

# GLOBAL EXPRESS

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## EDITORIAL

'Rules that guys wish girls knew' went down so well last time we felt compelled to print the other point of view, hence the girlie stuff opposite. Talking of girls, your two editors have something else to report. An eye infection caught in Siberia and a dose of the dreaded glandular fever have delayed the production of this issue. Whilst we are very sorry about this, it has also served as a warning. We realise that a publication depending solely on two people is unhealthy both for the product and the people concerned.

What we need are people ready to commit themselves to Global Express for the next few years. The work entails 'multi-skilling' from commissioning, editing and designing to business management, marketing and website development. Most important, however, is the drive to create a powerful antidote to the prevailing attitudes of cynicism and selfish individualism. Currently produced in Oxford, we are contemplating a move to MRA's new centre in London—a state-of-the-art venue with endless opportunities for exciting initiatives. If you are interested, and have one or more of the above mentioned skills, please contact us (details below).

**Nicci Long and Laura Trevelyan**

**Next issue:** Suggestions...

### •Inspiration and direction

### •Men—What is it to be a man in today's society?

If you are interested in writing or contributing artwork, please be in touch. **Deadline:** December 1, 2000

**Future issues:** Themes might include development; leadership; forgiveness; being yourself; growth and progress; humour (always welcome!)

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## Why Global Express?

Global Express (GE) was started in Melbourne, Australia, in 1994 to link up young people who care about the future. Dissatisfied with what we were being offered by commercial youth magazines, we felt an alternative was needed.

Our aim is to inspire people to believe in themselves, and to believe they can make a difference. In GE you can question the way things are, and search for solutions. It is also a great opportunity to make contacts outside your 'comfort zone'.

Most of the GE team met through MRA (Moral Re-Armament), which is a worldwide network of people working for personal responsibility and conflict resolution. Absolute standards of honesty, purity, unselfishness and love, together with a search for inspiration from God (or the inner voice), are central to this approach to life. MRA is a Non Government Organisation recognised by the United Nations. For more information visit: <http://www.mra.org.uk>

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### *Global Express goes to:*

Africa: Kenya, Nigeria and South Africa; Americas: Brazil, Canada and USA; Asia/Pacific: Australia, Cambodia, Fiji, Hong Kong, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Sri Lanka, Taiwan, Thailand and Western Samoa; Europe: Croatia, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Italy, Lithuania, Moldova, Poland, Russia, Scandinavia, Serbia, Switzerland, UK and Ukraine; Middle East: Lebanon and Palestine.



Five minutes before school in a Yorkshire village, England, Photo: Arthur Strong

## GREAT REASONS TO BE A GUY

- ♂ A five-day vacation requires only one suitcase.
- ♂ You can open all your own jars.
- ♂ You get extra credit for the slightest act of thoughtfulness.
- ♂ Wedding plans take care of themselves.
- ♂ Your underwear is \$10 for a three-pack.
- ♂ If you are 34 and single, nobody notices.
- ♂ Everything on your face stays its original colour.
- ♂ Car mechanics tell you the truth.
- ♂ Grey hair and wrinkles only add character.
- ♂ Wedding dress—\$2000. Tuxedo rental—75 bucks.
- ♂ You don't have to shave below your neck.
- ♂ Christmas shopping can be accomplished for 25 relatives, on December 24<sup>th</sup>, in 45 minutes.

## THINGS ONLY WOMEN UNDERSTAND

- ♀ Why it's good to have five pairs of black shoes.
- ♀ The difference between cream, ivory and off-white.
- ♀ FAT clothes.
- ♀ A salad, diet drink, and a hot fudge sundae make a balanced lunch.
- ♀ Discovering a designer dress on the clearance rack can be considered a peak life experience.
- ♀ A good man might be hard to find, but a good hairdresser is next to impossible.
- ♀ Why a phone call between two women never lasts under ten minutes.
- ♀ Other women.

**Authors unknown**



patriotism FEAR  
CITIZENSHIP past STEREOTYPES  
**NATIONALISM**  
future LOVE PRIDE GUILT  
IDENTITY superiority

Dad is a quirky English eccentric (check out Basil in 'Fawlty Towers'). Mum is a chirpy Irish colleen. The unlikely pair gave birth to me in Wales and I was educated in Scotland. I can only be British. Black cabs, beans on toast, bad weather... I love it. It's home. Yet, as I've travelled the world I've come to realise that 'the best of British' have a lot to answer for.

How many of us were taught at school about the way we raped Australia or the holocaust for which we were responsible in South Africa? Not many, sir. I'm not 'throwing the baby out with the bath water' but I do think we've got to take responsibility for the uglier legacy of the British Empire. Facing up to the damage we've caused, the effects of which can still be seen today, can be crippling, I find. A recent conversation with a man from North-East India helped me find healing and perspective.

Niketu Iralu has devoted his life to drug rehabilitation and other initiatives for change in Shillong and Nagaland. 'I could have a lot of bitterness towards Britain', he said, 'but I don't because of those British who have given their lives to work with us for change'. When asked if he has a stronger faith because of the daily dangers and difficulties he faces, he paused before replying, 'In many ways, it's more difficult for you. You could so easily say to yourself, "life is good" and just focus on your own career and enjoyment. But it's more difficult for you to say, "I care, I care for the world"'. He concluded that both East and West, rich and poor, are required to work together to bring about lasting change. That set me on a new road.

In this issue, we've asked people how they feel about their countries... the past, the good, the bad, the future. What's striking is how much love we have for our homelands. If as individuals it is only when we love ourselves that we can fully love others, so it is with our nations. As Tim Costello, the Aussie Baptist Minister puts it, 'it is about recognising that we each love our own tribe but that we need to reach out beyond it'.

**Laura Trevelyan, UK**

It was with a sense of trepidation that I agreed to put some thoughts on paper about what being Northern Irish means to me. I find it easy to talk about my experiences overseas, but closer to home the task is emotionally more difficult. There are as many opinions and experiences of Northern Irish life as there are people in the province. I am one voice among many in a divided society where political and religious standpoints are held onto with fierce pride.

My quest for a sense of identity has often been conflicting. It is hard to decide whether I am Irish or British, when these concepts are so

culturally and historically opposed. As a young child I remember my mother telling me that as Protestants, we were the settler community. Joining in an Orange parade, which celebrates our Protestant cultural heritage, I asked her why some of the shops were not open. She explained that Catholics owned them and were scared to open up. As the drums beat out their triumphalistic message, I knew there was something wrong with a celebration that was being used to intimidate and denigrate the heritage of our neighbours.

