

ATTENTION MEMBERS!

Personal Numbers and Office Procedures

Please help your administration office to run smoothly and so help you efficiently:

- when your details change (address, telephone number, email address etc.) please make sure we know
- use your membership number whenever you contact us, and write it onto all correspondence, conference booking slips, subscription forms and orders for books, services etc.
- book early for conferences - it helps you get a place
- ensure cheques are made out correctly to Scientific & Medical Network; for conferences and orders: always add (legibly!) details of what it's for and membership number on back, even when accompanied by a booking form
- remember we're a network, and it often takes time for all relevant people to be contacted so when making requests give us time to respond helpfully (and always remember to tell us who you are - we sometimes get forms back with no name at all!)
- help us save money; whenever possible pay in £ sterling and remember to gift aid when you make a payment (subscription, conference fees, etc..) - it maximises funds available for more important things.

Office hours are 10.00am to 5.00pm Monday - Thursday. Please leave a message if no one is available to take your call. We will get back to you as soon as we can.

NETWORK NEWS

SMN Thinking Challenge Papers by Leading Scientists or Medics

Paul Filmore writes: As an attempt to encourage professional scientists and medics out of their expert domain (due to the habitual limitations imposed by relating with their competitor peers), this series of papers challenges professionals to share briefly cross disciplinary insights and speculations. These two page 'think pieces' dare individuals to speculate in the widest way by 'thinking outside the box' to challenge present day theories and beliefs.

One process to aid speculation is to map an area of one's professional domain onto a dissimilar domain, and see if constructive insights, interconnections, synthesis etc., takes place. This is certainly not an anti-science process, as one is speculating within years of experience, knowledge and wisdom. It may though lead to a new science of the human being and the universe we inhabit (or think we do!).

Papers of around two pages (including references) are invited for peer review. The peer review is in place, to reflect on/ help improve, the clarity of the reasoned argument, to communicate their reader 'challenge' in the paper. Published papers will give the author a six-month electronic membership access to the SMN (journal and archives). Please email papers to chairman@scimednet.org

Appointment of Directors, 2017 – Nicholas Pilbrow

At an Extraordinary Meeting of the Company held on April 7th 2017, it was resolved to change the Articles of Association of the Company to increase the number of directors that the Company may have from eight to ten and to increase the number of directors that could be co-opted by the Board from two to four. **Mr Martin Redfern** had previously given notice of his intention to resign after the Annual General Meeting of the Company in July 2016 as reported last year. He subsequently agreed to stay on as vice chairman of the company until November 2016 and has now resigned. He will be missed by all and his long service to the Company is greatly appreciated. During the year, **Mr David Jaques** was co-opted as a director and Treasurer but he sadly has since had to resign due to the pressure of other commitments. Each year one third of the member appointed directors, who have served the longest, retire by rotation and all the co-opted members. They are, if they wish, eligible for re-election or co-option. The directors retiring by rotation are thus, **Mrs Jacqueline Nielsen**, **Mr Richard Irwin** and **Mr Paul Kieniewicz**. All those retiring are eligible for re-election or co-option and all have indicated their wish to continue. The remaining Directors are (2015), **Dr Edi Bilimoria** (2011), **Mr Tuvi Orbach** (2014) **Mr David King** (2016) and **Dr Paul Filmore** (2016 – Chairman).

There are now up to eight possible vacancies for Directors to be elected at the Annual General Meeting and three current applications. Of particular concern to the company is the loss of the Treasurer, David Jaques, particularly following the untimely death of his predecessor Simon Raggett the previous year, and great importance is being given to finding a replacement for him. There are four further vacancies available by co-option by the Board.

Members who wish to be considered for these vacancies are requested to apply by the end of May, 2017 by sending their C.V. and a short note on how they see themselves contributing to the aims of the Network. This will enable the Board to consider how they would match the tasks to be performed and, where appropriate, make recommendations to the members. If there are more applicants than vacancies, a vote will be taken at the Network AGM at the beginning of July. The members of the company will follow the recommendations of the Network AGM, unless there is good reason not to do so. Applications should be sent to The Secretary, Scientific and Medical Network, Colet House, 151 Talgarth Road, London W14 9DA

Blaker Fund to Support Research – Invitation to Apply

The Trustees of the GB Blaker Charitable Trust have requested that the grant, and the interest arising from it, shall be used to fund educational programs, in line with the charitable objects of the SMN Trust and SMN, particularly for young people aged approximately 15-30. Note especially that the intention is that the funds shall be used purely to support such educational programs in science or medicine. All those who wish to be considered for a grant in the range of £500 to £5000 are requested to apply 9th June 2017 to the Education Domain Holder, Edi Bilimoria, email: edibil@btinternet.com for guidance on application.



MEMBERS' NEWS The Penrose Institute – Sir Roger Penrose, OM, FRS, honorary member

The Penrose Institute is a non-profit research organisation in Oxford and San Diego whose mission is to understand the human mind, the cosmos and the laws of physics that govern them and to spread the wonder of science and mathematics, inspired by the scientific philosophy and writings of Roger Penrose. You may contribute to the organisation online, through its website, or by email or phone or contact us for further details on how you can help us create new physics.

