

Human Kindness Foundation

a little good news

Christmas 1997

FEASTING ON POISONED CAKE

Humanity grows more and more intelligent, yet there is clearly more trouble and less happiness daily. How can this be so? It is because intelligence is not the same thing as wisdom.

When a society misuses partial intelligence and ignores holistic wisdom, its people forget the benefits of a plain and natural life. Seduced by their desires, emotions, and egos, they become slaves to bodily demands, to luxuries, to power and unbalanced religion and psychological excuses. Then the reign of calamity and confusion begins.

Nonetheless, superior people can awaken during times of turmoil to lead others out of the mire. But how can the one liberate the many? By first liberating his own being. He does this not by elevating himself, but by lowering himself. He lowers himself to that which is simple, modest, true; integrating it into himself, he becomes a master of simplicity, modesty, truth.

Completely emancipated from his former false life, he discovers his original pure nature, which is the pure nature of the universe.

— Lao Tzu, from the Hua Hu Ching 2500 years ago (translated by Brian Walker)

Dear Family,

In this Christmas season, I invite you to reflect on Lao Tzu's teaching (above) and to consider how clearly it describes the life of Jesus Christ, even though it was spoken in China 500 years before Jesus was born.

Jesus looked around and saw "calamity and confusion," just like Lao Tzu had described. Also as Lao Tzu had described, Jesus first awakened and liberated his own being — he studied the scriptures, was baptized by John, went into the desert to be tempted by Satan — and then "*lowered himself* to that which is simple, modest, and true." He lived like the poor, not like the high and mighty. And he wouldn't let his affection or friendship be bought by people in power who practiced "unbalanced religion and psychological excuses" (Washington DC, take note!).

Then Jesus showed us how to be "completely emancipated from (our) former false life." He knew his own "original pure nature" and showed us a way to know ours as well. He fulfilled Lao Tzu's advice perfectly.

Consistent Advice Through the Ages

How could Jesus's way and Lao Tzu's way be identical? The answer is simple: That sort of advice doesn't change through the ages. From the beginning of time, sages have urged us to free ourselves from every form of false identity and tyranny of the senses. First, they have urged us to take proper care of body, mind and spirit. Second, they have all said that the spiritual part is the most important.

Without it, we're on an important journey without a map. Yet in each age we seem to forget the importance of the spiritual, and we do indeed lose our way. We lose our way so much, for so many years, that most of us forget we're on a journey at all. That's when the "reign of calamity and confusion" takes over.

What does that look like? Well, pick up today's newspaper or turn on the evening news and you'll see. Chaos. Violence. Children killing their parents. Society using education money to build prisons. Millions of people homeless on the street, while a young man just out of high school signs a \$125 million dollar contract to play baseball. Peppermint Prozac for children (true!). Sad, crazy times. Time for us to wake up and remember!

You wouldn't think, to look at us, that we are actually the living, breathing manifestations of the One Living God. We suffer and snivel our way through life as though we were tiny little "clods of ailments and grievances," to borrow a phrase from George Bernard Shaw.

We have such profound amnesia of who we really are, that it may seem to us that since money and possessions rule the world, we may as well just get our share.

But our share of what? Calamity and confusion? A poisoned cake? Endless debt? Why would we want our share of unnecessary misery? This is where we need to understand what Lao Tzu meant about *lowering* ourselves to that which is simple, modest, true. This advice never goes out of date.

We are not here to amass fortunes. We are not here to win wars or competitions. We are not here to earn rewards or make for ourselves a great name. We are here to know God. We are not an accident.

— from Open Secrets, by Rabbi Rami Shapiro

Legal, Voluntary Slavery

Would you like to save the world from the degradation and destruction it seems destined for? Then step away from shallow mass movements and quietly go to work on your own self-awareness.

— Lao Tzu, Hua Hu Ching

Perhaps the saddest, most disturbing “shallow mass movement” of our day is personal consumer debt. While on a flight to Nebraska to do some talks and workshops recently, I read a cover story in *USA Today* about the problem of personal debt. The average American is something like \$10,000 in debt, mostly on credit cards. Most people pay the minimum monthly payment.

The article showed on a graph that with a debt of \$10,000, paying the minimum of \$200/month — which is a pretty big chunk of most people’s salary — it would take fifty years to pay off the total. That’s \$120,000 to pay off \$10,000. Is that okay with you? Are you willing to pay \$6,000 for that \$500 washing machine? \$4800 for that \$400 television set? That’s how much you’re really paying when you buy things on time.

