

CAN COLLECTIVE VIOLENCE BE PREVENTED?

December 2006 – January 2007

The main focus during this Christmas visit was the re-structuring, re-decorating and planning of the **JIWA DAMAI RETREAT AND SEMINAR CENTER**. Existing rooms were transformed, incorporating local crafts and hand colored batiks as well as stone carvings to reflect the spirit of the place and the wealth of local Balinese arts available. JIWA DAMAI (an Indonesian word for soul at peace or tranquil soul) is meant to unfold into an international retreat and seminar center within the next few years. Guided by the vision to create a space, a sanctuary where, in alignment and honoring the existing tropical nature of the setting, adults and youths of all walks of life, cultures and religions can come together and initiate peace. The environment and location support reconnection to the abundance and life-giving force of the earth as well as the earth changes. and are ideal for reflection and contemplation. .

JIWA DAMAI is meant to provide a space where retreats and seminars can be held with international participation, focusing on integrating various subjects relating to inner and outer peace: i.e. education, philosophy, psychology, peace making, inter-religious dialogue, arts connected with physical wellbeing.

The place itself is blessed with several natural springs supplying an abundance of crystal clear waters, which, according to locals are endowed with cleansing and healing powers. They feed the pool and the water lily ponds teeming with fish.

Nestled in a lush tropical valley at the end of a small Balinese banjar (community) it is conveniently located a 25 Minutes drive from Ubud, the Balinese artist haven..

JD is in a transformation and growing process.

Presently it can accommodate comfortably 15 people in large spacious, beautifully decorated rooms. An additional 6 beds dormitory style are available. An in door group space, open air dining and open air living area with a water lily pond allow for enjoyment, socializing as well as contemplation.

Individuals wanting to retreat for a longer period of time are welcome. Individual retreat houses are also available in a setting next to the river. Detailed information will be available in March on its new website www.Jiwadamai.net or on our www.pppi.net website

BALI, LAGU DAMAI : Most of our university and highschool students were on Christmas vacation and insisted on a Western Christmas party which took place on Christmas eve. A beautiful Christmas tree, made of Balinese palm leaves was lovingly decorated with many chocolate hearts. All our students were cooking and preparing foods for about 80 guests for days. The Balinese brought their children and the students organized games for them. Old and young enjoyed swimming in the pool created..

After the gathering the students helped redecorating the rooms.

One of the great pleasures was the visit of one of our students from Aceh, who, thanks to a Swiss sponsor had her trip to Bali paid. Her headscarf disappeared quickly once she was in Bali and for each of the three weeks, she spent one week with a different family.. The Balinese world is so different from her Muslim world with its Shariah law enforcement. The intercultural exchange produced much resonance. It will allow the Indonesian students more openness and intercultural exchange among different cultural groups.

In addition we took in a female dog with five puppies, the owner did not have the money to buy food for them all. Jiwa Damai now hosts three adult dogs, three adult cats and the five puppies, all of whom found us on their own.

JAVA, BLITAR, YOUTH DETENTION CENTER. Due to the cancellation of PLAN for the previously promised funding of our well - developed one year training for staff and young inmates, we had to re- consider our involvement. We visited the facility and had several meetings with a new director and worked for several hours with 60 of the youths (age 10 – 19). Who had to remain there for several years more. During the meeting we found that at least 30 of the 60 were imprisoned for touching or having contact with or without sexual relationship with a girl underage (less than 18), which is considered a crime here. According to our Western perspective they had not committed a crime. We were able to give them emotional support and, of course, some food and distributed soap, tooth brushes and toothpaste to all 106 inmates.

My colleague Yusti and I decided to continue with the project, that is, the training of staff and youths as planned for 2007, carrying the occurring expenses ourselves and looking for funding. The project is proceeding well and showing results. The feedback of the staff and inmates was very positive.

JAVA, SURABAYA: The seminar I held during my October stay for lecturers and teachers: The art of empowerment, a transpersonal approach, has sparked quite a few responses and the creation of a transpersonal internet chat list.

My book **OUR INNER ACTORS** , Subpersonality work in Psychosynthesis, translated by my Javanese colleague Tiwi ,has now been published in Indonesian and is available in the major book stores.

ACEH, SUMATRA: The elections were won by the GAM, the rebel group that agreed to peace, whose mostly young freedom fighters are being re- integrated into the social setting. The governor elect was one of its primary leaders, now turned politician. I had several individual meetings with him while he was still on the freedom fighters side. My interest was in establishing the psychological tools for re- integrating many hundreds of youthful rebels into society after their years of living in the jungle. At this point this project seems to be re-vitalized due to the change of the political climate.

I thank all of you for your continued emotional and material support

Much inner peace for 2007

Dr.Margret Rueffler

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