



The Subud Boston *newsletter*

Newsletter of Subud Boston Inc.

October 1996 Volume 4 • Number 10

Editorial

We are at a loss to choose a subject for an editorial this month. Fundraising, House hunting, difficulties in explaining Subud, and of course the ongoing conflict over the correct presentation of the Subud symbol—There are so many contributions to the newsletter lately that we feel that there are no serious issues left to deal with in this space. Except for one.

The fax machine. Mardiyah Tarantino has been unflagging in her attempts to communicate with us but has been frustrated at every turn by the rococo arrangements necessary in order to send us copy by fax. To us in the more civilized northeast, it may be hard to believe that anyone in the United States still relies on such an outdated technology as the facsimile machine, but so it is. Many of us discarded fax machines in the distant past, along with phonograph records, postage stamps and the Tin Lizzie. At the Subud Boston Newsletter we do, however, retain the capacity to receive these archaic missives. However, the

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My Problems with Bapak's Talks

Stuart Cooke

My first problem with Bapak's talks was I couldn't read them. After I was opened, I tried but the word "God" was mentioned too often. It made me angry from memories of my church upbringing. My next problem was listening to them.

After I'd been opened for a year or so, Bapak came to New York. At the first talk I sat in the back amongst some 400 members and after an interminable time, the translator finally spoke English. But it was only for a few minutes and then back to the Indonesian again. I couldn't stand it; my mind went crazy. I wanted to leave the room and at the same time was falling asleep. It took all my will to keep from falling off the chair. It really felt like some kind of torture. Yet at the end of the talk, the fatigue and the crazy thoughts had gone away. I felt refreshed and clear. What had happened? I had no idea except I felt a quietness or the vibration of the latihan in a deeper way than after latihan.

At each talk during that visit the same process occurred. Later, when New York members gathered to listen for two or three hours to a tape of

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Chairperson's Corner

Housing skeptic turned proponent

Lorena Kreda

I'd like to share the following thoughts in case others have had some of the same doubts or concerns that I've had about acquiring a Subud house.

One of my greatest difficulties as chairperson has been embracing the idea of Subud Boston owning its own house. I've thought of every pitfall there is as I'm sure so many of us have. My primary concern, though, has been that a Boston Subud house might serve the needs of only a few active members in this area. I was looking at it very materialistically—a whole house for just a few people—and it didn't sit well with me.

After our first housing committee meeting on September 29, my attitude has changed dramatically. I'm still wary of all the logistical issues; but I no longer see our house as just serving the needs of only our few Boston members. Vernon Contessa, of Southbury, Connecticut, was visiting Kenneth and joined us for this meeting. He's a long-time Subud member and shared insight into this question. He said that in Indonesia there is a saying, "If you want a car, build a garage." Similarly, we don't wait for the baby to arrive before planning the nursery. To call our Subud house a field of dreams would

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**The Subud Boston
Newsletter**

Vol IV • 10 / October 1996

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The Subud Boston Newsletter is published monthly by Subud Boston and sent free to all members of Subud Boston and its affiliated regional members.

The subscription rate for all other U.S. subscribers is \$18.00 a year. Foreign subscribers \$23.00 a year.

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Fundraising—How do you feel about it?

Lorena Kreda

One way to help grow our housing fund is to consciously embark on fundraising projects. Each year we have a yard sale which is an example of one such effort. Last year we sold Christmas trees to raise some extra money, and it was Cassidy's diligence and organization that made that venture a success. Recently Mayer Kirkpatrick proposed the idea that Subud Boston become an independent travel agent in a multi-level travel agency business as a way of earning money in an ongoing enterprise. Kenneth suggested that perhaps we could have two yard sales a year instead of just one. Our thinking caps are also on to come up with something we can bring to the world congress to help channel money into our coffers.

I think all of these ideas are potentially good (or even great) money-makers. None can become a reality if there is only one person behind them and this is why I'm writing this article. I think we all need to be conscious of our

need to raise funds if we are ever going to have a down payment for the purchase of our own premises. We need to act as a group to agree upon a direction for our fund-raising energy, collectively and individually set goals, and work cooperatively toward achieving these goals. A fund-raising effort, be it a specific project or a long-term enterprise, cannot be the responsibility of just one or two people. The whole group must be supportive. That's not to say everyone must participate directly, but I feel everyone should take ownership of the idea and at least offer prayers and wishes of support (and perhaps patronization!).