It is hard to take pride in one's nationality when any form





The influence of Queen Victoria is fading in India's collective memory; one of many influences assimilated over the country's long history. Photographer David Channer has been a witness to the transience of the British Raj, and also to the friendships between Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi and British people which have outlived it. Interestingly, Calcutta's Marxist authorities are now re-erecting icons of the British Empire, as a sign of burying old animosities. 'There is no longer any wrath against the British in West Bengal. These statues are precious and have international appeal', they say (*The Times*, Monday February 7, 2000).



of flag-raising is seen as a sectarian gesture. However, we all need a sense of identity to understand and accept our place in the world. In Northern Ireland, religion and politics can define our very being. It was not until a trip to America that I discovered how we were seen by the rest of the world. An older couple looked at me pityingly, commenting on all the bombs I must have to deal with. This was a far cry from the life I was used to in my small village and even as a teenager at school on the outskirts of Belfast. The only violence I saw was on TV, and it was easy to become detached when it was a regular news feature. Apart from 'the Troubles', we were experiencing the lowest crime rates in Europe; I did not feel the need to be pitied living in a country where I had always felt safe. Sometimes we would tease our English friends that we went to school wearing bullet-proof vests—it was amazing how many believed us! I did not appreciate being seen as a 'child of the Troubles' when I was simply Frances, a girl with the same worries as any young person.

It was easy to grow up without any notion of the lives of the other group with whom we shared the island. Social contacts such as our village, church and school were mainly Protestant. Not being brought up amongst Catholics, it was a shock when I attended a conference for young people run by the Corrymeela Community, a group which promotes reconciliation across the divide. For the first time I heard Catholics speak of their sense of injustice, of being targets for police intimidation, and of discrimination in the search for employment. I had thought I was broadminded and tolerant, but this had been easy within the safety and privilege of my own community. As the only Protestant in my group I suddenly knew how it felt to be an intimidated minority amongst others who were not in the least impressed by my 'liberal' views and lack of interest in 'the border'. It is uncomfortable to discover how your people are viewed by another community. It was much easier for me to notice the oppressed overseas than on my own doorstep. According to Maurice Hayes, a local Catholic civil servant, the situation in Northern Ireland can be seen as a 'double minority problem'. While Catholics feel a suppressed minority in Northern Ireland, Protestants fear becoming an assimilated minority in a united Ireland. Thus both sides have displayed 'the arrogance and insensitivity of a majority and the insecurity and lack of self-confidence of a minority'.

Some dismiss the conflict as tribalism. The claim that 'religion causes wars' is equally dismissive, in a country where a long history of plantation and suppression has dictated that the majority of Catholics are Irish and Protestants are British. Others feel that if people sat around the table solutions would be forthcoming. Some English people believe that if they only had a free rein they would have everything sorted out in no time, after all that experience managing the Empire. It is easy to forget that the history of Ireland is long, complex and painful—people find it difficult

to compromise when their nationality and religion are at stake. Centuries of the 'divide and rule' mentality, with management from the top down, has left the English with a tendency to see situations from their perspective only, and to look for solutions on their terms. What would really help would be for them to have the humility to truly listen to us, to the issues of hurt spanning centuries and to our hopes and dreams for the future. This needs to be a listening that tries to understand and empathise without automatically giving advice, a listening that is not complacent and dispassionate but actually cares about the long-term welfare of our country. The Republic of Ireland is now flourishing, with the fastest growing economy in Europe. Yet it was only in its freedom to discover itself that its true creativity could burst forth.

I have a great love for my country and am very grateful for my upbringing. In some ways it was a lot simpler and more secure than that of the average British young person. With the strong emphasis on family and community values, and over two-thirds of the population attending church, I did not experience the same angst as those growing up in a more individualistic society where matters of faith are undermined. Although this can bring narrow-mindedness and sectarianism it does provide security and a sense of belonging. Faith takes on a very practical nature, borne out in a warmth and concern for the needs of others. It is tangible—a voice for political affiliation and reconciliation alike, but most importantly a channel of comfort and hope. At the height of the Troubles the suicide rate reportedly went down. Struggle brings reality into sharp focus, strengthening traditions, loyalties and beliefs and leaving no room for complacency. We learn the value of community and nationhood and gain a stronger sense of identity and purpose. Perhaps now we can look forward in hope to a future where the aspirations and cultural expressions of everybody will be embraced, so that we might find unity in our diversity.

*Frances Hume, Northern Ireland*

**T**all palm trees form romantic silhouettes on white sandy beaches in the Caribbean. Throw in a thatch hut, a marijuana-smoking Rastafarian, young Spring Breakers moving to the legendary chants of Bob Marley, and you have the average image of Jamaica ... package and parcel. This scene, widely advertised in holiday brochures, may well exist. True, Jamaica is extremely beautiful. True, the island abounds with lush tropical vegetation and there are palm trees everywhere—from backyards to beaches, on carefully groomed office fronts, as well as growing wild by the roadside. But there is more to it than that.

Music is an integral part of our culture, present in everything we do. There is music in the market, music in the mall, music in the office, music in make-shift stalls. It blasts from the sporty car, and the farmer

## WHAT WOULD REALLY HELP WOULD BE FOR THE ENGLISH TO HAVE THE HUMILITY TO TRULY LISTEN TO US



## CONTRARY TO POPULAR BELIEF, MARIJUANA IS MAINLY USED FOR MEDICINAL PURPOSES

makes his own as he sings to the rhythm of his donkey's hoofs. The dynamism of our culture can never be summed up in the advertisements. And contrary to popular belief, marijuana is mainly used for medicinal purposes—for example in the treatment of fever—as well as by Rastafarians for religious purposes. It is abused only by a small minority.

I am very proud to be African-Jamaican and feel privileged to have grown up with its traditions. Our biggest problem (as in so many countries) is political elitism and corruption. Many of our natural resources are exploited for the benefit of a few, while human resources remain largely undeveloped. Another problem is that of 'New Age Colonialism' by countries who seek to use globalisation (world capitalism) and its puppets—for example, the WTO—to exploit what they see as a market for consumer products and a source of cheap labour.

However, we have much to be thankful for. Jamaica has a rich and inspiring past and a bright future. There is a wealth of talent, creativity and hope which commercialisation and modern proletarianism haven't yet snatched away. People work to live, not live to work, and have a philosophical, unhurried—not lackadaisical—attitude to life. Money is not yet all. There is a high degree of racial harmony and cultural acceptance. As our motto says, we are 'Out of Many One People'. To fight against one group is to hurt the entire nation; to be racist is to be *un-Jamaican*. This above all else I'm proud of. While nationalistic, we are able to appreciate other cultures and are always ready to find out about them. The world could do with adopting, 'One Love, One Heart, Let's Get Together and Feel Alright ...'.

**Alleson Mason, Jamaica**

as a pariah.

Having lost most of our family, my mother and I fled to England to escape death, where we have started a new life alone. I made friends easily but for a long time felt lonely due to the moral and cultural differences of English society. Life was exciting in some ways but strange in others and it took a while to adjust. My mother and I have settled in well, and I am in my last years of high school. But this will never be home. So far away from my country for so long, I can't help but feel homesick. Some nights I spend looking back on old photos, and I realise more than ever how proud I am of my nationality. Yet I can remember a time—two years ago, during the bombing—when we were persecuted for being Serbs.

This was a war of greed between politicians. The real victims were the ordinary people from both sides, who had



Darko (front row, third from right) in Switzerland, with friends from around the world, Photo: Chris Davies-Griffith

no part in the political decision-making. This resulted in hatred on both sides.

I strongly disagree with the nationalism which sets people against each other, as it has in my part of the world. Contrary to people's beliefs, whenever I meet *anyone* from the former Yugoslavia we bond immediately. The happy memories we share make me feel closer to home.