Web: www.penroseinstitute.com

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/penroseinstitute/>

Web: <https://www.maths.ox.ac.uk/people/roger.penrose>

Email: press@penroseinstitute.com

NOURISHING THE PILGRIM SOUL



**A Weekend Retreat with
RAVI RAVINDRA
at Hawkwood College, Stroud
1 – 3 September 2017**

What is a *pilgrim soul*? What are the attitudes and characteristics of a pilgrim on a spiritual journey? Are they different from those of a religious believer? Can we be exclusively committed to one religion and belong to God? In this retreat we will discuss in detail the meaning of a *pilgrim soul*. What sorts of practices nourish a pilgrim and what stands in the way? Each pilgrim must begin from where they are, influenced by a particular culture and religious tradition. However, a state of being nourished by Truth or God is in essence transcultural and transreligious. On the Friday evening Ravi will be giving an open public talk entitled *Have You a Pilgrim Soul?* and this will form part of the retreat weekend.

Bookings: www.hawkwoodcollege.co.uk
info@hawkwoodcollege.co.uk, 01453 759034



**“The Divided Brain”
Documentary with Iain
McGilchrist**

A crowdfunding campaign has launched on Kickstarter to help complete “The Divided Brain”, the first documentary based on “The Master and his Emissary” by Dr Iain McGilchrist. The film will bring to a wider audience Iain’s ideas about our brain hemispheres and how understanding them can help us deal with global problems and our day-to-day lives. The film was shot in several countries and features Iain McGilchrist, actor-comedian John Cleese, Dr. Jill Bolte Taylor, Dr. Michael Gazzaniga, Dr. Leroy Little Bear, the former Archbishop of Canterbury Rowan Williams, and other experts and personalities. The goal is to raise \$60,000.00 before the deadline of Wednesday, May 31st. This is an ‘all or nothing’ campaign, so backers’ credit cards are not charged until the deadline, and only if the funding goal is met. To see the film’s trailer, visit “The Divided Brain” Kickstarter page at <http://supportdividedbrain.com>

LOCAL GROUPS

LONDON GROUP



CLAUDIA NIELSEN – 0207 431 1177,
claudia@cnielsen.eu

To read reports from other meetings, go to the REPORTS page of the London Group page of the Network’s website. If you don’t live in London but wish to be advised of London events please drop me an email and I shall add your e-address to the circulation list.



January 2017

We started the year on a high, with a full house and 35 people on the waiting list to hear **RUPERT SHELDRAKE** pose the question and discuss *Is the Sun Conscious?* Rupert started by reminding us that many traditions and mythologies consider the sun as conscious or even sacred, and salutations to the sun or sun-god are not unusual. The idea

that the sun is composed of very hot but dead matter, has its roots in the Cartesian split, which determines that all matter is dead and unconscious. This applies also to the Earth and the rest of the universe. On the other hand, pantheism - or panpsychism - considers that mind is primary, and all nature in the universe is permeated by mind. Rupert recalled the ideas of Alfred North Whitehead, who saw matter as process in time and not as objects. The relationship between matter and consciousness or body and mind, so central to the understanding of reality, is explained as body being the realm of the past and mind the realm of the future (possibilities). They intersect in the present. Mind is therefore the realm of possibilities not facts, and it permeates the universe.

Whereas the prevailing metaphor is mechanical, Whitehead used the idea of organism to explain the universe. Organisms have nested hierarchies with each level including lower, and being included in higher levels – e.g. atoms in molecules, molecules in cells, cells in tissues etc. all the way to planets in solar systems, in galaxies etc.

The theory of the universe as organism can incorporate Rupert’s own theory of morphic resonance and also Whitehead’s principle of prehension leading logically to the idea of a conscious sun. Rupert told us that in 1997 he and some other scientist colleagues got together to discuss this subject and although they came to the conclusion that a conscious sun could not be proven, they also agreed that it could not be disproved. Exploring this idea further, what would a conscious sun be thinking of, what would be its purpose? Consciousness presupposes the potential for action, and the sun is in constant activity, flares, sun spot cycles, mass corona ejection, may not be automatic patterns. If these are conscious actions, what might be their purpose? Could it be to influence in some way its “body”, the solar system? We know that electromagnetism plays an important role in all areas of life, including the thought activity within our own brain. It is also known that the sun has an electro-magnetic field. Might communication within the universe be across this field, through what we understand as thought? Might the sun be the big eye of mythology and be omniscient? These were some of the questions explored this evening by Rupert and by an excited audience.

February



This month we heard **DR. PETER MOORE**, an academic who back in 1972 pioneered the new area of Religious Studies at University of Kent, and later introduced an MA in the Study of Mysticism and Religious Experience at the same university with the late Leon Schlamm. This evening Peter presented a talk he entitled *Science, Religion and the future of the Afterlife*.