What are your feelings? Should Subud Boston take on active fund-raising projects? What types of projects interest you? Do you have any specific ideas? How much time can you devote to such an effort? Let me know what you think! You can e-mail me at kreda@eng.gdai.com. △

Quote of Note

In reality there is no such thing as time, because all of time is filled with the Power of God. And there are witnesses all around us when we receive God's power. All nature bears witness to our acts. So what else is there to look for? All you have to do is to receive it.

Feel now, how does the *alang alang* grass sway in the wind? A river? A wave in the wide ocean? And how does the earth feel the movement of an earthquake? Yes, this is witnessing, the proof in you. It is clear that the Power of Almighty God encompasses everything and is within everything.

Bapak

Housing Committee Kick Off

Dorothea Gillim

The Housing Committee met for the first time on September 29th to discuss short and long-term plans for finding an ideal space. All involved—Lorena, Kenneth, Viviana, Susan, Andrea, and Dorothea—agreed that it's incredibly exciting and equally daunting to be embarking on this new venture: finding a bigger rental house and eventually even maybe (gulp) to buy our very own house!

In terms of finding a bigger short-term place to rent, we defined our needs as the following:

- 2 rooms, approximately 1000 square feet a piece
- the space should be unobstructed and carpeted
- access to a kitchen
- parking
- accessible via public transportation
- rent includes 2 nights per week (Sunday and either Wednesday or Thursday), and ideally 2 Mondays per month for Helper/Committee meetings as well as the possibility of scheduling the occasional potluck brunch, etc.
- maximum rent \$200/month

We decided to limit our search to the in-lying towns of Boston, including Cambridge, Somerville, Watertown, Belmont, Newton, Brookline, etc. If you have any hot leads or would like to assist in the search, please approach any member of the Housing Committee.

In terms of finding a long-term space to purchase, Andrea reported on her meeting with a real estate agent who posed a number of questions for the group to answer, ranging from "What are our space needs?" to "What is our zoning status?" We will be contacting the regional and national offices to find out what kind of help (financial and otherwise) is available. We will also be contacting other groups, such as Subud New York and Subud Toronto, to learn from their experience of purchasing a place and then creating an enterprise to support it.

Finally, a committee member shared a reservation she had about buying our very own place. For me, this pointed out the importance of viewing this venture as a process. We must continually ask ourselves and our membership why are we doing this? And we must be satisfied with the answers, or be open to any opposition because our success rests on full participation and enrollment. My own feeling is that buying a house (or whatever it turns out to be) is more than just getting a roof over our heads that we can call our own. It's about learning to develop harmony as a

group and about developing a spiritual community based on the principles of the latihan.

I hope you'll indulge my editorializing. It's the secretary's privilege.

Dorothea

An Open Letter About Fundraising

Susan Holbert

Dear Subud members,

On September 29, a meeting was held to discuss the possibilities of renting new space and eventually purchasing a building. I would like to comment on part of what I learned at the housing meeting and to make a suggestion.

What do we have?

Our projected monthly income is \$465 per month. \$400 is from pledges from 12 members. The remainder is from fundraisers like the yard sale.

What do we spend?

\$170 per month is pledged to Subud East Coast, \$70 pays for newsletter expenses and \$40 is used for miscellaneous expenses. That leaves \$185 for housing, of which we currently spend \$100

What do we want?

We would like the space we are looking for to meet the following criteria:

- be attractive and pleasant
- be located in a safe, quiet neighborhood
- be accessible by public transportation
- have two rooms of at least 1000 square feet each, unobstructed and carpeted
- provide access to a kitchen
- provide easy, free parking
- be available 2 nights per week and ideally 2 Mondays per month, plus for the occasional potluck, etc.

This is a tall order for \$185 per month.

What can we do?

It seems to me we have only 3 choices:

- Stay with our current housing. (But in a recent survey of the Boston Subud members, a majority expressed an interest in having better latihan space.)
- Reduce our expenses. (But the last membership meeting voted to increase our commitment to Subud East Coast.)

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Editorial—continued from page 1

process can be arduous.

We receive faxes on the computer; but if left to its own devices the fax device in the computer will answer all of our phone calls and emit a horrible squeal. It also interferes with our ability to communicate by e-mail (our preferred mode of communication). Consequently this fax device is normally deactivated. In order to send us a fax you must first call. (It's the same telephone number.) Once alerted that a fax is imminent we hurry to the computer and activate the fax receiving software. Then, and only then, can the fax be sent to us.

This complex process becomes much more arduous when the sender of the fax is someone like Mardiyah, who lives on the other side of the planet—Hawaii in this case. People there, for some unfathomable reason, seem to prefer to send their faxes in that chilly hour between midnight and dawn when we are not, to tell the truth, *not* at our most alert.