Peddling credit cards to college students is also a big new industry. The article said modern students no longer want to live “on the cheap” while in school. No more old jalopies, mattresses on the floor. Now, minimum monthly payments enable them to live in whatever style they like. But again, at what cost? Their whole lives? Besides such credit debt, according to the *Boston Globe*, American college students also have an average debt of \$18,000 in student loans upon graduation with a bachelor’s degree, and \$40,000 average debt for masters’ degrees or PhD’s.

Amazing. Millions of people, young and old — precious, divine vehicles of God — are rushing to enslave themselves to big corporations for the rest of their lives, to support a lifestyle which has little to do with joy or truth or freedom. Have we gone nuts?

What’s the Alternative?

There is certainly an alternative to being consumer sheep fattened for the slaughter. We can “step away from shallow mass movements” both internally, through simple spiritual practices which clear our vision and cultivate our courage and faith; and externally, through creating a simpler lifestyle which not only requires a lot less money, but also gives us more time for the things that really do matter. We can go from “loving things and using people,” back to “loving people and using things.”

It takes work, of course. Anytime we step aside from the crowds there will be work involved. Maybe people trying to discourage us. Fellow slaves mocking our efforts to be free. Mahatma Gandhi called his autobiography, “My Experiments With Truth.” That is the opportunity each of us has. Not just what we read in the evening, not just in church on Sundays, but to make our everyday lives a grand, noble, good-humored, experiment in truth — where we live, what we do for a living (and how much

time we spend doing it), how our children are educated, the causes we embrace and support, how we spend our free time; all one thing. An undivided whole. A deliberate life. A rare thing in today’s world.

Many people say, “Oh, I could easily live in a simpler way or dedicate my life to a cause I believe in, but it would be unfair to my children. What about health care? What about their college education? I don’t want to limit their opportunities.”

Raising our kids to be indentured servants of the credit card companies and prostitutes to the dollar seems extremely limiting to me! I know perfectly healthy people in their twenties taking jobs they don’t like because the employers offer the most “bennies” — benefits like health insurance and retirement plans. Do we want our kids to sell their lives to the highest bidder? Is that all life is about? We have seriously lost our “Big View.”

Joyful Risks

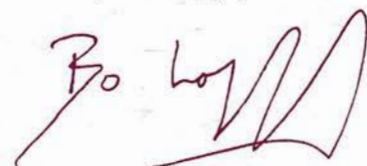
The truth is, no matter how we live, we risk limiting our children’s experience. Poor kids think there are no bad parts to being rich; rich kids think there are no good parts to being poor. Kids on a farm don’t know the benefits of travelling, and kids who have seen the world may not have the deep connection to one place they can call home. Our personal interests and values necessarily define much about our kids’ lives, so we must make sure we have deliberate and deep values rather than the “default” values of a dysfunctional, unhappy culture.

How often do we really step aside from the mass insanity in any major ways? When women come to power, they act pretty much like the men before them. Blacks act white. Native Americans use their tribal rights to build casinos on the land which was so sacred to their ancestors. The “reign of calamity and confusion” swallows up all these balancing forces before anything can ever get balanced. Poisoned cake for one and all.

It is a great time in human history to take some joyful risks with our experiments in truth. Perhaps we can use this very Christmas season to begin reclaiming our sanity, dignity and true freedom before our kids become absolutely convinced that such words are foolish or old-fashioned.

Be bold. Plan a non-materialistic Christmas this year. Take a stand against slavery and greed. Let your image of Christ this season be of His fury toward the money changers: *You have turned my Father’s House into a den of thieves!* In modern America, He may have said, *You have turned my Father’s Children into a den of slaves!*

May you all have a wondrous, modest, joyful and deep holy-day season.....



Practice: "BREAKING FREE"

Quit Smoking & Drinking !

Over 60 million Americans, including most prison inmates, smoke. A pack-a-day smoker these days is spending about \$60 per month, or \$720 per year. Double that amount for two people in the same family, or if somebody smokes a couple packs a day. Add in a similar amount for beer, wine, or liquor, and you can see that many people who may consider themselves poor are working about a quarter of their time to pay for these habits which shorten their lives, weaken their health, and provide a bad example for their children. Voluntary, suicidal slavery.

Many prisoners say they wish they could do more for their kids, yet they take serious amounts of money from their families for cigarettes. Talk is cheap. There's no better way to show you've really changed than to give up smoking and devote that money to your kids. This is not just about alcohol or tobacco; it's about taking control of our lives.

Get Out of Debt and Stay Out !

