

## **Blaker Foundation News**

### **Blaker Open Days held on 25th & 26th June 1999**

#### Introduction

Two Blaker Open Days were held on 25th & 26th June 1999. The purpose of these days was to give people the opportunity to participate in a dialogue about the development of the Blaker Foundation. 14 people attended the first day, 16 attended the second, with 3 attending both. A further 15-20 people were unable to make either day, but expressed interest in future involvement. There was enthusiasm expressed by those present for the general philosophy of the project, with a number of creative ideas emerging.

#### Summary of the days

At the beginning of the each day, time was given to enable those present to get to know each other. This began by individuals sharing their 'stories' in small groups - the story of how they came to be in this place at this point in time, and what particularly had attracted them to the Blaker initiative.

This then moved on to a dialogue about how it was possible to create a dynamic, evolving organisation, which emerged out of the process of people bringing their respective ideas and experience, then allowing the development of the Foundation to evolve from that process. If a key underlying principle is that of a participatory universe, in which we are all interconnected within the whole, then we need to work together in a way that values and honours that. On the other hand, we want to ensure that we are moving forward in the development of whatever events are to be offered by the Foundation. The importance of balance came up on a number of occasions. It was acknowledged that a major aim of this project is to recognise and manage the tension between a range of polarities, in order to develop a creative synthesis between the two - for example, content and process, rationality and intuition, yin and yang. One participant appropriately repeated a quote from Jung: "Hold the opposites, and the transcendent function appears".

As such, we are involved in collaboratively creating an 'organism' that is very different from the traditional hierarchical, task-centred organisation, within which so many people feel under stress, alienated, and out of control. Set within a framework of 'action research', we hope to learn a new way of developing a context which integrates spirit, heart, head and hands (perhaps reframed as transcendent energy, feelings, intellect and action?).

Both groups spent time grappling with the above, and reflecting on the implications for how we progress. There was a general consensus that there needed to be a dynamic relationship between 'I', 'we', and 'them' - that is, the way I engage in my own journey will influence the way we work together which will affect the quality of events, programmes, etc., that we offer out to others. Much attention has historically been paid to each of the component parts. What perhaps is more new, is paying attention to the relationship between them in a conscious, active cyclical process of individual and collective action and reflection.

#### Way ahead

A proposal that developed independently from both groups was that it would be good to have a 2-3 day follow-up residential event, which offered a combination of developing the group process, and the creation and development of specific activities that might be offered

by the Blaker Foundation. A substantial number of ideas have already been put forward, and we need the time and space to progress them. It would also be an opportunity for participants of both groups to meet, and to engage with those who had so far not played an active role, but who were interested in doing so. There was a recognition that individuals would find a level of involvement that was right for them, and the nature of the whole would adapt accordingly.

It is proposed that the 2/3 days include the following:

1. An opportunity for a development of the group process, incorporating music, movement, ritual and meditation, as well as continued dialogue, and the valuing of silence.
2. An opportunity for people to work together in small groups on specific workshops, or in the development of other ideas where there was a shared interest.
3. An exploration of the concept of 'learning' - learning how to learn more effectively - and examining how a developing awareness might influence the nature of the way learning events were planned and presented.
4. An exploration of the concept of 'spirituality'. All present seemed comfortable with the idea of a 'spiritual dimension' - but the question was raised as to whether people might have a differing understanding of the term.

#### Programme Development

Concurrent to this process is the development of a number of workshops and two major conferences that are to be put on during Winter / Spring 1999 - 2000. A leaflet outlining these is included in the Review. Please contact me for further information.

#### Conclusion

Those attending the Open Days went away to reflect on the experience, and to consider what they felt their future role might be. We look forward to the next meeting, when we can progress these ideas further. An interesting range of workshops are already planned, and our development will be informed by feedback gained from these. In the meantime, an email list is being established, which will allow continuing dialogue for those who have access to the net. For those who do not have this facility, information will be received and sent out in more conventional ways!

We are always open to hearing from people who wish to be involved in this venture. If you would like more information, please contact me.

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Birmingham B48 7QB. Telephone / Fax: 01527 61919 Email: blakerf@compuserve.com**

#### **Blaker Diary**

#### IMPLICATIONS OF MODERN SCIENCE FOR A NEW WORLD VIEW

Facilitators: Chris Clarke M.A., Ph.D.      Joan Walton M.Soc.Sci., B.A., Dip.S.W.

Programme 1 (Sat&Sun)

Module 1: 16-17 October 1999  
Module 2: 27-28 November 1999  
Module 3: 22-23 January 2000  
Module 4: 25-26 March 2000  
Module 5: 13-14 May 2000

**Programme 2 (Thurs & Fri)**

Module 1: 2-3 December 1999    Module 2: 13-14 January 2000  
Module 3: 16-17 March 2000  
Module 4: 18-19 May 2000  
Module 5: 29-30 June 2000

Cost: £80.00 per module.    £350.00 for 5 modules.

Preference will be given to participants subscribing to the whole programme. Three bursaries, each worth £150.00, are being offered for students / unwaged by **GreenSpirit** . Please inquire for further information.

**MYSTICISM & MADNESS**

Facilitator: Isabel Clarke M.A., B.A., Dip.Clin.Psych

**Programme 1 (Sat)**            6 November 1999

**Programme 2 (Sat - Midlands)**            5 February 2000

**THE PARTICIPATORY UNIVERSE**

Facilitator: Chris Clarke M.A., Ph.D.

**Programme 1 (Tues-Wed)**            4-5 January 2000

**Programme 2 (Sat-Sun)**            12-13 February 2000

**WESTERN DEPTH PSYCHOLOGY & EASTERN MYSTICAL PHILOSOPHY**

Facilitator: Dr Chris Lyons B.Sc., M.B., B.S., M.R.C.G.P.

**Programme 1 (Sat - Sun)**            20-21 November 1999

**Programme 2 (Sat-Sun -Midlands)**            19-20 February 2000

**EXPLORING INNER SPACE**

Facilitators: Catherine Thom M.Mus, F.T.C.L.    Paul Filmore: Ph.D., MBA.,B.Sc.

**Programme 1 (Sat-Sun -Midlands)**            4-5 December 1999

**LIVING INTO DYING**

Facilitator: Dr Jenny Kitchen B.M., M.R.C.P., D.P.M.S.A.

**Programme 1 (Fri)**            26 November 1999

**Programme 2 (Sat) 15**            January 2000

Cost per single day event is £40.00.    Cost per two day event is £75.00.  
There will be a 10% reduction for any person registering for 3 or more events.

**Week-end events will be held at a venue in London, except when otherwise stated.  
Week-day events will be held at a venue in the Midlands.**