

A House Called Bountyfull

Newsletter May 2008



OCEANS OF FORGIVENESS

Recently I was reminded both of the profound wisdom and meaningfulness, and yet the startling simplicity, of the Native Indian rituals of healing.

A friend of mine, Shirley Alphonse, a Native Indian lady of the Cowichan Tribe, whom I have known since I was a young missionary in the Gulf Islands, was recounting with joy her experience with her ten-year old grandson during the Lenten Season. Shirley was always a deeply spiritual person and remained very much in touch with her own people and the Native Indian traditions. In these past years she has been deeply involved in the ministry of healing as an Elder among her own Native people, not only in the Cowichan area but in the southern Vancouver Island community of Sooke where she has lived for the past number of years. In her role as an Elder and spiritual leader she has conducted many healing circles and has been involved in countless wakes and funerals in the lower Vancouver Island Native peoples' communities.

One simple ritual that she uses when she gathers people together in a healing circle in their homes, is to place a silver bowl in the centre of the room. She then asks everybody to write down on a small piece of paper their bad feelings and any hurting memories and place them in the little bowl. After prayerful reflection Shirley burns these little scraps of paper and blesses the ashes with sage. A peacefulness settles over the room and people experience a sense of letting go.

Her little grandson, Dallan, phoned her and said, "Grandma, I want you to come down to the ocean with me and bring your sage with you." Without question Shirley, who loves her little grandson so much, went down with him to the wind-swept, weather-beaten shores of Sooke. When they got there, he pulled out a crumpled piece of paper and said, "Grandma, these are all my bad feelings. I want you to burn them and bless the ashes with your sage." With great ceremony and dignity, Shirley burned the crumpled pieces of paper, and little Dallan dug a hole in the sand and buried the ashes. Shirley said, "Did you thank God, Dallan?" "Oh, yes", he said, "and all my guides too, my guardian angel, my mama, my grandma and my old grandma too".

As I thought of the waves battering the sands of the shore and washing the burnt feelings out to sea, I was reminded of Ezekiel's promise, "*I will pour clean water over you and I will remove your hearts of stone from your bodies and give you hearts of flesh instead. You will be my people, and I will be your God.*"

- Larry Mackey, OMI

Our thanks...

Thank you so much to all of you who have contributed in any way to our ministry at Bountyfull.

- Those of you who support us financially on a regular basis or have made individual donations
- Our faithful Board members
- Paddy and Maureen, "bread for the hungry"
- Diane Craig, keeping close watch on the finances
- All of you who have helped us in so other many ways.



Maureen and Paddy Hickey

Dear Father Mackey:

Thank you for accompanying me on my path last week. I am very grateful for the insights I gained. Here's a poem I wrote at "16 ish" .. If you wish it can go in a newsletter.

NUTCRACKER SWEET

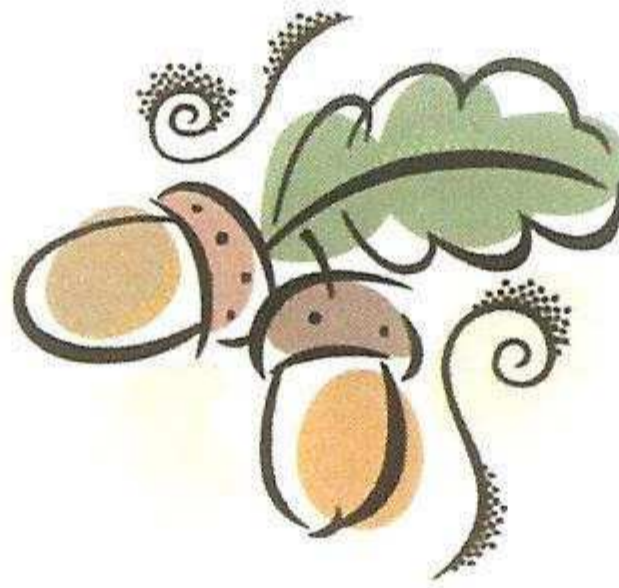
Are you the magic nutcracker
Who can break away my shell?
Crack apart the wooden façade
That captures my soul so well?

