



Welcome to Janki Foundation News this spring, marking ten years since the foundation was launched at the Royal College of Physicians in December 1997. This season's news reflects the diversity of activity around Values in healthcare: a spiritual approach (VIHASA) as it gains in popularity with practitioners round the world and as more facilitators become familiar with the learning and facilitation

process. Many local groups of facilitators are meeting up to explore more deeply how this modular training programme for health practitioners works.

The seminar this year was titled *Lifting the Spirit* and explored new ground in methods of caring for the self in a balanced way. New projects are getting off the ground; in particular, we will soon be ready to launch

Lifting Your Spirits, a guide for people coping with serious illness, imaginatively using the seven spiritual tools of VIHASA as therapeutic supports (see below).

If you are new to the foundation or its work, you can find more information on our website: www.jankifoundation.org
Happy reading!

Dr Kala Mistry



Dadi Janki, President of The Janki Foundation, joined 175 mainstream and complementary healthcare practitioners in NW London on 13th January 2008 for a lively day of dialogue, discussions and insights on the theme of Lifting the Spirit.

Panel members relax their discussion

A panel led by laughter therapist Margaret McMathie, who overcame her own clinical depression through the power of laughter and went on to work with the renowned Dr Patch Adams, discussed what it is that lifts our spirits – and what brings them down. There is no quick-fix for low spirits, it seems, and the panellists, Ruth Sewell, a lecturer in cancer, palliative care and spirituality, Arnold Desser, a senior lecturer at the School of Integrated Health, University of Westminster and Sister Jayanti, a spiritual teacher, broadcaster and trustee of The Janki Foundation, were of one mind about this.

The comforts of such things as food, drink, films or conversations with friends, to which we often resort to cheer ourselves up, tend to be short-lived, the speakers maintained. They argued that an essential step in raising our spirits is to stand back and observe our own thoughts and feelings in a disciplined, objective way. This enables us to watch out for harmful habits of thought and behaviour that bring us down, and to reawaken our self-respect. Meditation can facilitate this process.

Are there 'easy' ways to do this?

Sister Jayanti spoke of using the mind to travel to places or memories of calm, happiness and enthusiasm as this can help us to see the present in a different light.

Margaret suggested that an 'attitude of gratitude' and of wonder about our life and the world around us leads automatically to a greater sense of self-respect – and respect for others. Arnold's counsel was: "Try not to have bad days!" and when you are feeling low, to do an "audit" of what is going on inside and where the pain is really coming from: whether from habitual responses to stress, or unhelpful relationships with family, friends and work colleagues, or resistance to change. Ruth warned about the compulsive and draining habit of worry: "Be careful not to suffer over your sufferings," she said and stressed the danger of feeling alone and disconnected, and the value of community and experiencing empathy from those around us.

Ruth also mentioned the solace and refreshment she finds in the quiet pursuit of quilting – likening it to meditation and an opportunity to connect with her inner self.

One sure-fire way of lifting the spirit, the panel agreed, is to serve others, which brings blessings in return. Margaret quoted Patch Adams saying: "Go out and serve and see your depression lift", something borne out by a cancer patient she knew who was inspired to don a clown's outfit and wig and visit wards to uplift other patients.

Need to recharge

Interestingly, the audience's questions all centred on the risk of carer 'burn-out' – of

July launch of new publication from the Janki Foundation

Lifting Your Spirits: Seven tools for coping with illness



A practical guide with two CDs

Lifting Your Spirits is a unique guide designed to help people coping with serious illness or disability. It is being published by The Janki Foundation and introduces the same seven tools that facilitate learning in the Values in Healthcare programme for healthcare practitioners: meditation, visualisation, appreciation, listening, creativity, play and reflection. Written by Jan Alcoe, in collaboration with other members of the Values in Healthcare project group, it draws on Jan's own experience of using the tools for her support and self-healing during a lengthy treatment for cancer. She was inspired to write the guide because of the benefits she experienced and the lack of any guide of this kind for people who are diagnosed with serious illness.