It is unfair of anyone to denounce us and make us feel ashamed for being Serbian. Attitudes like these create wars and keep them going.

My message to today's generation: as ambassadors of your countries, you represent the future. That future can be great, but only if we promote unity.

**Darko Hadzic, Serbia**

**M**any people have opinions on the recent war in Kosovo. I feel that Serbia has been unfairly portrayed by the media and is still looked upon



**W**hen I think of my childhood in post-independence Zimbabwe, all I can do is smile. Some of the things we did sound funny now, but we sure loved them at the time. Most of the people I meet today seem to have had the same experiences—we remember the same songs, games and ways of thinking. All these memories, and my feelings now—living away from home—have made it clear that I love Zimbabwe dearly. I hope to plough back the fruits of what I have received from her.

Here in Europe, many things are different from home: the way of life, the people, and the way everyone grows up. One thing I sorely miss is the level of spirituality and an open love of God. I don't know if this is because people here are more reserved; all I know is that I miss it. It is these subtle differences that make me realise it is a privilege to be Zimbabwean.

When I got into St George's College in Harare my grandfather expressed his amazement. When he worked (1940's - 60's) schools like that were only for whites in (then) Rhodesia. Hearing about our past depresses me. The Colonial Era brought many problems and the oppression changed the way people thought. Until the dawn of Independence they

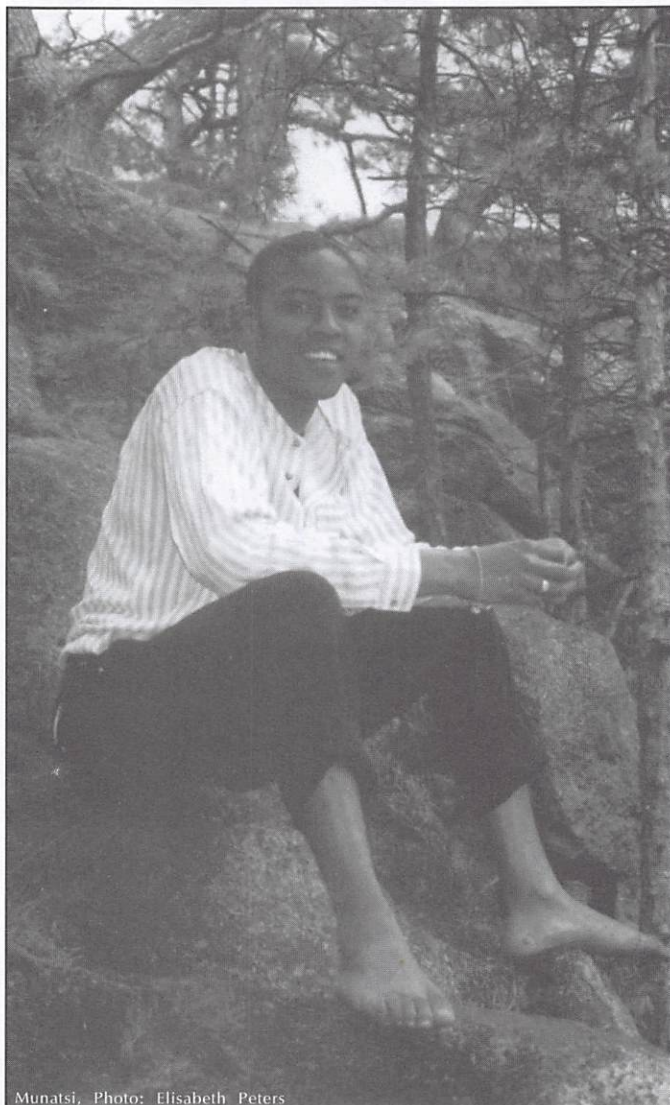
had little belief in themselves.

Hate and resentment are harboured in the hearts of many because they feel they were victims of grave injustice. This is one of the reasons why people have been taking over land belonging to white farmers. There was no real healing at Independence and this has been a time bomb, ticking away slowly. People think the Mugabe Regime is behind the farm invasions, as an attempt to cling to power. But I believe there is more to it than meets the eye.

Zimbabwe has done well for herself in a number of departments but there are some things we need to let go of as a nation. Too often we've felt superior to other countries; we need to turn away from this pride. However, I am happy that we've started to make a noise about the unfairness of colonial land distribution. This has been ignored for too long—the time has come for leaders of the former colonies to address this world-wide issue.

As long as we can achieve free and fair elections in Zimbabwe, I am positive about the future. I have my own political ambitions, and in the meantime will pray for our country and its leadership.

**Munatsi Manyande, Zimbabwe**



Munatsi, Photo: Elisabeth Peters

**K**enya, my country, is surrounded by five other countries, as well as Lake Victoria, Mount Kilimanjaro and the Indian Ocean. Kenya itself is a cornucopia of beauty—from forests containing rare owls to coasts with tropical reefs and beaches, deserts expanding for days, plains with wild beasts, lakes with flamingoes and mountains capped in snow. Situated on the equator, it has the Great Rift Valley flowing through it like the claw of a wild eagle. Its resplendent beauty, however, is nothing without its people.

Kenyans are able to cope in diverse circumstances, some

## THEY HAVE NOT LOST THE ART OF INSTANT JOY

life threatening. Though poverty, and drought stricken, they are always warm and welcoming.

They have not lost the art of instant joy, as well as having courage, patience, fortitude and a sense of humour. One might even consider their souls to be more developed than those of people living in Western countries. Instead of worrying about the wavering stock exchange, or whether or not to invest in a new BMW, rural Kenyans have more immediate concerns, such as where their children's next meal will come from.

There are certain problems which African countries find difficult to overcome. Our government is corrupt and leaves the infrastructure to rot, pocketing huge amounts of public funds. Kenya is made up of 42 tribes which leads to large conflicts. For example, the tribal group in power does not always give government funding to the schools of other tribes. Our government has until recently been a one-party



system with no freedom of speech; those who spoke out were detained, tortured and often killed. This authoritarian regime is slowly changing and hopefully will become more democratic.

It is difficult for Africa to develop as the West has. The colonialists forced borders on African soil that brought some tribal groups together and split others up. This has caused bloodshed in Rwanda, for example, where two ethnic groups were unable to manage together. Perhaps Africa would have been best left on its own, developing in a way that suited its true character.

If the diverse tribes were able to look beyond their differences—accepting each ethnic group as a brother—it would enable the political parties to focus on more urgent issues. To overcome poverty and corruption, Kenya needs to recover the ‘African’ way it was following before colonialism.

International organisations like the IMF and the World Bank need to be more careful to whom they give aid—very often it falls into the wrong hands, or does not help Africa develop on its own. It would be wonderful if the debt owed to developed nations could be dropped so that African states could invest their money in domestic issues like the development of infrastructure.

Kenya is a land of unending beauty, and although the life may sound simplistic, it is what I have grown to love.