He started by stating that our ideas of the afterlife are necessarily anthropocentric, geocentric in character and culturally constructed, aligned with priorities we give to our present life. The question itself however is of serious interest because if we were to be able to establish that survival after death is a reality, this would throw light on many aspects of life including facts at present dismissed. It would explain the long held belief in ghosts and also give insight into the benefits or otherwise of rituals and customs for the newly deceased person. Therefore, experiences currently labelled as paranormal, mystical, or spiritual need to be taken seriously which does not mean accepted uncritically or at face value, but given due consideration.

One of the difficulties is that the tension which exist between the domains of science and religion, means that the question of parapsychology is regarded with suspicion by both camps, science seeing it as too “mystical” and religion as too “materialistic”. On the question of eschatologies, Peter pointed out that these have historically been commentaries on a whole spectrum of relevant human ideas and experiences. As with so many other ideas within doctrinal systems, they are also subject to revision, and he suggested that this is a good time to revisit those. Reincarnation has taken hold in the collective psyche and is seen to be compatible with empirical data. Recent Christian thinkers have attempted to incorporate this idea in the Christian doctrine but this move has been seen as controversial. Peter concluded his thoughts by talking about the two principles which he thinks are important in the consideration of life after death: the first being the principle of corporeality – the idea that in the afterlife we must be embodied in some sense and the principle of continuity, the idea that whatever the experience in the afterlife, it cannot be completely discontinuous with what came before. These ideas gave rise to an animated discussion which lasted well beyond our normal ending time!



March

MARIANNE RANKIN, Communications Director of the Alister Hardy Society entitled her talk: *Experiences of Angels – Intimation of Ultimate Reality?* She started by telling us that she has had in the past reservations about the existence of angels, and only when she was asked to look into this subject for a conference, did the topic come

alive for her. She found that a MORI poll in 2009 established that 46% of the adults in Britain believe in guardian angels (58% of those being women) and 3 out of 4 of those believe that their Guardian Angel has helped them in their daily life. The concept of angels is deeply embedded, especially in the Abrahamic religions. The word comes from the Greek *angelos*, which means messenger. Angels are messengers from God. Many religions recognise beings that exist between the divine and humans. The Buddhists call them *devas* and the Zoroastrians, *daevas*. In the Abrahamic religions, angels are understood to have been created by God. They are purely spiritual

beings, mainly male, beautiful and have wings. They sometimes take on human form. We heard about the angels mentioned in the Bible, both the Old and New Testaments and Dionysius the Areopagite talks about hierarchies of angels.

In the New Testament Archangel Gabriel brings important messages from God, announcing the birth of John the Baptist to his parents and the birth of Jesus to Mary and in Islam Archangel Gabriel gave Muhammad the revelations of the Qu'ran. But angels do not belong only to the distant past, Archangel Michael was reportedly seen by soldiers during the assault on German trenches in the Battle of Mons in 1914. Marianne showed us a number of paintings of angels by various artists including Leonardo da Vinci and Chagall, for more recent works, we saw Anthony Gormley's Angel of the North, erected in 1998 in Gateshead and is 20 metres tall and has a wingspan to 54 metres. We also heard about reports from the Alister Hardy archives of strangers warning people of danger, who subsequently are found to have disappeared. Those experiences leave the impression of an encounter with an angel. In our discussion we had the opportunity to hear personal stories of members of the audience of unexplained events, which could have been angelic encounter or intervention.



April

In-Formation at the Centre of the Creation: consciousness, causality and coherence, was the title of **DR. JUDE CURRIVAN** presentation this month. Jude is a cosmologist, as well as a mystic.

She has a Masters Degree in Physics from Oxford University specialising in quantum physics and cosmology, and a PhD in Archaeology researching ancient cosmologies. She had mystical experiences from a very young age and worked with the wisdom teachers of many traditions furthering over many years, her interest and research into the nature of reality. Jude started by telling us that the evidence-based and the faith-based worldviews can be reconciled into a whole worldview of a conscious, evolving and unified Cosmos where we, humans, are both creation and co-creators. This is based on 21st century science which describes our Universe as a cosmic hologram where consciousness expresses itself as space and time, energy and matter through informational patterns and relationships at all scales of existence. Time, Jude says, is the universe thinking and space is our universe breathing.

In the first moments of the Big Bang, or Big Breath as she likes to call it, time flowed which also implies an ever increasing level of entropically expressed information. At that moment also, space started to expand and so holographically contain ever more evolutionary information – and emergent self-awareness. Jude says that recent scientific discoveries show that information is more fundamental than energy-matter and space-time. She says that the same digitised information that underpins our technologies is also the basic stuff of our universe. Our universe is in-formed, by which she means formed by information shaping space-time and energy-matter.

