a sheet of paper of words / phrases that came to mind following this exercise:

- *Compassion*
- *Resonance*
- *Nonviolence is 'love in action'*
- *Activism is helping in any way*
- *Spiritual awareness rescues us in daily life*
- *Calm*
- *Be the change*
- *Changing Quality of Being*
- *Impact on communities (+ or -)*
- *Flexibility of communities*
- *Finding language / words to express spiritual values and build bridges*
- *Connections*
- *Mystery*

Bringing in inspirations - quotes

*A series of quotations were placed around the room and we were invited to read them and stand next to one that reflected our own feelings / beliefs on spirituality. **The quotations are compiled by Denise in a separate email.***

Going deeper – inner journey

A guided meditation was led by Bob, lasting about 15 minutes.

Sharing our reactions to this experience, people used the words ‘powerful’, ‘enlightening’, while some felt strong physical or emotional responses. Many found they had a surprising and possibly useful experience – and one they hoped to repeat at some future time.

Connecting the inner and outer

We were invited to consider how to use our spiritual understandings to connect to our ‘outer’ life. To do this – we were invited to do a picture / diagram / or other representation on paper to set out possible ways forward.

Mapping our way forward – moving through obstacles

Next stages of our journey

Obstacles / challenges

Resources: inner / outer

Paths through

When we had completed our ‘drawing’ we discussed what we had come up with in small groups, before sharing our comments all together.

Tools sharing (set out on a wall sheet)

- *NVC*
- *Minute silence in meetings – hold shared vision*
- *JournalEmail journal*
- *Poetry..... Sewing..... Origami*
- *Cooking..... food>>>> healthy, better energy*
- *.....bring & share..... Helping different conversations.....*
..... ‘HALT’(Hungry? Angry? Lonely? Tired?)
- *Photo of child*
- *Courtesy.....*
- *Communicating in a way that is >>>>honouring our own*
humanity>>>>Honouring people’s humanity

Planning for December

December is a ‘self-managed’ day, which needs to be considered, designed, and planned.

The year group invited the day-attenders to stay and join in considering what we would do on the day.

Adam agreed to summarise the discussion in a separate email and circulate it, which has already been done.