**Mairo Retief, Kenya**

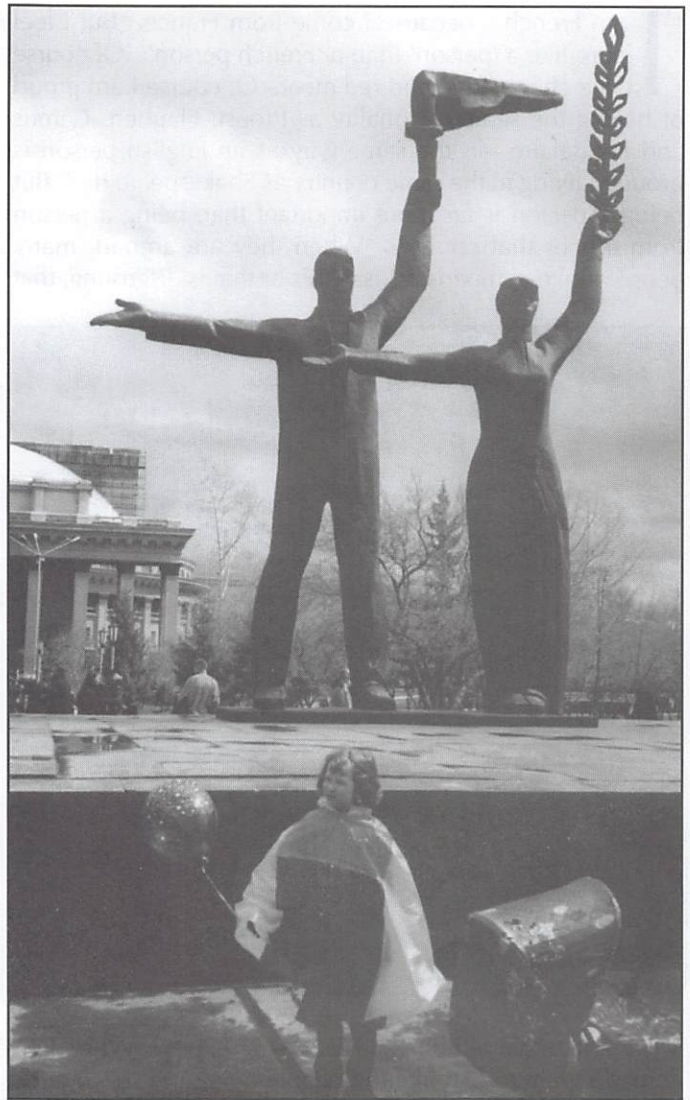
In the communist past I hated my country. For me it was the embodiment of evil. I couldn’t hate the communist ideology alone—all around me were people who whole-heartedly supported it. I hated them too. However pure hate was destructive. It was turning me into a lonely misanthropist who viewed everything with disgust.

That’s why I started to look nostalgically at Russia’s past and found a lot to be proud of. Mostly, it was Russian classical literature (which I hated at school because it was forced on me) and Russian religious philosophy. The names of Vladimir Soloviev, Nikolai Berdyaev and Pavel Florensky became household names to me. I

found myself in a mysterious kingdom of great theological thoughts. It was bliss and I immigrated there. I suspected all along that this ‘Russia’ didn’t exist, but I was happy to have it in my mind. In a sense I became a Russophile and it helped me survive.

When democracy unexpectedly came to my country I briefly entertained an illusion that my ‘dream Russia’ might come to life. Soon I realized that the new life was no better

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Statues from the communist era in Novosibirsk, Siberia  
Photo: Laura Trevelyan

than the old. Communist dictatorship passed away but the economic version (ie. poverty for the whole nation with the exception of a few ‘legalized’ criminals) came in its place.

I had two options—immigrate to my beloved past again or try to make it a reality (fearing this was an impossible task). Many of my friends chose the first option. Not a fighter by nature, I also tended towards it. But my teaching job, as Associate Professor of Religious Studies at Moscow University, gave me a chance to at least share my dreams with the younger generation.

I’m not sure about the results. Frankly, I’m rather pessimistic about them in the short term. If the dream cannot be instantly realised, it should at least be passed on from one person to another. It helps us survive in ruthless times and provides hope that in the long term there’s still a chance for my country to achieve its full potential. Sounds utopian? Agreed. But utopias play an important role in human history.

**Boris Falikov, Russia**



I am French... because I come from France. But I feel more like a 'person' than a 'French person'. Of course I like champagne and red meat. Of course I am proud of having the same nationality as Proust, Flaubert, Camus and Baudelaire—in the same way as an English person is proud of living in the same country as Shakespeare did! But being a person is far more important than being a person from this or that country. When they are abroad, many people make comparisons, say this or that is disgusting, that



it is not like that at home... This is such a pity! When I go abroad I want to feel like the people living in that country. Meeting different kinds of people, learning how they live and what they think, is one of the most interesting things in life for me.

My friend and I have just come back from Scotland where we spent a week staying in youth hostels. I met as many interesting people in that one week as I have in several years! Because many young people travel with the same wish in mind—meeting people and speaking a different language—we are very keen on exchanging our points of view on everything, including how we see our own countries.

When asked about France, I cannot help saying that some French are far too worried about what is happening at home and not interested in what is going on elsewhere. I feel sad for them; they don't know what they're missing.

Concerning the past, some French did awful things during the Second World War. At the same time, some—like Charles de Gaulle—became the pride of our country. I think it is wrong to judge the people of a country on what happened in past generations. Although it was terrible, my generation should not have to feel guilty for what was done under the Vichy government, just as my German peers are not responsible for Hitler's actions.

France's future? I really wonder what is going to happen since a key element—education—is falling to pieces. Many areas surrounding our big cities are

now cradles of juvenile delinquency, as poverty leads to a lack of motivation, petty crimes and violence. I want to be a teacher, and am particularly concerned about this. It seems that we can no longer control it. But I am determined to do my best to open the eyes and minds of French students, and to encourage them to travel to other countries.

**Caroline Battut, France**

Earlier this year I went to see my driving instructor at his home in Hampshire, England, to drop off a cheque. He invited me to have a cup of tea. Originally from Yorkshire, Ray has that no-nonsense 'a spade's a spade' approach to life which is both refreshing and funny. A typical Englishman, you might think. However he and his wife, Peggy, have a passion for somewhere thousands of miles away: America.

That evening Ray dressed up in his 'country' outfit and excitedly showed me his replica guns from the Wild West days of Wyatt Earp and Jesse James. By the hi-fi was a collection of country CDs and line dancing albums. Ray had told me many times, during lessons, of their line dancing evenings, and the amount he has spent on regalia and books on Native Indians.

I experienced one of these country evenings when I took my sister to a concert by singer Gail Davies, near Bournemouth. Middle-aged couples mostly, dressed up with Stetsons, spurs, replica guns (men) and the women in traditional country dresses—dancing and imagining they weren't English but belonged to another country, another age.

How odd you may think, this desire to be American, as

## A BRIEF FORAY INTO GANGSTA RAP HAD ME FEARING A WETTING BY SOME 'G' IN A DRIVEBY



Chris in the USA, Photo: Roger Blackburn



you read this in your Nike trainers and Tommy Hilfiger top, sipping a Coke, munching a Big Mac, with Britney Spears in the background... I would agree with you, except I was once 'Americanised' myself.

It started when I met this American girl at uni (isn't there always a woman involved?) and although nothing came of it I soon became an American culture junkie. After buying a Yankees cap, I got into baseball. Then it was all American sports, music, movies, slang. It started to have an impact on what I said; autumn became the fall, petrol became gas. A brief foray into gangsta rap had me fearing a wetting by some 'G' in a driveby when I was hanging out in the hood with my homies...!

