

# FROM ILLNESS TO WHOLENESS: FEEDBACK SUMMARY (30 Aug '08)

**Workshop Date:** 19-26 August '08, **Location:** Lesley Sawhney Centre, Deolali

## 1. Describe your overall experience at the program

- It was really enriching. I feel I have really evolved as a person.
- Beautiful, encouraging, insightful
- It was a very enriching journey towards self-discovery: a power-packed retreat with very nourishing, informative and interesting content, delivered amazingly well by the 2 of you
- The retreat has given me a new vision, direction, a new way of looking at things happening around me. More so, it has given a new way of looking at Cancer and disease in general
- Barring a few minor glitches, the accommodation was very comfortable, food well-cooked and wholesome, service and presentation good. Management, catering service staff: neat, clean and hygienic. All in all, very satisfactory except that linen could be changed every 2 days if possible.
- It was the best thing that's happened to me in my life. Nilima/ Vijay: the 2 of you were absolutely wonderful teachers/ healers who took us through these 7 days so smoothly and dramatically making us understand every bit, step-by-step. You showed so much of care and compassion at every step. The entire experience was beautiful.
- One word: Fantastique!
- Relaxing, comforting, giving confidence, decreasing fear factor, giving positive approach to life.
- It's a wonderful experience, this retreat completely changed the view of life.
- Was exceptionally beautiful and mind-blowing to be so honest with oneself is difficult.
- Excellent!
- The retreat was an instructive and enjoyable experience. Personally, I was hesitant to utter the word "Cancer" before coming to Deolali. After the retreat, I have no quarrel with the disease
- Overwhelming, enriching experience. A lot of good power-packed in 7 days.
- Though I was absent for 2 days, the overall experience is learning, peace and joy
- It's a really amazing experience, I find I can really de-construct and re-construct myself with this retreat
- Divine, learning about each other and self
- A rewarding, enriching and enlightening experience. Concept, design and delivery: all amazing! Commitment, compassion and passion (for mission) of both, really mind-boggling! Guruma, pranaam's.

## 2. What new ideas or perspectives did you gain about yourself and/or your illness?

- I have understood my unresolved issues; my shadows were stronger than my values; to work on my own personality.
- Just be; that peace lies within me
- To use illness/ negativity/ setback as a gift; to honour it and finally transcend it; we need to embrace our shadow in order to become whole
- The goal/ purpose of my life is set and exists within me; All I need to do is wake up and work towards finding it
- There was a definite reason for the cancer: to make life wholesome, I have to have all elements – diet, rest, meditation, learning, etc – in my life; Be more open, forgiveness and respect the shadows.
- My health problem and subsequent loss of the sense of smell at a very young age, leading to a fear factor in my psyche for all these years may be the cause of my cancer attack in 1998. It is a reasonable assumption considering that my job in the mid-90's was on tankers carrying very dangerous cargo. By recognizing that cancer is an indicator asking me to honour it and bring out my system's fear, also learning to be more lax and lenient upon my own self may help me shift from illness to wellness. Other issues too need attention.
- We cause all the upsets ourselves; We get the warnings but refuse to acknowledge them till we are struck by it; The emotional/ mental/ spiritual issues stuck inside cause Cancer
- From Illness to Wholeness: I have changed completely and I hope I keep it up