That information is not random, and the Big Breath which brought our Universe into being, was not chaotic but highly ordered and fine tuned. The in-formation is physical, as exemplified by excitations and processes of physical reality and is more fundamental than energy-matter. Interestingly, the in-formational patterns embodied in our Universe at all scales of existence are the same when plotted on a graph – whether natural or man-made. Examples shown were the incidence and violence of earthquakes, events in Iraq and the number of casualties, the internet, stock markets, growth of cities, etc. And she showed that the holographic nature of the Universe follows fractal patterns. At the core of her proposal is the idea that what we call Reality is integral information/consciousness which within physical spacetime expresses itself as interconnected holographic fractal patterns of energy/matter on all scales of existence. So more fundamentally, nothing is random, everything has meaning and purpose. Jude's book *The Cosmic Hologram: In-formation at the Centre of Creation* is now out and her website is <http://www.judecurrivan.com>.

KENT GROUP YVONNE LOUIS

The Kent branch has been quietly active over the past two years, despite the lack of reports which may suggest to the contrary! This is due to various contributory factors like a change in venue to the local community arts centre and my own personal circumstances. Still we have managed to continue with our meetings and have been fortunate

to have had such excellent speakers who have covered a number of varied and interesting subjects and all events have been extremely well attended. In addition we have held some informal discussion groups in order to review some of the talks, which has enabled us to explore the issues raised in more depth. We are fortunate in that there is a small core of people who always help with the practical arrangements like catering and transport on the day.

On 5th June 2015 we were honoured that **Professor Brian Lancaster** was able to be with us. Brian (Les) is Emeritus Professor of Transpersonal Psychology at Liverpool John Moores University, UK. As well as several other posts, he is the current President of the International Transpersonal Association and Chair of the Transpersonal Psychology section of the British Psychological Society. His first book *Mind, Brain and Human Potential* won an SMN award.

Professor Lancaster's talk "Kabbalistic Psychology: Conscious, Creation and the Sacred" explored the two faces of Kabbalistic psychology – the first focusing on psychological insights intrinsic to traditional Kabbalistic texts, and the second concerned the role that contemporary psychology and neuroscience may play in interpreting and developing the Kabbalah. Les stressed that a tradition that relies only on its past glories stagnates, but the approach of using Kabbalistic psychology offers a path for integrating the old and new in meeting the spiritual challenges of the 21st century.

Les began by giving an overview of the term "Kabbalah" which he explained applies to a broad stream of mystical and occult traditions generally based in a view of the Hebrew Scriptures as transmitting inner teachings embedded beneath their surface narrative. In a technical sense, the term has been restricted to the specific tradition of mysticism that arose within Judaism in the 12th century. In a broader sense, Kabbalah is profoundly relevant to those seeking an enriched sense of "Western" mysticism and esoteric lore as part of their own quest for spiritual fulfilment.

He went on to elaborate that the term Kabbalistic Psychology is a way of working with traditional Kabbalistic teachings and practices that emphasise their relevance to contemporary research in psychology and neuroscience. With its emphasis on the nature of thought and the way that ideas develop through stages from a concealed seed through to their revealed manifestation, the Kabbalah encompasses a peculiarly rich spiritual psychology. Kabbalistic sources explore what we would call today pre- or unconsciousness processes and provide practices that enable access to regions of the psyche normally closed to conscious thought. Moreover, recent research concerning the relations between consciousness and the brain may be seen to reflect Kabbalistic insights dating back to the 12th and 13th centuries.

The talk provoked much interest and for many of us was helpful in providing enlightenment on a subject where our knowledge was limited. Les happily answered many questions and his explanatory hand out notes were very welcome.

On 11 September 2015 we were delighted to welcome **Phoebe Wyss** for the first of her two talks. This one was "Inside the Cosmic Mind" was based on her recent book *Inside the Cosmic Mind: Archetypal Astrology and the New Cosmology*. Phoebe studied English and Philosophy at Reading University and wrote her MA on William Blake. She worked for twenty years as a lecturer at the University of Hanover, Germany but gave this up in 1985 to become a professional astrologer. Since then she has been giving consultations, courses and workshops and more recently, has been investigating frontier science in her quest to understand how astrology works. She has published two previous books on the astrological archetypes, as well as an astrology board game.

Phoebe's superbly illustrated power point talk explored aspects of the emerging 21st century paradigm of a dynamic self-creating universe. Viewing the cosmos as a living organism with inter-related parts gives new meaning to the Hermetic axiom "As above, so below".

She felt strongly that the cosmology of mainstream physicists must be extended to include the inner levels of reality – the cosmic mind and psyche – arguing that the systems science model of nested hierarchies, when applied to mind, suggests that purpose and meaning in the cosmos could flow top-down from Universal mind and insight would put subject like astrology onto a new footing.

A talk on a perennially fascinating subject, prompted many questions and much discussions.

4th March 2016 we welcomed **Dr. Frances Hawkes** speaking on "When Conservation, Human Health and Agriculture Collide". Frances is a Research Fellow at the Natural Resource Institute, University of Greenwich and her area of research is medical entomology, i.e. insects that spread human and animal diseases, with a focus on understanding mosquito behaviour and ecology in order to "better

know your enemy". From her research findings following field work at various locations world-wide, Frances has been developing new tools to monitor and control mosquitoes and the diseases they spread. She has been a guest contributor to Sky News and has featured in a BBC documentary about her research into a new trap for malarial mosquitoes in Africa.