America was the ultimate for me. Everything seemed to be done better over there. They seemed to have more of everything over there. Oh to be in America! It was my promised land.

It was only a matter of time till I 'crossed the pond'. I have been there a couple of times now, but it was the second visit that really hit me. I was staying near Chicago and was the only 'Brit' around. People seemed fascinated by my accent. I lapped it up, putting in as much English slang and as many Hugh Grantisms as possible. For once, to be English was special.

It was then I realised that coming from the UK is not so bad after all, and that I do love my country. When I went home, I began to appreciate English sports, food, and culture more. Besides, if I lived in the States, would I ever get a decent cup of tea?!

**Chris Hall, UK**

**P**eople have strong opinions about my country. To some, it's the greatest nation in the world and the land of freedom and abundance. To others, it's the bossy superpower that sticks its nose and military might where it's not wanted. Figured it out yet? I'm American. Not once have I been unhappy about that or thought that the grass might be greener elsewhere. However, my patriotism doesn't restrict me from loving other countries or from seeing the shortcomings of my own.

On its good side, America has often been quick to come to the aid of countries in need. I know little about politics or history, but I do know we have offered help and, to my knowledge, have not expected that this help be reciprocated. Currently an essay is being emailed throughout cyberspace. In his 'Tribute to the United States', Gordon Sinclair, Canadian Television commentator, argues that Americans

are generous and under-appreciated. 'When earthquakes hit distant cities, it is the United States that hurries in to help. This spring, 59 American communities were flattened by tornadoes. Nobody helped.'

The flip side is the fact that other countries do not always want what we consider to be help. The recent war in Kosovo is an example. The American government played a large role in NATO's decision to bomb the region. While some felt this was the right thing to do, others were fiercely opposed and contended that NATO's actions only made things worse.

## **IT'S THE BOSSY SUPERPOWER THAT STICKS ITS NOSE AND MILITARY MIGHT WHERE IT'S NOT WANTED**

Whether I agree or disagree with my country's actions in such situations, I still get defensive if non-Americans criticize America's decisions or policies. The way others see the United States has been important to me, and I gained perspective on that by living in another country.

Those I met while abroad were often kind and receptive, and yet I was sometimes worried that when people heard my accent they'd think I was just another loud tourist from the States. Once I became incensed when a man in the street rolled his eyes and shouted, 'American, go home!' I don't remember his exact words, but I do recall that they were full of profanities and sincere hatred. I was shocked and enraged, and at that moment wanted to return to America and never bother with other countries again. But it's through bothering that I learned how similar we all are. For a long time my best friends were Russian, British, South American, Indian, Australian, and African. Take away our language differences, and we could have been from anywhere. We could all relate to having countries with pasts tarnished by war or mistreatment of our own citizens. We all knew how it felt to love our parents, siblings and friends. We all liked days off and laughter. In so many ways we were the same. Each of us cared about our countries despite their weaknesses.

When it comes to America, I am proud of her greatness and sad about her problems. I bet people around the world have the same feelings about their own homelands.

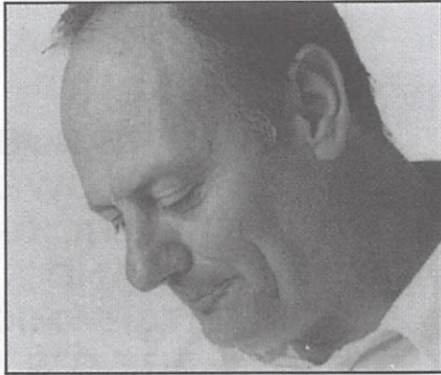
**Christine Kenny, USA**



Christine, Photo: Allison Kenny



# — NEED A TIP? —



*In his Melbourne office on a 'bad' day, Tim Costello receives a phone call every three minutes. He has found himself in the position of spiritual and political leader in modern Australian society, but prefers to describe his role as that of fellow 'soul-searcher'. As a lawyer, minister of the church, former city mayor and well-known social justice activist on issues including gambling and indigenous rights, he bravely blends religion and politics. Despite the phone calls, he makes it a priority to listen to people's stories...*

**'Stories should be treasured, because in the telling of them and in the listening to them we open our souls to wisdom which may help us discern where we are in our world, and how to take the next step'.**

*In his most recent book, Tim offers Tips from a Travelling Soul-Searcher. And he's not afraid to speak of his own mistakes ... including a desperate attempt to describe a restaurant he'd never been to, for the food section of a national newspaper—but you'll have to read the book for that one!*

**Interview by Nicci Long, Australia**

**After graduating as a lawyer, why did you decide to train for the ministry?**

I studied law initially as a way of going to university and 'growing up'. My family all thought I wouldn't stay in it long-term and I must admit my boyhood passion was to be a travelling evangelist (not a television one!). I guess Billy Graham was a bit of a role model. I wanted to study theology and after three years working in the Law I knew I could not stay doing a desk job. In fact, I knew that after 3 weeks! So my wife and I talked it through and decided to follow our dreams. She always wanted to live in Europe and also to study theology. So going to a Baptist Seminary in Rueschlikon at the end of 1980 was a culmination of a lot of impulses, and also a deeper sense of being called to ministry.

**Working in both religion and politics, you have been called a 'mould-breaker'. Do you agree?**

Yes, I do and I enjoy it all. Actually I have been called a 'boundary-rider' more often, and I do see myself as able to understand and to address both church and secular cultures. I have always admired people who have taken courageous stands and in so far as the moulds need breaking I am happy to wear that label. However, I am not anti-institutional; where institutions can work for good I am quite glad to work within them.

**Why are politicians generally held in such low regard today?**

Politicians have to bear most of the angst people have about their financial situation, social conditions, family problems! It is not an easy role to play being out there in the public domain. My own experience of being Mayor of a Melbourne suburb taught me that you cannot please everyone and tough decisions have to be made. Some politicians deserve to be held in low regard (those who have rorted the fringe-benefits system or taken advantage of their privileges, for example). But there are also some very fine people in politics and they do not deserve the flak they get.

**Is it possible to agree on certain principles to be held 'sacred', on a national—or even international—scale?**

I would hope so. I think other nations have done this successfully, such as America with its Bill of Rights. I think we as Australians have done it to some extent in our own Constitution of 1901. Sure, it is hard to get agreement—especially in these post-modern times with such plurality of views—but sometimes the majority has to be carried by creative thinkers giving a lead and articulating deeper truths. I think of Martin Luther King's speeches and how they shaped a whole cause.



Internationally, well ... I think that has been the vision, challenge and the limited success of the UN convention.