Pay off your debts and then live within your means. If you can't afford it, don't buy it. Other than a home or land, never buy a car or anything else on time. You will discover many good things about yourself if you follow this advice. Your kids will benefit greatly. Especially never go into debt for a wedding or graduation, tuxes, gowns, limos, etc. This is a horribly misguided way of expressing love. It creates stress and reinforces distorted views about "the good life." Celebrate weddings, etc., with pot-lucks, picnics, and other happy, stress-free occasions.

Buy One, Give Away One (or Two!)

Get into the habit of giving away one old item for each new item you buy. Want a new CD? Give away (or sell) an old one. Want a new shirt? Shoes? Same thing. Again, your kids will learn a lot from this, and your home will be less cluttered. If you want to reduce clutter even quicker, give *two* away for every one you buy. It is a wonderful feeling not to be burdened by too many possessions. This practice also helps you think twice before buying!

Team Up With Friends & Neighbors

Bulk buying, carpooling, exchanging goods & services, even buying an apartment building or piece of land to live on with friends — there are many ways you can save money by teaming up with others. It begins by simply having open discussions about what you all spend money on. Many ways to save will become obvious. We must overcome our latter-day attitude of not wanting to share and not wanting to depend on each other. It has not worked. We *need* to need each other, to share. This is the heart of community organizing.

Boycott Holiday Buying Madness Forever

Sita, Josh & I agreed years ago not to buy gifts for each other on birthdays or holidays. What a relief! And believe it or not, your friends and family will survive the shock if you extend it to them as well. We make plans to be with each other and *do* something together instead of rushing to the mall to buy meaningless junk. We make something ourselves, or bake a special treat. How much of your annual salary do you spend on things that break and rust?

No Escaping A Few Trade-offs

But there's no way around the fact that we can't have everything. A lot of the joy of simpler living is to love the old car that's paid for; to enjoy the old sofa from the thrift shop. Whether it's cars or clothes or furniture, we need to strengthen our *inner* dignity so that we are no longer slaves to fashion. We have to rethink our basic values and not try to spare our kids from forming a deeper sense of self-worth than the cost of the clothes they wear.

Being brainwashed by countless advertisements which have convinced us that we are incomplete without the new this or the improved that, it is quite understandable that we get frightened and tense by the idea of "doing without." But those of us who have gotten off of that treadmill rejoice at the discovery that the ads were never true. Our needs are very simple. Most of what we hock our lives for is excess. We have the power and choice to be prostitutes to consumerism, or spiritual pilgrims getting to the heart of what we're all doing here in the first place.

Find the people in your community whose lives revolve around helping out, and link your family up with them. Step away from the "shallow mass movements" which degrade your childrens' souls and which guarantee they'll either be slaves of the state (in prison) or slaves of the credit card companies. Be bold. Our people are very unhappy and confused. It's time to take a stand toward simpler, soul-powered living even if it's hard to do.



LETTERS

Dear Bo,

I've been fortunate enough to come across a copy of "We're all doing Time." It is a wonderful thing you guys have going there.

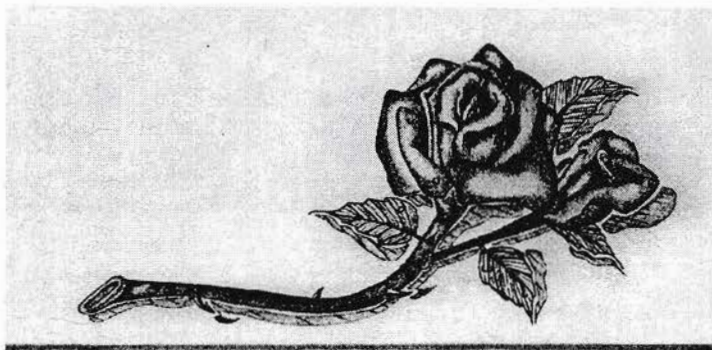
Providing this literature has done so much for so many people here, and I am anxious to acquire this "Peace of Mind" everyone speaks of. I'm eagerly excited to begin the process of spiritual growth and freedom to bring new meaning to my life.

I really feel as if this is the reason I'm here at this time in my life especially because of the circumstances. **I'm just a few cells down from the person who murdered my mother in front of us children. I have come face to face with him several times. I even sat in the chair directly beside him in church.**

As one would realize, I'm having a very difficult time coping with it. He beat her to death with a baseball bat and I remember seeing her on the floor convulsing with her eyes rolling behind her head, as I'm kneeling beside her crying for her not to die.

He was never convicted of the crime and for twenty years I've carried this burden and pain with me everywhere I went, every day of my life. Any day I might have forgotten about it, a terrible reminder comes to me in the middle of the night in the form of nightmares when I begin convulsing myself, waking up with my own eyes rolling behind my head, stuck there without being able to see even though I'm awake.