At that time the crisis with the Zika virus was almost a daily headline and we were fortunate that Frances was available to give a first-hand understanding of the issues involved. For example how the changes we make to our environment in order to achieve intensive production of crops and livestock can have completely unexpected impacts on the health of local human population. The stark reality of the situation was made clear by Frances' power point presentation which showed, for example, the alarming rate of the mass destruction of the Malaysian forests in order to expand and intensify the production of palm oil. (Palm oil is universally used for a wide variety of purposes, from cleansing products, to cosmetics and confectionary). Consequentially the animals have been driven from the forests closer to the urban communities and this has resulted in the emergence of a new species of malaria parasites that have jumped from monkeys to humans via the tiny forest dwelling mosquitoes.

Frances' talk was profoundly relevant and sad in that it brought home the fact that human greed for bigger, better and more consumption is literally at the cost of the planet. This in turn raised challenging questions about how rapid environmental changes for agricultural expansion can jeopardise the habitats and biodiversity and expose people to new disease threats.

Phoebe Wyss' second talk was a major exposition on "Synchronicity, Astrology and the Oracle Principle". The phenomenon of synchronicity, on which techniques of divination and the art of astrology are based, challenges our faith in linear time and the ubiquity of the law of physical cause and effect. It also challenges the exclusively rationalist-materialist worldview by suggesting that the inner world of the mind and the outer material world of matter may not be as separate as we believe.

In this talk, and in her book on synchronicity, hopefully published in 2017, Phoebe showed how synchronicities open a peephole in the wall of conventional scientific thinking to reveal dimensions beyond the material and support the paradigm shift from the conception of the universe as a machine to seeing it as a living, intelligent organism in which we all participate. Experiencing a case of synchronicity pulls us up in our tracks. It's as if we've encountered a flaw in the fabric of reality. David Peat in his book on the subject calls it 'the joker in the pack' because these meaningful coincidences have the power to upset our ordered, settled worldview.

Jung, who had had some strong personal experiences of synchronicity while he was investigating the *I Ching*, became excited by it. It seemed to him he was on the brink of discovering a new connecting principle additional to that of cause and effect, and he researched it for many years before publishing his conclusions in a work titled *Synchronicity: an a-causal connecting principle*.

In the 1930's an exchange of ideas took place between Jung and the physicist Wolfgang Pauli, who, with his knowledge of quantum mechanics was able to place Jung's experience of synchronicity in the context of modern physics. When he described the quantum level to him, Jung recognised its similarities with the collective unconscious he was investigating in his field of depth psychology. The two scientists concluded that perhaps they were approaching the same thing from different directions. From the perspective of physics, it appeared then as the ground of matter, and from that of depth psychology as the deepest strata of the collective unconscious. Then Pauli commented to Jung that the flow of waves and particles on the quantum level appeared to him more like the workings of a vast mind than anything material.

As it happens other eminent twentieth century scientists were thinking along the same lines – Sir James Jeans for example, said, 'the universe begins to look more like a great thought than like a great machine.' If he is right, then all that exists are thoughts in a cosmic mind, which must have the power, through thought, to create substance and fashion material reality.

When Phoebe met this idea it fascinated her, and her book, *Inside the Cosmic Mind* (Floris Books, 2014) introduces the model of a nested hierarchy of minds to describe the hypothetical relationships between the different levels of mind in the universe. It's a useful model for demonstrating the oneness and inter-connectedness in the cosmos.

Today science is gradually coming closer to the conception of the universe as a living, organic, interconnected whole. On the sub-atomic level, where nature stores its information, quantum

entanglement shows this connectivity. There information is passed on instantaneously through the links between particles, even when they lie far apart in the universe. A more informed understanding of the mechanism of vision has now led us to conclude that our minds, with their expectations and intentions, contribute to creating what our eyes then see. And convincing proof of the power of human intention to influence events in the objective material world has also emerged from many scientifically robust trials. Thus the conclusion we reach is that no clear line between subject and object can be drawn, which is relevant for understanding the phenomenon of synchronicity.

Phoebe explained that events in the natural world emerge from underlying invisible fields of information. From its source on the quantum level, this information then unfolds on denser levels to create objects and events, or to mould the contents of our inner thoughts and imaginings. In other words, information can manifest either physically or psychologically, or in both ways in parallel, suggesting that this latter option is what occurs when we experience a meaningful coincidence.

Astrology is based on synchronicities, the primary one being the correspondence between the macro- and microcosms, or our outer and inner worlds. 'That which is above is like that which is below' stands carved on the emerald tablet of Hermes Trismegistos, which is not news for the astrologers who experience daily in their work that the realms of mind and matter mirror each other. When they draw up a birth chart they follow the precept of 'as above so below', and when interpreting it they rely on the correspondence between the configurations in the heavens and the personality and life patterns of a client.