All of these difficulties plus many others have been overcome by the modern invention of e-mail. Remember, anytime is a good time with e-mail! The particular extra advantage of e-mail is that it avoids the labor of re-typing articles, not to mention that it eliminates the danger of misspellings and wrong punctuation which are the bane of Kenneth Henderson's existence. Mardiyah doesn't want to make the leap into the 22nd century. Ever conservative, she has taken a giant step backward and now sends things post. In the next issue we will include instructions on how to access our mailbox. △

Chairperson—continued from page 1

be a little overly dramatic, but I think it's true that we first need a facility in which a good-sized group could gather before the good-sized group can appear. Obtaining such a facility is not just to nurture the latihan of our small core of members, a Subud house is also a place from which to reach out to the community and to be a bright, shining presence. It makes having visitors easier, both from within Subud and without. It's a home base, a foundation, a launch pad.

I feel so much more positively now about the idea of obtaining a Subud house though I'll admit I'm still cautiously positive. I think that we could go a long way toward being a more hospitable presence just by finding a more adequate rental space. This is our immediate goal and one I hope we will achieve very soon. It will be exciting to watch the influence improved space has on our group in growing anticipation of the influence a house would have both on our group and on Subud in general △

Problems with Bapak's Talks—continued from page 1

a new talk, the same thing occurred. The word "God" had since ceased to bother me and one day I tried reading a talk. Though not as strong, I had the same experience.

I still have problems reading or listening to a talk. I'd rather read a book or newspaper, watch TV, talk, anything. I want to keep using my thinking and my feelings all the time. But on occasion I'm drawn to the quietness I know is there if I stop and read and listen to a talk of Bapak. I'm often confused about my life. Despite my resistance, Bapak's talks plant something in me. Afterwards I feel I understand something, though if you asked me what that understanding is about, I couldn't tell you. When I go to latihan my attitude is different. I'm more confident and free to follow this thing that expresses itself in us. I guess you could call it spiritual food or as Bapak put it, his talks aren't for our minds and hearts like everything else we read or watch or listen to. They're for our inner. They explain to our inner, or at least to my inner what Subud and the latihan are about and we need that very much, for to follow the latihan without a clear purpose or understanding is treating it and ourselves as though we were just things to be tossed about by anything, by any force whatever.

As to who is this person who gives these talks, I don't know. I have no yardstick that will measure him. He's outside the common assessments I make of people, often unwittingly I'm afraid. Despite my problems with him, I feel a great love for him but strangely it was never even close to the love I felt emanating from him. It sounds mushy in this culture to say this, but it's true. I never felt obeisant though some members did behave that way. I did feel a kind of respect that one has for anyone you look up to. I don't think I ever looked up to anyone more, despite all the years of head pain, trying to listen to what he had to say. Now I see it was never "my problem with Bapak"; it was my problem with me. As he used to say, he was only serving as a channel for something else. It was that something else that was my problem. △

Letters

From the Andersons

To all our dear friends in Boston,

Well, we have finally made a definite decision about where the Andersons' will be! After months of trying to fit work, schools, health and other family needs together and after losing a house in Portland and then also in Lexington we are predictably going for

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Open Letter—continued from page 3

- Raise our income. (But the pledge system does not seem to suffice. Requests for pledges went out to 44 members. 30 have not responded.)

To improve housing

I want to suggest that each member think of making a specific contribution toward rental space. Those who are pressed for money should by no means feel obligated to contribute. But those who can afford to go to the movies or buy CDs could contribute \$1 to \$3 per meeting. This could double the amount of money we have available for finding suitable space. Money left over could go toward a housing fund.

Furthermore, if we want to borrow money to buy a building, we should be able to show a financial institution—and ourselves—that we are willing and able to come up with some monthly amount that is realistically in line with what we would like to purchase.

To support the newsletter and Subud East Coast

Those who value the newsletter might consider contributing \$1 per issue or \$10-\$15 per year.

Those who want to support Subud East Coast must contribute in order to meet the \$170 that was pledged at the last membership meeting. (In dollars and cents, this means that if eleven members support the pledge, then each must contribute \$15 per month to meet that commitment. If only eight support it, then each must contribute \$20 per month for Subud East Coast alone.) What does it mean to make a pledge if you don't contribute the necessary amount to honor that pledge? Whatever it may mean in spiritual terms, in practical terms it means that the money comes out of the rent and housing budget.

In addition to having lofty ideals and high hopes, we must support our aspirations in the material plane. Otherwise they will not materialize.