Each tool offers practical and inspiring ways of dealing with the physical and emotional upheaval and uncertainty which illness presents. Some focus on preparing for surgery and treatment, others on coping with pain, anxiety or depression. The guide can be used by individuals for their own sustenance, or introduced into patient support groups, treatment and therapy centres, hospices, day centres and other healthcare services. The beautifully illustrated booklet and two audio CDs, with original music by Matthew Stephenson and Lou Beckerman, provide guided relaxation and meditation, short daily practices and positive thoughts which will literally 'lift your spirits'.

ISBN 978-0-9548386-1-4

Order forms are available from the Janki Foundation office. Enquires at lys@jankifoundation.org

LIFTING THE SPIRIT *(continued from page 1)*

healthcare professions being overwhelmed and drained by the needs of their patients. Arnold suggested that the practice of listening with an open heart, while standing aside, may help. Sister Jayanti said that each individual needs to know how to recharge, by connecting with their inner peace, love and power. Ruth remarked that patients are not a blank canvas – they have many skills, and it is important to trust and empower them without being attached to one's own ambition for them. The panel agreed that our first responsibility is to the self: to understand ourselves and accept responsibility for the quality of our thoughts and feelings.

Celebrating 10 years of the foundation's work, Dadi Janki shared insights to 'operate' on the audience, as she put it. "Only the mind has the power to put right the health,

wealth, relationships and the condition of the world," she said. Her tips for nourishing the mind, giving it rest and banishing blockages, bondages and barriers centred on living lightly with honesty and love and giving co-operation. In particular, Dadi explained, "When the true self and the divine connect, our hearts can become compassionate, honest and strong, our intellects reliable and our consciences clean."

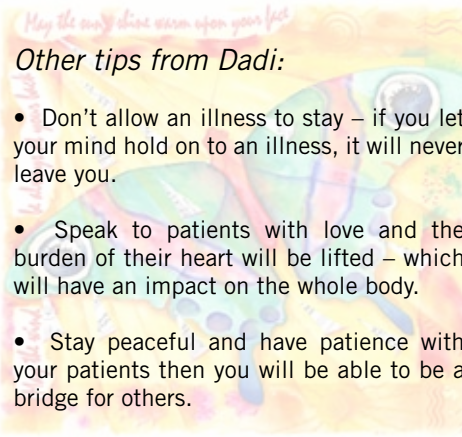
The day ended with three workshops: The Hidden Key, Mastering Time and Create, Innovate and Elevate, each focused on different spiritual tools from the *Values in healthcare* training programme (listening, appreciation, reflection, meditation, visualisation, creativity and play). Lou Beckerman, a nurse and professional singer, brought the enlivening day to a melodic close.



Sister Jayanti responds to a question from the chair of the meeting, Margaret McCathie



Arnold Desser in conversation with Ruth Sewell



Other tips from Dadi:

- Don't allow an illness to stay – if you let your mind hold on to an illness, it will never leave you.
- Speak to patients with love and the burden of their heart will be lifted – which will have an impact on the whole body.
- Stay peaceful and have patience with your patients then you will be able to be a bridge for others.



A candle-lighting celebration of 10 years of The Janki Foundation's work

Lessons from North Wales

John Fleet, retired surgeon, who continues to offer whole day VIHASA workshops to various groups, sent his latest thoughts to us:

In earlier days, I feared that the word 'spiritual' would put healthcare professionals off, and I have been proved wrong again and again! Only yesterday (written in March 2008) staff from a local hospice, with whom I have run several modules, attended for a workshop on Being Positive. As always, at the beginning, I defined spirituality as 'the act of using our inner resources of peace, love and compassion for the benefit of ourselves and others'.

One of the chaplains, who had come for the first time and who had thoroughly enjoyed the day, came to write this definition down at the end of the day as he liked it so much. I found that a great compliment to the underlying spiritual principles of VIHASA and am thoroughly comfortable now with the 'spiritual' word and we get many repeat bookings!

Let's co-operate

When I run an open module, anyone can choose whether to attend. Another lesson for me came about in organising a workshop for a working team of 110 nurses from our local hospitals, who were going

to attend in small groups. The first team were surprisingly stiff, cold and hostile when normally the atmosphere is light and fun. It was only with gentle questioning I discovered that they thought I was part of a management plot to control uncooperative nurses! As they realised this was not so, that it was meant to be fun and when some of the management staff joined in later in the morning, things started to smooth out. I can honestly say that having done VIHASA workshops from the piloting days, I actually enjoy them more and more each time, so good is the material, and I would encourage these wonderful workshops to ripple round the world!