That the macrocosm and the microcosm mirror one another can be explained if in their ground in all-encompassing cosmic mind they are one and the same. Then it's conceivable that the thought processes in an individual mind could mirror those in the great cosmic mind. And the patterns formed by the planets in the sky could mirror events in the world below. Thus astrology, together with synchronicity on which it is based, leads us to a view of life in which everything we experience in our three dimensional world is symbolical of truths existing in a timeless cosmic dimension beyond the range of our human senses.

Sydney Group – Jean Ingman

Report of the Meeting of the Scientific and Medical Network Sydney Group February 26th 2017

David Burfoot talked about his book "Finding the Elephant. Subspace, the Mega-Phenomenon." We welcomed David to the meeting which was attended by 13 people with two apologies for absence. Following introductions David talked about how he came to write his book. He wanted to find out more about life following the deaths of his mother and two brothers, and his experience working in special development situations overseas. He started researching the possibility of having a TV show bringing together people from different disciplines to debate big questions.

What he found that separated them was not so much the subject matter, but the politics between different disciplines. This gave him the idea of using the fable of the six blind men and the elephant to show how if people worked together they would find out a lot more. The fable helped people examine information outside their own speciality and interest, without them feeling as though they were going to lose something in the process. Like the blind men and the elephant modern research knowledge, if pooled, can combine to reveal interesting phenomena, like 'subspace'.

The discussion continued with heuristics and how learnt behaviour and biases can get in the way of decision making. We were then shown a variety of images to illustrate how the brain 'makes things up'. David went on to talk about the brain being a 'middle man' between reality and the subjective perceiver, i.e., and that various biases like 'moral licence' and a 'self-serving' bias, meant that he mind will favour self in providing information to the perceiver.

The discussion then turned to Daniel Kahneman and fast and slow thinking. Expertise can blind you to innovation. With fast thinking the memory is working automatically, effortlessly, while the slow thinking mind calculates and supervises. Mostly fast thinking works well but we need to recognise when to think carefully and not be overconfident.

David went on to talk about Einstein, space/time and relativity, Max Planck and quantum physics, which turned science upside down. Then the awareness of the moment and the ability of consciousness to affect the outcome, and the placebo effect working throughout

medicine. Other topics included the Ganzfeld effect and psi research and connectivity, neuroplasticity and reprogramming the brain, multiple personality disorder with physical as well as mental changes, and global consciousness being effected by major world events such as 9/11 or Princess Diana's death. He also asked if we are in a computer game and if so who/what is running it?

The discussion then centred on delayed choice quantum eraser, particles becoming waves, the observer effect and information travelling both forward and backwards in time. Past present and future are one. This prompted considerable exchange, especially regarding whether we can change our past. We also talked about TRIZ, TIPS, Ken Wilber and Integral Theory, Edward Witten and M Theory and String Theory. The integral view would suggest that everyone is right in some way, like the blind men and the elephant, but only partially. It was an extremely interesting discussion by the author of a very informative, entertaining up to the minute book with brilliant illustrations. The afternoon was thoroughly enjoyed by everyone.

North Wales

Eric Franklin

When I announced the series of sound-healing sessions with Hara Willow as our one event in eight weekly parts here in Lampeter during February and March 2017 I used, among others, the following words: "Within the wide area of conscious experience that we call 'mind' we find a number of modes of healing, the making whole of the mind and the body. Even psychoanalysis, mediated indirectly via words, seems somewhat efficacious (albeit extremely slow), but the other bodily senses seem also to convey beneficial effects, often through a gentle trance state which sets deliberate logical cogitation aside, and seems to influence future consciousness via direct effects on the brain. Mankind's pre-occupation with the subject has given rise to a variety of practices, including for examples shamanism, Santo Daime, Transcendental Meditation, and many others, all warranting our attention and honest research."

As a result of reading my introduction Dr Nicola Miller contacted me to tell of her research, using the MRI scanner, seeking the connections between listening and the body's small but sensitive, and largely unnoticed, responses. This research is intriguing to the scientific mind, and probably lies near one extreme of a wide range of effects brought about by sound, but what I had in mind myself was a direct effect of returning neuronal systems to a neutral state, a kind of resetting of a 'tabula rasa' ground-state, by means of sound and a light trance, which might heal memories, or free the mind from trauma to allow it to act thereafter without neurosis.

Pre-scientific minds may have discovered such healing means. Certainly what Hara Willow offered us would not be considered scientific by most Western minds, but might lie at yet another distant point in that range of postulated effects. Her sessions seemed to be based upon what I would describe as intuitive practices of a wiccan kind, and healing might well result in susceptible minds, but the approach was via practices and rituals taken from a variety of shamanic and yogic or tantric traditions. For example, early in the sessions Hara used the chant 'Aum gam Gana pata ye namaha' by which one calls upon Ganesha, the Hindu elephant-headed god, to assist in removing obstacles to achieving one's healing goals during the eight weeks of sessions. I wondered whether some might find their desired healing via meditation having less cognitive content, and whether the beta-wave attention needed to learn and speak a chant in an unfamiliar language from an unfamiliar culture would be counterproductive.