- The illness is not the only thing or so important, that we stop our life there.
- We don't see things as they are, we see things as we are; Illness hasn't come to destroy life, but to teach you in life; Illness is the shadow of health and it is a gift.
- That I could have such deep insights and heal myself so well; I find a different depth to myself
- I got to appreciate much more of 'who I already am'; I got to move from Head to Heart; I got that I need to express my being-ness to create the movement forward.
- Cancer is not a deadly disease if detected early; I can handle it: do not feel lonely and dejected; share your experience with others; put your experience and energy for betterment of others.
- You come out of your shell; I am not the only one who has gone through this; Feel lighter and free
- Facing myself; analyzing myself; thought of improving myself
- What I am and where I am, in view of journey from 'honouring' to 'transcending'
- Values and shadow are equally important, so not good to hide the shadow; Through meditation, yoga and all 7 days, I have opened myself ... I opened my block.
- Inner soul and higher spirit, which is powerful; Shadows and how I was ignoring them; To forgive and forget
- Got more clarity about my stressors and a new perspective to cope with/ handle them. The shadow and the gift/ nugget; worth its weight in gold; got empowered through observing shadows of other 'precious' participants and in the process, could see 'my shadows'. PEP session was invaluable and the nucleus of the retreat. And the sensation and joy of 'aha' experience can be for only those who experienced. "Paisa-vasool!"

### **3. List two behavioural changes that you will make as a result of this retreat**

- Resolve my unfinished issues; To be more practical and learn to be more open and expressive; above all, to forgive myself.
- To be more patient/ tolerant; Be at peace
- I will work towards embracing my shadows; pay more attention towards strengthening my relationships with family, colleagues and friends.
- Diet, exercise and meditation; transform myself into a wholesome person physically, mentally and spiritually
- Change my outlook/ attitude towards cancer; thus returning to wellness: so that I can spend the remaining years productively; Intend to start in a small way teaching needy young children use of simple tools to enable them to do simple electrician's/ carpenter's/ plumber's jobs
- I have started smiling a lot, I have reasons to; Become very peaceful so irritations can be controlled
- I will have more insight into another human being; I will think of my Values and my shadows
- Meditation, prayer; positive approach, changes in diet & exercise
- Meditation to keep divine energy flowing in the body, to prevent illness; Diet & exercise on regular basis; increase spiritual consciousness
- I will be calm, cool and more humane; A solid rock of Gibraltar to my patients, clients in all aspects
- I will make being-ness a part of my awareness throughout the day; It is my aim to be aware of my being-ness, even while I move and do whatever I'm doing
- I will be listening to others with 'empathy' and less 'sympathy'; I will participate in CPAA programs more enthusiastically.
- Have learnt to recognize my shadow, cannot evaluate someone else through my values
- Will pay attention to my mental needs; will improve relationships in the family
- I understood why energy is not flowing inside me; I learned how to resolve this unresolved issue
- Start reading and evolving continuously; try to discard mental stressors
- Restrict my verbal communication in similar situations and generally (not withdrawing); Increase regularity and duration of my physical activity including Yoga, including awareness and interest; Also more attention to rest and nutrition

#### **4. What about the retreat did you enjoy most ... and why?**

- I liked everything; I needed all of it to transcend
- The ambience, the food, the participants, the facilitators
- I enjoyed every single bit of it: the sessions, discussions, yoga, breaks, place, yoga nidra, etc.
- Yoga exercises, mantras in healing, yogic influence in curing Cancer in various ways, yoga-nidra is a wonderful tool for refreshing sleep, finding a 'fork' not 'bump' in my journey through life after only 7 days, when I could not recognize it in 6 years since retirement was a great achievement. That was a pleasant surprise!
- All activities: it helped to understand and find the true person I am
- All the participants enjoying themselves on the same platform; at the end of the day, dancing and singing with high spirits; the togetherness of each and every activity is amazing
- Exercises, yoga and tai-chi, because it boosted my spirits up
- Getting your life-purpose, positive approaches and how to enjoy your life
- Healing meditation, when we used to meditate, I used to feel that really my body was healing day-by-day and I also experienced it, within these 7 days.
- Everything to a 'T'; the 7 days I spent was an experience of a celestial life
- The trainers, the participants, the place and the spiritual awareness every day, every moment.
- I enjoyed morning exercises and meditation because it enhanced my energy for the entire day, it cleansed body and mind
- Talks on life-force, chi (prana), spirituality, higher consciousness
- I liked the Values session the most, because it gave me an opportunity of self-analysis. For your unique approach to the study sessions, Yoga. Everybody gave a positive vibration to each other
- Play-clay, because it is very practical ... didn't need any skill
- All activities like drawing, gazing, burning of stressors, life-line, etc as they revealed all deeper inner thoughts and psyche of a person
- Morning yoga sessions and yoga-nidra (though should normally be at least 2-2.5 hours after meals, for obvious benefits of both, to body and mind); All the other sessions, the discussions/ debriefing and pin-pointing key takeaways. The Metta; healing and getting healed: double "paisa-vasool"!