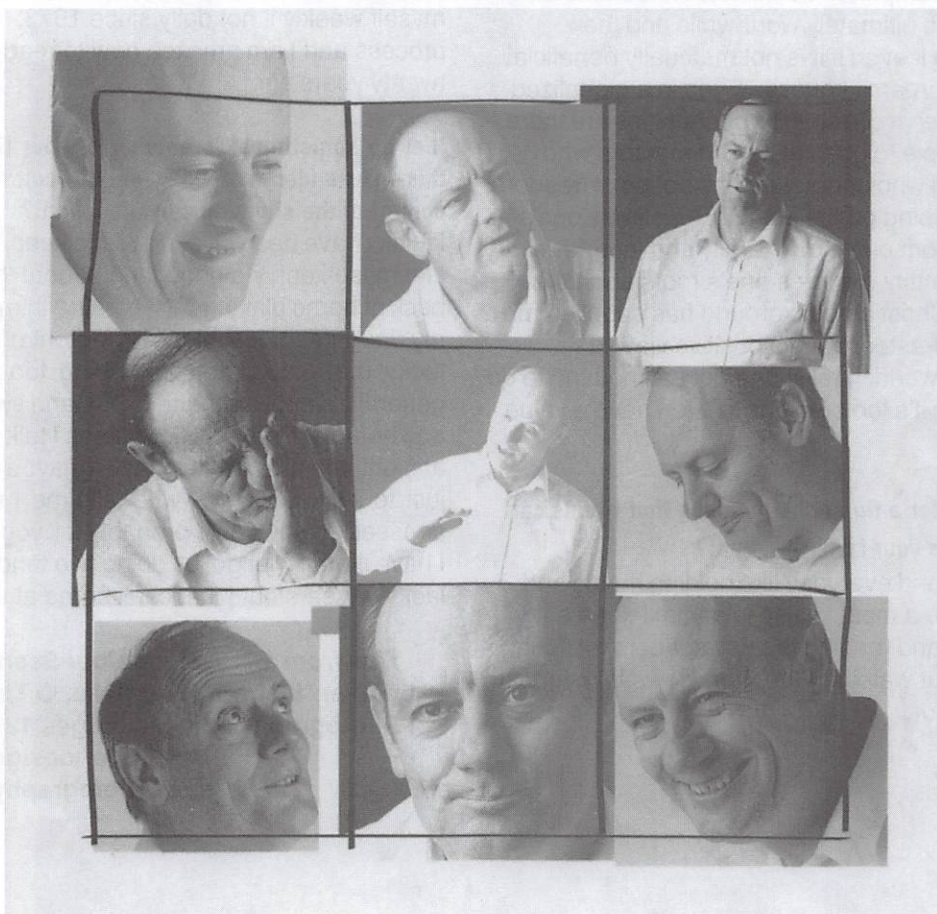
**Do you think that pride in one's country is a good thing? Are you proud of Australia?**

I love Australia. I can still recite Dorothea MacKellar's 'I love a sunburnt country, a land of sweeping plains'—a poem we all learnt in primary school back in the '60's. The landscape is magnificent and inspires awe. I also love our stories, our characters, our home-grown sports

**'the dimensions of soulful living'. What is it? And why do you think these dimensions are such a point of discussion?** I think of 'soulful living' as that which happens behind our personas and the surface living of our lives. It is usually triggered by something unconsciously pressing our 'buttons' and then we want to talk ... maybe about our anxieties with our marriages, children, society, or spiritual issues such as loss of meaning, feeling lost, the need for faith or grief. After I have given a public address people are often stirred to think and to feel, and most treasure a

## RIDE THE BOUNDARY

EARLY MORNING TEA



ENJOY RITUALS

LET GO SOMETIMES

and our relaxed lifestyle. But national pride can become obsessive and I find nationalism a worry. We always have to be astutely aware of what we make into idols. We also need to acknowledge the shadow side of our history and present reality. That is what the whole reconciliation movement with our indigenous people is about.

**You say that, wherever you go, people are eager to discuss**

place where they can talk further. Of course, I cannot always provide that space but when I can I treat it with care and integrity. For some people it is very difficult to be self-revealing. I have been told that in my addresses I am self-deprecating. So perhaps that puts people at ease, helps them to feel I haven't got it all together and to identify with things I have revealed.



**You like a church 'with a holistic feel to it'. What does this mean?**

I look for a church to have a healthy balance between the 'inward' and the 'outward' journey. So the worship, prayer and pastoral dimension is matched by active, hands-on care for the community and involvement in issues that impact on society. It is not easy to maintain the balance and leaders will always have their own bias. I am an activist but I really need to work with others who bring a more reflective, introverted spirituality to bear.

**You recognise that it is difficult for young people to find their identity in a globalised world based on market values. Do you have any tips for how we could go about searching?**

I realise finding one's identity is a long process and even in mid-life it is not complete. I think it is linked to finding what one believes is ultimately worthwhile and then investing oneself in it even if it is not materially beneficial ... 'following one's dream', I guess. Even in a globalized world—perhaps even more so the opportunities are there. I advise young people to go for it, to find mentors who have gone for it and who understand the notion of freedom, discovery and life being on the edge. Sometimes one's wisest counsel is from one's own family and long-term friends as well. Identity explores one's roots and takes the best of it. My Christian background has supplied me with resources, self-esteem and a positive view of involvement in the world. I relish that. It has nothing to do with market values; it's too precious to even have a value put on it.

**In your book, you offer a tip on the meaning that rituals can bring to life. What is your favourite ritual?**

Something simple and everyday like holding hands and saying grace before a meal. I also love making an early morning pot of tea and reading the newspaper first thing. My children say that watching the 7pm News is my most predictable behaviour.

**Are you ever lonely?**

I don't remember ever feeling consciously lonely and if I was I probably dealt with it by jumping on the phone. But I notice, now that I am travelling quite a bit, that I do feel a bit alone in a strange city, so I phone my wife or go for a jog. It's that feeling of anonymity. I am sure it can be very destructive if you let it.

**'I don't recommend a lot of personal introspection', you comment in your book. Why?**

I guess I have met too many people who were so introspective that they could never risk doing anything, or so fear-prone they were emotional cripples. I think it is better to live life fully and to accept that sometimes you might make a mistake but it is never the end of the story. There's always a lot to learn through giving things a go. I do recommend personal journalling and have done it myself weekly if not daily since 1973. It is a very helpful process and I am amazed now to read my thoughts of twenty years ago!

**'Let go sometimes' is another of your tips. How do you do this—surrender everything—at difficult times, when personal control of the situation can seem vital?**

I think I have been blessed with a keen sense of humour, so I let myself enjoy a good laugh about things. I love kicking back at home playing basketball with my sons, jogging with my daughter or just blobbing in front of the television. I am lucky that I don't take anything too seriously so I can generally sleep, no matter what, and switch off when I want and need to. In very difficult times I talk it over, go for a walk at night and pray on the way or maybe go and see a movie just to switch off. My wife tells me I sleep-talk when I'm stressed so she could probably tell you more on this score! I have literally 'let go' by doing two tandem sky-dives in the last few years but I just can't come at a bungy jump!