Something near to Western, Freudian, psychology was expressed by Hara in the following words, written to participants after one of the sessions: "We discussed mental patterns, habits of thinking, which make neuronal connections in the brain and which after repeating over time eventually lead to the creation of literal physical grooves in the brain. These patterns are then set. However, we can create new patterns (to replace the old ones) by becoming aware of those that cause us imbalance or pain (usually fear based) and by not acting on them, but by acting from a place of love and trust instead. Simple but not easy. This practice of acting 'as if' enables us to create new patterns even if we don't actually feel the trust. We can literally create it by practising."

This may be true, of course, but it is unlike the alpha-wave meditative state I had imagined myself as a possible means of washing out harmful data and resetting an empty ground-state by means of sound. Perhaps there are indeed many modes along that range of possible healing techniques. As the reader will discern, the eight weeks of Hara Willow's sessions, each session grounded in a different segment of 'The Medicine Wheel', could be repeated and developed in future

cycles, just as further sessions of psychotherapy might accumulate benefits. In this way, a person might bring healing to his or her own mind via a personal psychosynthesis, whether using existing traditions and teachings or not. But perhaps Dr Miller's research into the links between sound itself, including meaningful but non-verbal sound such as music, and the responses of the somatic system, would be at least equally fruitful, and more direct.

GRAMPIAN GROUP

NICOLA MILLER

March 2017

Paolo Maccagno, an anthropologist, Feldenkrais practitioner[®] and marathoner, was our speaker in March. He began his talk with a story from an African tribe where, in the middle of a thunderstorm, a woman went out into the forest. The strange atmosphere gave rise to a powerful experience which she was moved to express by singing a song. On returning to the tribe, she wanted to share her song. Normally, Paolo said, anthropologists would be interested in the song, or the culture surrounding the song. But the artist recounting the story, Bill Viola, was more interested in being with the woman in the forest when she started singing. His interest lay in being "on the front line, right there where something new is coming into the world," to "bring forth" the experience itself.

After working 15 years as a landscape architect, Paolo began to run on a regular basis, a "crazy idea," he said. Over time, he started to notice that, through this "powerful practice," he was beginning to see people and the world differently. He began to experience the feeling that "everything was possible." This experience led Paolo to think about running marathons and, in particular, the 'wall' of the marathon and the idea of the 'limit.' Some but not all marathon runners hit this wall after covering around 35-42 Km when they appear to run out of energy. They have reached their limit.

Paolo's interest lies in the nature of the physical, psychological or cultural factors that underpin this phenomenon. By way of illustration he showed an image of an arm wearing a watch. The arm was 'tattooed' with the times by which the runner should reach particular parts of the route, thereby putting pressure on the runner to be "on time." At around 35 km, these values can start to lose their meaning. Runners may begin to wonder "Why am I doing this?" and start to lose power over their "self." In Paolo's experience, if the runner's mind is only focused on time, they are likely to face and probably fall at, the wall. He suggests that to really run, you should run as if you're going to run forever. Yes, there is a lot of preparation before the race but, if you want to finish, all thought of this must be shed when you start running. The wall, or limit, expands and becomes space, and with this expansion, comes the potential to explore. Paolo described continuing to run without knowing why you're really doing it as a very transformative experience. *When I run I forget who I am!*

Returning to anthropologists, Paolo talked of their interest in lines or borders between states before reminding us that in the past, divisions between states were often spaces called margins. These were often deserts or virgin forests, spaces which offered freedom to interact. His notion of 'limit' therefore, is more like a margin that provides the space and the freedom to explore. But what, he asked, is the meaning of exploration? To answer this, Paolo drew on the words of Tim Ingold "Research is the pursuit of truth through the practice of curiosity and care." and St Francis, "The truth is not the knowledge we have of it but the joy that it gives us." He highlighted the practice of care as being existentially meaningful, and the importance of caring for yourself as well as for others. Facing a wall or a limit "demands a movement of exposure (that downsizes) the arrogance of meaning and (accepts) its intrinsic fragility. It is that acceptance that can be a path of care for humans."

Paolo learnt to trust the gesture of running without really understanding why he was doing it and found that this gave him the capacity to face situations "without protections." He took his experience and insights into prisons in Milan/Italy where he coached and ran with prisoners as they prepared to run the Milano Marathon. During the course of the project he had to find ways to challenge numerous borders/lines/divisions related to prison practices and procedures. Even at the very last minute there remained doubt as to whether the prisoners would be able to run the marathon.

To see the successful conclusion to this project, please see YouTube "Forza papa! The dream of the marathon." I'm sure you'll enjoy it.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wdOIXV4SZ14&list=UU1uiSL6xZVYE9gubBB682Q&index=6>

A similar project in Peterhead prison, Scotland, is now underway. Paolo's talk was thought provoking and extremely well received judging by the questions raised in the discussion that followed.