Thoughts become things

Four young entrepreneurs have chosen The Janki Foundation, on the basis of shared aims and understandings, to be one of five beneficiaries from an innovative project called TBT 721. This is a launch project of their company, also TBT 721, "a business to encourage people to pursue their dreams" and it aims to help people see their ideas from conception through to reality. TBT stands for "Thoughts Become Things" and at the launch, they intend to sell within a space of 72 hours (from 18th to 20th July), one million badges – hence "721", with all proceeds from badge sales earmarked for five charities. An exhibition in London showcases how powerfully "thoughts" have

become "things" through the ages and the £1 badges state: "Knowledge is oxygen – breathe in" as well as their slogan.

For details, see:

www.tbt721.com/1millionproject.htm

London: Women and Health conference

The Janki Foundation had an exhibition stand at the International meeting of Innovations & Progress in Healthcare for Women, Queen Elizabeth II Conference Centre, London on 7-8th April 2008, organized by the Elizabeth Garrett-Anderson Institute for Women's Health, University College London, in partnership with The Eve Appeal.

News updates from Italy

Milan: a group of mainly health professionals are attending monthly whole day sessions, exploring one module from VIHASA each time.

Rome: The VIHASA programme was presented to health professionals and a Chief Councillor, who subsequently offered a venue for further official presentations. One main hospital in Rome has arranged training using VIHASA for staff dealing with Alzheimer's Disease

Turin: Dr Paola Lagorio continues to present modules to a mixed group on a regular basis.

VIHASA training in Oxford, November 2007

The weekend retreat for facilitators last November at Oxford inspired much discussion, exchange and reflection. Participants were put through their paces in the skills of listening, reflection, sharing values, giving feedback and facilitating sessions. They also learned to appreciate taking time off to relax.



Pathways in Mauritius

On a visit to Mauritius last November, Kala Mistry and Keertee Rugbursing, both mental health professionals in London, agreed to work with PATH (Positive Approach to Total Health), the local NGO using VIHASA. Keertee (for whom this was a home visit) and Kala ended up touring more of the beautiful island's healthcare system than originally planned. They presented workshops on the project Values in Healthcare and on managing work-related stress and emotions at Flacq hospital and SSR hospital with doctors and with the multi-disciplinary team at the regional psychiatric unit, Brown-Sequard hospital. They also ran workshops on compassion and values with senior nurses and administrators at the Ministry of Social Services. To top it off they organised training sessions for two nursing schools as well as trainee prison officers, and Kala gave a talk to diabetic patients on managing health-related stress. The events were

organised by members of PATH, who also attended a retreat to familiarise themselves further with the VIHASA programme.

Participants feedback, SSR hospital, November 20th 2007 on Continuing Medical Education (CME) session on managing stress:

Very relaxing and de-stressing. (I opened my eyes with a smile).

Thank you very much!! This CME gave me another way of looking at things.

A group of 7 junior doctors wrote: It was a very interesting, inspiring talk which will be very useful to us ... Thanking you!



Senior nurses discuss values underlying compassion at the ministry of social services, Mauritius

Jamaica, Montego Bay

Volunteers from the Cornwall Regional Hospital in Montego Bay, Jamaica greatly enjoyed discovering VIHASA as they took part in exercises on Valuing Yourself, Peace

and "Listening", facilitated by Masana de Souza. The volunteers offer pastoral visits to in-patients and patients in the community and are looking forward to training as VIHASA facilitators.



News from India

Mt Abu: Global Hospital and Research Centre, Mt Abu India, a flagship hospital supported by The Janki Foundation, continues expanding its service, outreach, education and research activities. A new Trauma Centre, which has served over 3600 outpatients in the first quarter alone, was opened in October 2007. Fully equipped with diagnostic and treatment facilities, including radiology, staff at the centre can perform emergency and elective surgery, and treat burns, fractures and road traffic accident injuries. For more information see www.ghrc-abu.com.