This was and continues to be a very frightening experience for me and I'm searching for some understanding. There has never been any closure to this and until he either confesses, is convicted, or until I can bring myself to forgive him, I will not be able to break free from this emotional bondage.



For My Mother, Luz Castro, by Victor Jesus Gallo, 1997 Corcoran CA

I have shown an unbelievable amount of restraint so far, but I'm afraid to go to sleep at night and, stay up all night with it eating away at my inner self. I feel like I'm not taking vengeance on this individual for the sake of my mother, my family for everything we've had to endure since her murder. It's tearing me up inside and without any counseling available to me, I'm turning to you for some help. I'm emotionally exhausted from running away and hiding from this matter.

Now that I'm confined side by side with this person, I need to find some other way to deal with this anger, rage, and severe depression. I am in no position to run away this time and need to confront the problem face to face. I feel with your help and insight, I might be able to bring some kind of peace and understanding to my life.

I've had problems finishing a book and cannot remember the last one I was able to get through, from start to finish, but since I picked up one of yours, I felt compelled to ask to borrow it from the guy in the cell next to me on a daily basis. It was very enlightening and I felt as if it lightened the weight of the world from my shoulders by showing me how to grow spiritually and fly freely to these places of peace where serenity grows from the trees and understanding flows through the streams. Thank you and I'm looking forward to hearing from you guys in the near future.

Love, J

Dear J,

It's great that you already seem to recognize there are "no accidents" involved with you being so near to this guy who killed your mom and traumatized you so deeply.

Recognizing this as an opportunity for spiritual growth is more than half the journey. Most people wouldn't even want to consider the idea. They would just want him dead. I'm very happy God is giving you a deeper sense than that, although I appreciate that

some ideas of sheer revenge must also roll around in your head now and then. It's understandable.

But back to using his presence as work for yourself: In a prison setting, you have the opportunity to watch this guy probably every day — watch him as he moves around, as he eats his meals, as he walks the yard. It seems to me that you have so much opportunity to do that, that you might be able to break through and see him as a human being instead of as the monster he became in your life by what he did.

You might be able to look at him so closely, it begins to occur to you that he is related to you just as closely as your mother was related to you. He has a profoundly intimate role in your life and growth. He's like your father in a way. And he's just a man, nothing more. He has his sources of pain and fear and nightmares just like you do. You could kill him, just like he killed your mom. And like him, you would be no happier, no better off, if you did.

So it's best to stop the wheel of pain now, isn't it? It has to stop somewhere. Someone hurt him way back when, and he hurt you and your mom, and you could hurt him, and it just rolls on forever in cruel ignorance that we are all one family, all children of one God.

If you could just watch him a little every day and keep working on seeing him as one ordinary man who did some terrible things (and realize that whether he is ever convicted or not, he's not getting away with anything; none of us gets away with anything, you know), I think your nightmares might calm down.

As you watch him, and as you lay in bed at night, focus your breathing on your heart-center, just breathing in and out to keep your heart open while you think of him or see him. You don't have to conjure up phony feelings of love for him, just try to keep the heart open by breathing in and out of it.

See him more and more as he truly is, instead of seeing him as a larger-than-life monster. If you think about it, you're one of the few children anywhere who actually sees the "boogeyman" for real. We're all scared of this vicious monster when we're young, and in your case you met him and saw his viciousness first-hand.

But the truth is, he is not the boogeyman. There isn't one. And that seems to be the opportunity God is giving you in this weird situation where you have to see this guy every day. He is not the boogeyman. He is just like you, only probably sadder and older and feeling lousy enough about his own life for the both of you.

Read my story "Lineage" in the book *Lineage & Other Stories*. The end may relate to you and this guy a lot.

Love, Bo



Dear Mr. Lozoff,

Sir I would like to begin by thanking you very much for the books you sent. I've read them both and I'm going back over parts of *We're All Doing Time* in order to make sure I'm doing my meditation correctly.

Mr. Lozoff, I need your advice. I had or still have a very sharp sometimes violent temper. And I have a hard drinking problem. But only at certain times. And I'm divorced with two kids I haven't seen or heard from in over seven months. Sorry it's so heavy.

What I need your advice on is I'm going to be getting out shortly. I'm not sure if I should start all over again, which I'll have to anyway—she got everything! Or say "screw-it" and simply just completely leave. As in forget as much as possible my kids, and go further south to another town, where nobody knows me. I'm 40 years old already and starting over sounds to be pretty hard.

But I'm afraid if I come across my ex-wife or her new "old man," I'll be right back "inside" in about a heart-beat. Do you understand what I'm driving at?