Biography

Ongoing life-research into the notion of limit focusing on movement, body and touch. Currently a PhD student in anthropology at the University of Aberdeen under the supervision of Professor Tim Ingold and Dr. Jo Vergunst. Contract professor for the chair of pedagogy of the body (Prof. Ivano Gamelli) at the Milan-Bicocca University. Registered with the UK Feldenkrais Guild. Recent publications: *Lungo lento. Maratona e pratica del limite* (Quodlibet - 2015), *Running Walls: the performance of the limit in prison* (Scottish Journal of Performance - 2015), *Through these walls* (Like the wind magazine - 2016), *Solitudine esposta* (Magazzino di Filosofia - 2016), *Running North* (La Repubblica - 2016), *Guidare libertà* (Amica Sofia magazine - forthcoming 2017).

GUILDFORD GROUP

GERRI MCMANUS

Because of work commitments the convenor of the local Guildford Group needed to change the meeting date from a Wednesday to a Thursday but this resulted in very poor attendance so the Guildford Group has been effectively dormant for a year or so. However, Gerri McManus is now proposing to run monthly Local Group meetings in Godalming on a Sunday, early evening - with a talk from 5:30pm followed by an early supper. Those interested please email Gerri at gerri.mcmanus@gmail.co.uk to indicate support and any suggestions for forthcoming topics/speakers.

MEMBERS ARTICLES AND ARTICLES OF INTEREST

Available from the editor or through links – dl@scimednet.org

SCIENCE

"Life, Environment and People: my inclusional educational approach to encouraging creative and discerning scientific understanding of our natural human neighbourhood"

Alan Rayner (3 pp.)

Life and Consciousness – The Vedantic view
Bhakti Niskama Shanta (12 pp., from Communicative & Integrative Biology, 8:5, e1085138, DOI: 10.1080/19420889.2015.1085138)

PHILOSOPHY/SPIRITUALITY

Pre-modern Interfaith Dialogues with Special Reference to Nicholas of Cusa

Michael J. Langford (13 pp.)

The Supernatural and Modern Thought – with special reference to Alfred Russel Wallace

Charles Smith (15 pp)

<http://people.wku.edu/charles.smith/wallace/S174.htm>

'In Accordance with Their Own Nature': Women and Equality in the Catholic Church

Jo de Groot BSW PhD DipEd (9 pp.)

PSYCHOLOGY

Digital Consciousness and Platonic Computation

Simon.X.Duan PhD, Metacomputics Labs, UK (13 pp.)

The Existence of Spirits

Andris Tebecis, PhD (12 pp)

ECOLOGY

Greening the Hot Deserts (and ppt)

Dr Anthony Fox (6 pp.)

Interview: "Wholeness & the Environmental Crisis"—

Jeffrey Kiehl, Ph.D., with Bonnie Bright (7 pp.)

GENERAL

Trump and the Post-Truth World

Ken Wilber (80 pp.)

Evaluating youth character development programs using evolutionary evaluation and the systems evaluation protocol
Jennifer Brown Urban et al (14 pp.)

To link to this article: <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/10888691.2017.1285236>

Online publications by Rolf Sattler

Wholeness, Fragmentation, and the Unnamable: Holism, Materialism, and Mysticism - A Mandala

http://www.beyondwilber.ca/books/mandala/mandala_of_life_and_living.html

This book is based on a mandala with the unnamable in the centre and the namable of holism and materialism/mechanism at the periphery. In 12 chapters it examines the relation of our materialistic mainstream culture and science with holistic alternative culture and science on the background of the unnamable mystery. One appendix is on the Human Condition, another on Lessons from the 20th century for the 21st century.

Science: its Power and Limitations

<http://www.beyondwilber.ca/about/science/limitations-of-science.html>

A very comprehensive analysis of the power and especially the limitations of science in its various forms.

Plant Morphology

http://www.beyondwilber.ca/about/plantmorphology/plant_morphology.html

A wide-ranging discussion of plant morphology with special emphasis of continuum and process morphology that I elaborated during my scientific career as a plant morphologist.

Toward better health and more sanity in our life and society

<http://www.beyondwilber.ca/health/health/health-sanity.html>

An examination of health and sanity of the mind, speech, and the body, including the physical, subtle, and very subtle (causal) body.

Ken Wilber's AQAL Dogma

<http://www.beyondwilber.ca/AQALmap/AQAL-dogma/ken-wilber.html>
A very critical appreciation of Ken Wilber's AQAL map of the Kosmos.

ONLINE ARTICLES BY ANTHONY JUDGE

Public Enemy #1 as Supreme Leader?

Thinking otherwise about framing the engagement with society's worst fear

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/selfmarg.php>

Empowering Ineffectual Outrage with the Strategically Outrageous

Beyond reactive protest, demonstration and resistance

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/outragus.php>

Indians? Witches? Natives? Jews? Islamists? ETs? Eradication as genocide – now and then?

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/eradanew.php>

Zen of Facticity: Bull, Ox or Otherwise?

Herdin facts and their alternatives in a post-truth-era

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/docs10s/zenbull.php>

Psychosocial Transformation by "Pill Pushing"?

Model-making, strategic advocacy and the myth of the "red pill"

<https://www.laetusinpraesens.org/musings/redpill.php>