**Tips from a Travelling Soul-Searcher is published by Allen & Unwin, Australia, © Tim Costello, 1999.**

**Photographic images (pages 12 & 13) from book**

**Cover design: Sandra Nobes,  
Cover photography: Ponch Hawkes**

## **WHAT - U - THINK**

*Next issue we look at: **Are moral absolutes out of date?***

*Deadline: **December 1, 2000***

*This issue: **What teachings have inspired or challenged you to do extraordinary things?***

**Marianne Knudsen, Norway**

My childhood involved many outdoor activities. Through challenging the forces of nature, I have come to a strong sense of trust in myself and my judgements. After secondary school I took a year out and went on

board a ship. Living with 90 other people in a restricted area taught me more about life than years on shore. It was not so much the nautical education, but the daily routines and tasks involving teamwork, trust, tolerance and respect for others, that gave me new and valuable insights. I had to reach deep into myself to dare to climb to the top of the rig to help to set sails. I had to concentrate hard, standing at watch-out in the night, looking for other vessels to avoid crashing. I had to trust other people when we arrived in countries where I'd never been and about whose culture I knew nothing. These challenges broadened my horizons and made me realise what we are capable of achieving.



# can\_do@kanbay

During the final decade of the 20th century, the advent of the Internet gave rise to the 'connected economy', leading to the establishment of a 'global workplace.' How do we create new organisations in a borderless world? How do we keep focused on the human factor? *Global Express* interviewed Mohan Bhagwandas in Melbourne, Australia, who works for Megatec, a member of the global IT company, Kanbay.

In the early 1970s, three young idealists found themselves in India, in community development work. John Patterson (Canada), Raymond Spencer (Australia) and Dileep Nath (India) spent 15 years together, engaging people in development processes in rural areas, to encourage them to

participate more fully in India's economy. In the 1980s, having gained valuable insights, the three men set out to make their vision a reality.

John Patterson, now a Regional Director of Kanbay Inc. for Asia Pacific based in Hong Kong, explains, 'We had a serious



The e-Solutions Centre in Pune, India, Photos: Courtesy of Kanbay Inc.

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## **Amos Seyama, South Africa**

When I look back at my life, I can honestly say it was 100% miserable—not due to apartheid alone. My mother died when I was three, so I never really knew her; my father died when I was fifteen and we never had a father/son relationship; my friends were sniffing glue/drugs and some were shot and killed robbing banks or burgling houses. I had no role model. I could easily have involved myself in crime. But I didn't. Instead I started voluntary work—especially giving time to people who are HIV/AIDS infected—and other welfare matters. I passed my matric and studied electrical engineering. So, what made me do

extraordinary things? I can only attribute all that I am to the choices I made and my life experiences as a whole. This may not make sense to you but me it makes a whole lot to me.

## **Anna Davis, UK**

This year Anna Davis, 85 and confined to a wheelchair, travelled round the world. A retired nurse and midwife, she visited a hospital in Ranchi, India, where a maternity ward has been named after her. She has been inspired by the lives of people such as Florence Nightingale and Mother Teresa. The Biblical quotation, 'Judge not, that ye be not judged' has taught her to build others up,



review of what we were doing in India. We could see that India was going to play a leading role in the global Information Technology revolution (at that time the PC had not been invented). We set out to find a way to use that vehicle to help develop new leaders in India and the world. So we registered a company in the US and then in India. We had to borrow the money necessary for the establishment costs, and Kanbay Incorporated was born.'

Today, 15 years on, Kanbay is a multi-million dollar company with 1000 associates (staff are called associates), working on four continents. In the foothills of the magnificent Western Ghats (mountains), 28 kilometres from the centre of Pune city, lies Kanbay's e-Solutions Centre, with 450 people in one of the most modern workplaces in India. There is a long waiting list to join the company.

### What's so special about Kanbay?

Says the Indian Director Dileep Nath, 'All of us are people of deep integrity. Honesty is a bedrock value. Today if you want greater leverage across the globe you need a physical global infrastructure, which many companies have. But at the deeper level you also need to have a value system that honours all the cultures within which you work. This makes us different from other organisations. This is not an Indian,

*We value respect for the individual.*

*We value our ability to create and exceed high client expectations.*

*We value honesty, integrity and open and caring communication.*

*We value attracting, developing and retaining a diverse group of people to achieve both personal and corporate goals.*

*We value an ownership mentality that encourages innovation and risk-taking.*

*We value a spirit of co-operation that is seen in our ability to perform in teams and partnerships.*

*We value work that enables us to give back to our global society.*

American or Australian company. It's a global company, and it goes right back to our foundations.'

CEO Raymond Spencer, an Australian who now lives in Chicago, says that the company he and his friends founded has one core objective—'to build an enduring demonstration of the workplace of the future'. He outlines the company's corporate principles, above.

### What are the differences between Kanbay and other companies who set up IT shops in India?

With some passion, John Patterson says, 'On the surface of things it is not that different. But dig a little below the surface and you will begin to discern the difference. It has evolved as a global company, developing simultaneously in the US, in Asia and in India. The advantage of various cultures being in at the beginning makes it different from other companies.

'This has led to a cohesiveness in our organisation which is its strength. We all have a strong sense of ownership—'



## WHAT - U - THINK

rather than criticising. And a piece of music which has influenced her is Lisiecki's 'Oratorio for Our Time'.

### Roshan Dodanwela, Sri Lanka

I understand extraordinary things to be those I do by reaching beyond the realms of my personality. I also realise that other people can see things we do, which may seem normal to us, as extraordinary. My biggest inspirer and challenger is my faith. The path guided by the teachings of the Buddha has certainly led me to step outside my comfortable realm.

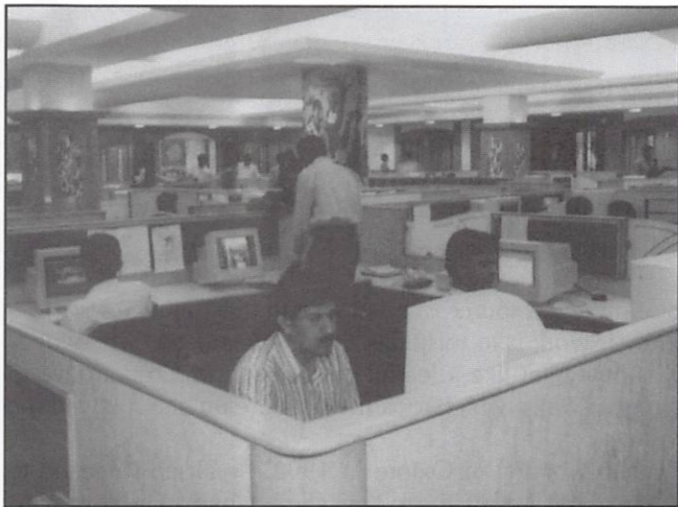
People also inspire me in a great way; the smile of the polite ticket officer at the station each morning

challenges me to return that smile to all I meet—an apparently small thing, but extraordinary as it spreads through a gloomy morning. Nature is my other great teacher—to live with and be one with it.

### Angela Starovoitova, Ukraine

Once upon a time, with the idea of escaping my hectic yet boring life, I joined a group of people to do a course called 'Foundations for Freedom'. Away from my usual distractions, I found time to be alone. The course looked at man, society and belief. The interconnectedness of life was discussed as a driving force for each individual to fulfil





am part of this company and it is part of me". The chemistry and synergy with which the company developed has given us this sense of identity, which is the key to our rapid growth and stability.

'The key differentiator in our success, delivery and negotiations with our clients has been our ability to understand both business and the human factor. As we move towards public listing on Nasdaq, we believe that people will want to have a stake in our company because our commercial success is driven by some of the world's best people working together as a team.'