#### **5. What did you enjoy least ... and why?**

- PEP presentations.
- The last PEP presentations.
- Every part was a great experience; Vijay & Nilima did a wonderful job with a crowd as varied in age, profession and experience as the one we represented
- 5 stages of grieving and loss (maybe I was already aware of it.)
- No photo-copies of notes were given (particularly yoga & yoga-nidra)
- The program was designed and executed exceptionally well; there was very little that I did not enjoy; the question does not arise
- Enjoyed all the topics
- Khandoba temple visit
- Mosquitoes, but can't help!
- Pace was too hectic/ tiring; absorption (in my view) would improve with more 'gaps' to contemplate and also to 'stand and stare' ("What is the life so full of care ...). Even trainers will benefit. (Sorry, unasked advice/ concern) YOU BOTH ARE VERY, VERY PRECIOUS)

#### **6. What support and/or follow-up would you like in the future?**

- Maybe the group can meet again, after a year
- Please, if possible, keep me informed about your forthcoming events and also about similar / related courses available. Meetings at regular intervals to sharpen skills.
- I would like to once in a while be in touch over email and exchange my progress and take motivation as and when needed from you.

- By keeping in touch and having a fair idea about each other, I can inform about my health and the ‘Cancer-directed’ new venture of conducting children’s camps
- We had a wonderful team – like a family. Like to keep in touch with them and vice versa. Once a year, would like to go through this briefly, to be in touch with it.
- We must have a retreat like this, next year
- Dance, music therapy, yoga, yoga-nidra, Tai-chi, meditation, exercise, diet.
- I prefer to get involved in a support-group
- Future workshops in Mumbai and info/notes in detail about what you teach.
- Write-ups based on personal experiences of survivors regarding their onset, detection and treatment including cost may give correct picture for discussion and analysis. Cost factor has to be brought into focus.
- Please keep us informed about forthcoming and related programs
- For alternative therapy and moral support and sharing my experience
- I’ll need support as and when it comes about my day-to-day patient counseling
- Meeting you both was an unforgettable experience. I see a divine plan for me as it has come to me at the most appropriate time. Thanks and God-bless. I look forward to continued contact and mutual support

#### **7. Any other comments (or suggestions for improvement)**

- Would love to keep in touch
- This retreat should help more in awareness programs
- Please, please, please let me know about your life-skills school
- Words fall short, but from the deep cave in my heart, where the soul rests, a deep sense of gratitude and a sincere THANK YOU!
- It was nearly flawlessly conducted, giving me a real feeling of upliftment and joy. Being human, we are not perfect; there is always scope for improvement. But I am stumped to find what!
- I like to get more knowledge about alternative therapies also
- Please make available meditation instructions CD and study material
- Please, please give photocopy of all your notes, CD’s/ audio-cassettes of chants, meditation techniques and quotes will help me to practice.
- Awareness of the disease in mid-lower classes has to be promoted in a systematic manner. Our efforts to bring down the costs has to be highlighted for arousing public interest
- The whole process from intro to conclusion is absolutely complete and just right
- There should be some formal written/ oral evaluation about each participant which will give proper direction to him/her; please give CD for morning yoga & yoga-nidra
- Place like Lesley Sawhney is the most appropriate, even some place in Mumbai (which I suggested) won’t be equal in value-for-money, ambience and healthy supporting atmosphere and services here.