New Delhi: A group of 70 doctors listened with interest as Dr Astrid Bendomir introduced the Values in healthcare: a spiritual approach programme at the Institute of Human Behaviour and Applied Sciences (IHBAS), New Delhi, on 8th March, 2008 and enjoyed taking part in exercises from the Valuing Yourself module.

Hyderabad: A VIHASA facilitators' training took place in February 2008 in Hyderabad at the Brahma Kumaris retreat centre, a 'haven of peace' in the middle of the hustle and bustle of the city. Of the 60 participants attending, the majority were doctors from the locality with a few visitors from abroad. They enjoyed the material and the new way of learning; the facilitators (from UK and India) also learnt and grew as they co-created the programme daily in response to the new challenges of this group! Since 2005, interest in the method and ethos of the training has continued to grow all over the world.



Durban, South Africa:

Dr Raksha Balbudar updated us: The Values in Healthcare programme has been a support for carers from various fields of healthcare in South Africa. Staff from hospices, the private sector, public sector, a university clinic and medical university, HIV helpline, rape crisis, cancer support, NGOs, old age homes, children's homes and hospitals, as well as psychologists, paramedics and alternative healers have all attended. The healthcare system is understaffed and existing staff battle with burnout and low morale as they care for a society ridden with first- and third-world diseases, with one of the highest rates of crime, road accidents, trauma, rape and HIV/AIDS in the world.

Carers find that the VIHASA programme addresses their needs and although little time is allocated for staff development, they use their breaks and time off duty to attend the workshops, seeing the benefit in their personal and professional lives.

Participants' comments: *I have realised how 'dead' I have become. It is not going to be a magic fix but I will try to take these values back into the workplace.* Tara Eksteen

Thank you for a wonderful and uplifting experience. There is a lot to reflect on and reinstate for the self. Dr Gillian Nutt

The significance of acknowledging values as a foundation for how we see ourselves is tremendously important, not only for how

we operate in our daily lives but also in our work environments. Working from a values base enhances our energy in dealing with patients. Nkosazana Ngidi

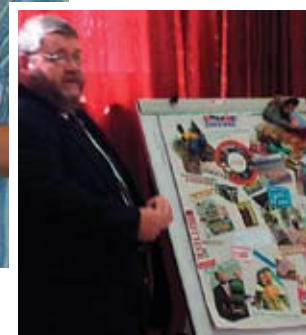
Self-nurturance is important in order to give to others. Cheryl Adams

I have realised that everything starts with me and within me... So if I treat people with warmth, kindness and love I will receive the same. Ntsiki Mgadi

I now have a change in attitude towards life, people and my environment. I will appreciate life more fully. The sessions were very enjoyable in a light and spiritually fulfilling way. Premi Vahed



Participants discuss their vision and strategy during workshops in S Africa.



The Lighthouse Centre hosts Befrienders' Retreat

Fifteen befrienders, a truly mixed group with an age range from 22-80 years, representing eight different nationalities, consisting of counsellors, nurses, a policeman, a drugs worker and others, with their facilitator Georgina Long, spent the February 29-2 March weekend at the Lighthouse Retreat Centre in Worthing. One of the attendees, Joan Thomas, reported:

The weekend forms part of the training we undertake in order to support our clients more effectively and enrich our own lives in the process. It was designed to enable us to study compassion – a quality we have to call on in all its aspects of our befriending roles. The calm, peaceful atmosphere pervading this establishment on the Worthing seafront provided the ideal venue.

Dr Craig Brown, an experienced and thoughtful GP, facilitated an exchange of ideas and experiences, made more interesting by the background of our varying ages and situations. Craig probed our differing concepts of compassion and raised many points that I am sure some of us had not previously considered.

Maureen Goodman, spiritual educationalist, added an intriguing strand on compassionate listening. After an hour with this splendid lady, we surely improved our listening skills!

We returned to London reinforced by the spiritual ambience of the Lighthouse, the fulfilling discussions and the soul food, cooked with love, served to us during the weekend.



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For information on the activities of Global Hospital & Research Centre, Rajasthan, India, which the Janki Foundation supports, visit www.ghrc-abu.com