

## Winter Solstice

When I was asked to write the festivals pages for the 2015 Earth Pathways diary I said that since each page would only allow me to touch on a few points I should like to supplement them in a section of the website.

This is the last of the eight, and I feel a sense of satisfaction at having kept to my commitment. I've enjoyed choosing what to share with you each time, and I hope that the right people will read it at the right time, since all my contributions will be 'archived' on the website.

I put my heart into these writings, as well as my experience, and what I've learnt from great teachers. I'm always happy to hear from you, and delighted if you accept my invitation to be part of my global project, 'I have a dream' . See below.

So what have I included in this Winter Solstice sack of presents?

The story is Stone Soup, easy to remember and tell, and yet with the most powerful of messages.

An expanded exercise on looking at one's life.

A set of guidelines for living which I found on a table at Buddhafield cafe at the Green Gathering in 2006.

An invitation to be part of a global project. I really need you!

Thanks

Marion McCartney

### Stone Soup

Many years ago, or perhaps just yesterday, three travellers approached a village. The travellers were hungry but in many ways the villagers were in a worse position: after years of civil war and poor harvests they feared hunger, they feared scarcity and each person or family hoarded what little they had.

So as the travellers walked through the village one person after another assured them that there was no food to spare.

The travellers stopped in the village square and said to the villagers, "Since you have nothing to share, we will share what little we have: the secret of how to make soup from stones."

Naturally the villagers were intrigued and soon a fire was lit under the town's largest cooking pot, water was added and the travellers ceremoniously dropped in three smooth stones.

"Now this is going to be a fine soup," said one of the travellers, "but a pinch of salt and some mixed herbs would make it wonderful." Up jumped a villager crying out that she'd just remembered where she'd seen some. And off she ran, returning with a spoonful of salt, an apron full of herbs "found" by her neighbours, and a turnip. As the pot boiled on, the memories of the villagers improved. Soon barley, carrots, potatoes and small quantities of soup ingredients donated by every single person in the village found their way into the great pot, and a cask of wine was rolled into the square as all sat down to feast.

They ate and danced and sang well into the night, refreshed by the feast and their new-found friends. In the morning the three travellers awoke to find the entire village standing in front of them. At their feet lay a satchel of the village's best breads and cheese.

"You have given us the greatest gift," said an elder, "the secret of how to make soup from stones, and we shall never forget."

The third traveller turned to the crowd and said, “There is no secret, but this is certain: it is only by sharing that we may make a feast.”

And off the travellers went, never to be seen again, However the villagers and all those they visited had a whole new recipe – for life.

## **No Regrets**

What would I regret not having done when I come to the end of my life?

List all the things that come to mind when you ask yourself this question. Give yourself permission to write down whatever comes to mind and don't 'think' about it for too long.

To support you to get going I have given you some life areas to write about. Add your own as you write and remember there are no right or wrong answers...

I would regret it if I hadn't ...

told ...

asked

shared

experienced

discovered

visited

created

achieved

completed

given

When you have completed your list choose one or more and write a Precise Next Step, something you can do in the next few days to move yourself closer to your goal and away from regret. It needs to be a small action, not something huge and daunting.

## **How I Live My Life**

I firmly establish my intention to live my life for the healing of the world.

I am fully present in our time.

I hold in a single vision the transformation of myself and the transformation of the world.

As a bird flies on two wings, I balance outer activity with inner sustenance.

I remember that I am the inheritor of the strengths of thousands of generations of life.

I recall that the prayers of future generations are silently with me.

I am confident in the magic and power that arise when people come together in a great cause.

In it all and through it all, holding to my intention, I let go into the music of life.

I dance.

Adapted from a Buddhafield leaflet

**Imagine...a beautifully designed and illustrated leaflet...**

**Well my talents lie elsewhere, so instead, this is what I'd say to you if we found ourselves in a café or waiting in a queue together: "I'm Marion McCartney and I have a dream..."**

So what about the future? We're good at creating nightmare visions and scientific predictions, but we've lost sight of the essential third element. What sort of world do we actually want for future generations, our grandchildren and their grandchildren? Set aside for a moment what you think is **likely**, and focus on what would be **lovely!**

Why do it? Here's one reason: "Just as the scientist proceeds from speculative hypothesis to practical experimentation, so with social change, what begin as wild dreams emerge as movements to make the imagined real." (Stephen Coleman)

Polly Higgins, author of 'Ecocide', says that when we give voice to what we want to see happening in the world, it creates a process of 'new future visioning.' Giving it language makes it start to happen.

You could start:

'I dream of a world where ...'

'where children/ older people ...'

'where ... is valued more than ...'

Don't worry about whether what you write is original or 'good' enough; just writing and sharing it is what counts. You can sign it with your full name, initials, or a 'pen name'. So far some people have written a single sentence, others a few lines or a paragraph. However if you feel inspired to write more, that's fine.

If you include your name and email address I'll update you once or twice on how the project is going and enter you in a prize draw to win a copy of the beautiful Earth Pathways diary.

This global multimedia project started as a tribute to Martin Luther King's 'I have a dream' speech. I aim to collect 1001 dreams from people all over the world, so I really need your help!

*Please hand in whatever you write, or send it to*

the Facebook page 'I have a dream 2'

or the website [www.dreamthefuture.org.uk](http://www.dreamthefuture.org.uk)

Do check out the website anyway.

or c/o Tim Harland, The Sustainability Centre, East Meon, Hampshire GU32 1HR  
Then please use all your networks to spread this idea.