### How does a global organisation with diverse nationalities resolve differences and conflicts?

John Patterson says, 'We don't dwell on the past. But it has to be understood in order to learn from it and build the future that we all intend. So we evaluate thoroughly when things do not go as planned. That way we all learn from such experiences.

'When people get hurt in the processes of our business life, the organisation needs to provide the kind of place that allows healing to happen. We have to understand that healing is not an instantaneous process. There is patience

required. You don't get over difficulties immediately. Having patience with the individual's speed of recovery is important.

'Literally, these days, things are done at the speed of light. It isn't just a saying anymore! Clients expect results immediately. We all have such high expectations in relation to productivity. In business, we often underestimate the importance of sensitivity to the human factor. We intend our organisation to be good at that sensitivity.'

Cyprian D'Souza, one of the company Directors working in Pune, adds, 'The fundamental beliefs of an organisation are like the roots of a tree. Like roots, beliefs are not visible. But without roots the tree will wither and die. As the trunk, branches, leaves and fruit of a tree are visible, so in an organisation the operations, actions, functioning and behaviours are visible.'

**For more information: [www.kanbay.com](http://www.kanbay.com)**

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his/her role. We discovered the importance of every single action; tomorrow is the result of today.

Despite all our mistakes, there is still order in the world. That order is maintained by a higher authority, or truth. I realised I can be more useful if I sing in tune with that truth, rather than practising my own singing.

Questions arose: Why do I wake up every morning? Why am I able to use my ears, eyes, tongue? Looking for answers within and without, I came to believe that this higher authority was God, who became my passion. Through service for others, I am trying to express this extraordinary thing.

### Correction

In our last issue (Vol 5 No 3) Tony Tsai-Fu Chuang responded to *What-U-Think*. The book What the Buddha Said was recommended by *Global Express* as an introduction to Buddhism, but Tony prefers to recommend a different title: Working Toward Enlightenment – The Cultivation of Practice (Part I)

To Realise Enlightenment – Practice of Cultivation (Part II).

By Huai Chin Nan, translated by J. C. Cleary, published by Samuel Weisner (US).

The editors are sorry for any misunderstanding caused.



# life faith *art*

Three things that everybody has and three things that frustrate us all because they take so long to get right, and then tend to go wrong anyway. Three aspects of our lives which require nurturing and cannot be hurried. Three common denominators of our race that reflect our human consciousness and our diversity.

As a graduate in geophysics (geology with electronic gadgets) I worked overseas in oil and mineral exploration for two years after finishing university in 1996. I was fortunate enough to visit some wonderful countries and to work with some amazing people. From a busy office in Milan to the

**I learnt that discipline is a source of freedom and that to judge someone or their work is to misjudge them, guaranteed.**

coast of Labrador, and from the Libyan desert to the mountain forests of Indonesia, I began to get to grips with what the job demanded of me. After leaving three companies, however, I realised I was unhappy with myself, was letting people down and needed to review the situation. Something was bottled up inside me. It was a difficult time and I looked longingly at my sister studying art in London. 'I can't take time out to study art. That's irresponsible, I'll enjoy myself too much', I thought. But in the end I did, and it was the best decision I ever made.

OK, I blew my precious savings but it was such a valuable investment. The year was a revelation; I was hardly Rembrandt born again, but for the first time that did not matter. I rediscovered an aptitude for photography and printmaking, and uncovered a whole new world of observation and self-discipline in life-drawing class. I felt a buzz of

creativity and had the space to express it. I learnt that

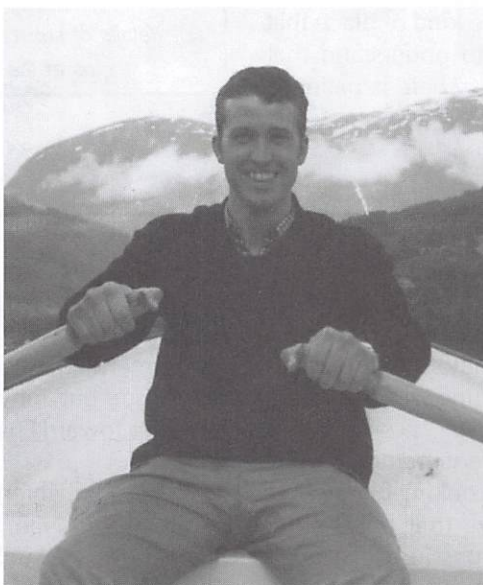
discipline is a source of freedom and that to judge someone or their work is to misjudge them, guaranteed. The work I was doing felt like a learning process, and did not have to hang on walls, which took the pressure off and allowed me to enjoy it.

While working in Oxford in 1998, I realised I needed to express the faith I think I've always had in a new way. Sharing a house made it difficult to be silent, and so it was I found myself in a Society of Friends (Quaker) meeting on a sunny Sunday morning. As a child my mother had attended a Quaker school in Yorkshire and had told me of their method of silent worship and their down-to-earth approach to life. The hour's silence was powerful; it was the first time I had shared such an intimate experience with anyone.

With so many flavours of religion available to those who are free to choose, it can be hard to find a meaning in any one of them—especially if it negates the others. And besides, what about that which is inside you, individual and unique? It takes courage to develop an independent faith, but it is an important step. You say to yourself, 'I may be wrong, but this is the truth as I have experienced it', which is unique and changing all the time. The extra dimension I experienced in the Quaker meeting was a sharing of that individual faith and the discovery that it was part of something bigger. It was magic to acknowledge my faith in God to others, not through words, but through attendance at the meeting. I have no idea what God is, but my faith and its results are real enough. I was brought up in the Christian

tradition and believe it is something wonderful that creates with love. That goes hand in hand with suffering, which is legitimate, but different to evil, which creates with self-pity, bitterness and hate.

Each of us can be creative with our life, faith and art, and be empowered when we treat them as our own. That's art, not the picture hanging on the wall. It's the way that picture was made and the way we look at it that matters. Life, faith and art go hand in hand as creative processes in which we are all engaged. They are expressed through questioning and observation, in such a way that we have to be creative and risk everything we have. After all, it is only on loan anyway...



Mike in a Norwegian fjord, above, Photo: Alexey Goncharov  
'Sunburst through oak tree', opposite, Photo: Mike Carpenter





**arts** expressed



A loud voice cannot compete with a clear voice, even if it's a whisper

Scepticism is healthy, cynicism is corrosive - Tony Blair

Can you build a machine if you don't understand what the parts do?

The real tragedy of suffering is the wasted opportunity

Lost is a place, too

As I am so is my nation

Only Robinson Crusoe had everything done by Friday

We carry on conversations long after they have run out of intelligence simply because we like to hear ourselves talk - Selwyn Hughes

What's the difference between involvement and commitment? Think of bacon and eggs. The chicken was involved. The pig was committed - Martina Navratilova

One's mouth can proclaim one thing whilst one's life proclaims another

When in doubt, speak the truth

It is with the heart one sees rightly; what is essential is invisible to the eye - St. Exupery

If at first you don't succeed, sky-diving is not for you

History repeats itself, which is good because most people don't pay attention the first time anyway

Life is 10% what happens to me and 90% how I react to it - Lou Holtz