This is my personal suggestion and not a reflection of the opinions of the housing committee. In the meantime, I will continue to look for better rental space within our current budget.

Sincerely,
Susan Holbert

Letters—continued from page 4

the seemingly more insane option and have returned to our original plan of moving to Portland, Oregon. It has been an extraordinary time with many bizarre circumstances that have pushed and pulled in all directions. Our new address is: Anderson Family, 4 Touchstone Dr., Apt. 102, Lake Oswego, OR 97035, Tel: 503-699-2846, Fax: 503-699-1565

Now it is settled we are looking forward to this next phase. However, we are especially sorry to leave the many dear friends that we and the children have made. We were sad that in the chaos of leaving for

England in the summer and with the uncertainty of our future we did not manage to say good-bye properly and to thank you. You all gave us much love and support and we felt especially close to you. It has been a very special time in all our lives and we will always remember our New England life!

With much love

David, Louise, Rose, Bryn, Brigitta, Bonnie and Raphaella

From Mardiyah Tarantino

Hey gang!

I'm sure not for the Subud symbol to become an "object of idolatrous worship!" Between you & me, I can't stand the Subud symbol. It looks like something the NRA dreamed up to put in their range. It looks like a beer ad—a spider web—a bomber's sign—But read your quote on what the Boss says about it and tremble!—here's a little article—in answer to Sharif.

Mardiyah T.

Atrocious At Explaining Subud

Mardiyah Tarantino

Yes, I confess to being atrocious at explaining Subud. People have even run the other way when I've broached the subject. I've tried and failed and given up. Once I even gave a short explanation of Subud as an example of "alternate religions" in my Intro. Sociology class. Result: one mildly curious inquiry which soon fizzled out.

So now I avoid talking about Subud. But why should that be?

- 1) It's the most important thing in my life. How can I risk babbling to perfect strangers about it, then watch them shrug it off?
- 2) It's like talking about one's "secret parts" — "You know, God and I have a thing going." "You must be kidding."
- 3) Speak from the latihan, and your voice gets quiet and serious. They think there's something wrong with you, especially if you don't usually sound quiet and serious. They ask: "are you all right?"
- 4) Talk from an elevated feeling or fiery conviction, and the KNOW your nuts.

From a sociological standpoint, Herbie Mead's "taking the role of the other" provides a good explanation.

As compassionate beings, we tend to put ourselves in the place of the person we are talking to. Rightly or wrongly, we gauge our speech to what we think they will understand or agree with. At the same time, we, as Subud members, feel mildly uncomfortable about it. We are using tools—words—which don't jibe with the experience. We don't have the jiwa of the Prophets

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Newsflash

An all-new SEC membership directory was unveiled at the SEC Congress last May. The new directory is spiral-bound and includes a regional/national dewan page and e-mail addresses. Directories are available for \$3.50 each (includes postage), so if you would like a copy, please make your check payable to Subud East Coast and send it to: Ron Larson 3826 Highgate Drive Valrico, FL 33594-5306; e-mail: ronanilars@aol.com (e-mail orders accepted)

This announcement appeared in the most recent issue of the *Courier*, but I wanted to include it in our newsletter as well because I think it's a wonderful directory and that everyone should have one. I've used mine quite a bit; I carry it with me everywhere (really). It was especially useful in my travels to DC. I'd encourage anyone who didn't get a directory at the congress to order one from Ron. —*Jillian*

Dates to Remember

October

26 City Year Servathon

November

3 dessert after latihan

4 Helpers/committee

11 Helpers/committee

13 Bill Sullivan will be speaking at the Smithsonian Institute, Washington, DC.

18 Helpers/Committee

December

7 Christmas party

Birthdays

October

3 Andrea Blum

10 Peter Hensley

20 Grace Kyle

22 Susan Holbert

November

2 Lisa Gorman

2 Mayer Kirkpatrick

5 Hillel Natanson

26 Walt Thornton

Atrocious—continued from page 5

who never cared what people thought about them. I think it has something to do with the quality of one's heart: a certain naivetè, a purity, a lack of sophistication, like the children of Fatimah who could relay a message which they didn't completely understand.

Watch the people who can and do talk about Subud successfully. They don't usually "Take the role of the other" because, like children, somewhere along the way they never learned the trick. Usually, they are not self-conscious; moreover they have a certain courage. I admire people like that. Maybe it's a gift.

So you say to yourself, "Well, after 35 years in Subud, what can you do?"
(May we hear from others on the subject? Editors? Δ

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