Can you help me through the lesson
That's hard yet must be learned,
That in sharing love it needn't
Have a fear of being burned?

Placing trust in anyone
Is something I find hard
Since love's last deceit
Left me badly scarred.

Into a shell did I retreat
With feelings tucked inside.
Split my self-imposed cell,
Show me I need not hide.

I've sealed my shell so tightly
I may not get out alive
Won't you aid my escape
Before the squirrels arrive?



- Jenny

Bountyfull Mission Statement

At Bountyfull we commit ourselves to journey with people who have come to realize they are powerless and are ready and willing to seek help.

Steps in the Journey

- 1 . We accept the person totally and non-judgmentally.
2. We listen to their life story and help them discover the hidden roots of their brokenness.
3. We help them identify and own the resultant dysfunctional behaviour.
- 4 . We help them discover that the answer to healing their powerlessness lies within, through their loving acceptance of themselves and their whole life story.
5. They come to a spiritual awareness that they do not journey alone.
- 6 They touch the life-giving power within themselves.



Monica

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Life moves on...

I watched a young couple begin to renovate an old house down the lane. It looked like so much work ahead but they seemed delighted to get in there, tear down and build up. I was amazed at how hard they worked, and the changes that began to take place. Setbacks, including stolen tools, slowed the pace. Yet they pushed on cheerfully.

Across the lane, closer to us, another old house began to be renovated. I watched it change. First the dirt of the dismantling. Will they ever be able to finish this? Then old boards were replaced, new ones put in place. It really began to look good.

One evening a bright light came on across the lane at the first house. I noticed a new porch at the back, doors, windows in place. I could see through the window a lovely painted wall with pictures evenly spaced. What a surprise! It had changed so much while I had my focus on the second house and I had missed progressive steps of growth and change in the first one. I had shifted focus, and missed much of the day-to-day progress on the first couple's work. Suddenly the house was all grown up!

I drew a parallel with so many stories I have heard about how family dynamics can happen just as easily, how quickly time goes by, and important steps in the lives of children can pass by sometimes barely noticed by those who love them. And I thank God for the opportunity to be able to walk through those stories and help people find their healing power within themselves, let go of past hurts, accept and be grateful for the love they did receive, and begin to really love themselves and their own story, coming to fuller and happier lives. I thank all who have shared your life with me. You have made my life richer and helped to deepen my faith in a loving God.



- *Monica Guest, SCIC*



*Is Larry starting another book?
Didn't he just finish the DVD?*

I'm Back!

After three years of living in Victoria and working in the role of leadership for the Sisters of St. Ann in the West, I have returned to Bountyfull. It is great to be back in this house of healing. During the three years while I was away, I still kept in touch by being a Bountyfull Board member. I continue to be the acting secretary for the Board.

I also do other secretarial work and a variety of other duties at Bountyfull.

No matter what the work is, the work of inner growth is a continuing one. I can always learn something if I stop and look at myself. This season of Spring, with the new growth on the trees and blossoms brightening up the dull days, is a reminder of looking at my own growth. I am amazed when I discover more and more about myself and am able to continue the healing process. Someone once said, *once you stop growing, you are dead!*

Looking at this, I don't think I will die soon!

- Patricia Donovan, SSA



Round Table Workshop

Members of the Round Table which is the community of the Diocesan organizations and the Religious Communities that are involved in the downtown East side, of which Bountyfull is a member, requested that Larry share with the group the healing insights and the approaches that we have used at Bountyfull House during these many years.

The workshop was held at Kateri Centre on May 3rd from 9:30 until noon.

OFF Principles Our Focus is Feelings

No
Judging
Analyzing
Criticizing
Fixing
Rescuing
Saving
Simply accept
unconditionally

Enjoy a safe and restful summer!