That's why I need your help. In the mean time, I'll just keep working on my meditation. It has helped me get control of my temper so far. Although anyone I tell this to on the "outside" thinks I'm full of crap. Oh well.

Anyway I hope to hear from you soon, I really need it to focus on the right path. You know, "Do the right thing, not the easy thing."

Peace & Love Always, D.

Dear D,

Letters like yours make me wish I had a magic wand to wave and make everything all right. But after a lifetime of anger, drinking, violence, and lots of different types of bad decisions, you

have to try to understand why it's so hard to turn things around. We can definitely turn our lives around, and we absolutely need to; but we have to be willing to go through some hard times while we do.

Nearly every one of Jesus's disciples went through hard times after they decided to stick with Him. Years of hard times. St. Paul spent many years in Roman prisons, several of the apostles were executed, many lived in hiding, teaching secretly and staying on the move. They all gave up their families, their wives, kids, professions.

Don't get me wrong; I'm not saying you're one of the apostles. I'm just reminding you that sometimes doing the right thing can mean you are in for some tough times. If you have to "start over at 40" as you put it, or if you have to be out of contact with your kids for a while, that would be very sad, but it doesn't mean it would be wrong. Sometimes the right thing is sad.

And the right thing in this case is to be unselfish. If you think there is even a slight chance that you could lose your temper and do violence to your ex-wife or her new guy, then I don't think you should stick around. It's not fair to your kids. If you're really trying to turn over a new leaf, that's often hardest to do in your home town anyway. You already mentioned in your letter that your friends on the outside think you're "full of crap" when you tell them meditation is helping with your anger. That's not very good support, is it?

I don't know exactly what you should do. If it were me, I'd get hooked up with AA or some other drinking-recovery group. I'd try to make new friends who were more like who I want to be than who I used to be, and I'd try to set things up with my ex-wife and kids so that I could keep in touch with them by mail and phone for a while. If that's not possible, I'd still go off and do the work on myself for a year or so, and then deal with how to become part of their lives again. Maybe even a long-term treatment program, like one with a 2-year commitment. If you're interested in one of those, I might be able to give you a name or two.

Most of our problems in life are due to selfishness. The only thing I know about what you should do, is to make decisions based on what is best and safest for your kids & others — not what you want or think you have a "right" to. That's selfish thinking, and it will continue to get you in trouble all

your life. Prisons are filled with more selfish people than evil people.

Selfish thinking is almost instinctive, so it's hard to turn around. But it's the only thing that really works to allow us to experience how joyful it is simply to be alive. Please be generous and kind in making your decision about what to do when you get out. God will watch out for your interests if you get busy watching out for the interests of others. And we'll be part of your support if you stay in touch with us when your address changes.

Love, Bo



Dear Bo & Sita,

Greetings once again from Swampsville. I really felt a strong urge to write ya'll but now the words seem to come very slow. Over the past years even though we've only corresponded a few times I feel as if I've known you both for a lifetime. I've just finished reading *Just Another Spiritual Book* for about the 16th time and believe me it just keeps getting better.

I can now truly look back & say WOW! instead of UGH! Even in this hell-hole, with the things I feel, see, and am sometimes forced to do, I still stop at least once a day & say "far-out". I still have not achieved total silence of mind, but I know when it comes it'll knock my socks off! Just sitting still & shutting up is one hell-of-a trip for me.

It's really kind of ironic, because for 13 years, almost 14, I've been in one prison or another, fed. & state. Some rough, some not, from CA to NY to GA. And in every one of them I've tried one religious practice after another from *Christian Science* to *Christian Identity*. And somehow all of them felt fake or just not right for me. But after reading *We're All Doing Time* and *Just Another Spiritual Book* what does feel right, is to do as mom always said, "Sit on your ass & keep your mouth shut."

If it feels this good being a "Spiritual Infant" I can hardly wait to grow-up.

Well Bo & Sita, much love & kindness I send your way, and I really do feel yours every day.

I love ya all lots, M

Artwork by Jameyson MacDonald
1997 Iowa Park, TX

GOOD WORKS

EDITORS' NOTE: *It occurred to us recently that we have not put enough effort into publicizing the wonderful things many ex-cons are doing with their lives. There's so much bad press, and almost zero mention of people who leave prison and dedicate themselves to something noble or good. So, with this issue of our newsletter we apologize for taking so long to do it, and we invite you to please send us brief descriptions, articles, photos, etc. of ex-cons who fit that description. The two people whom we describe below have started their own organizations, but that is not what's important. What's important is the shift they have made from self-centered living to unselfishness and community spirit. Do you have an ex-con story to share?*

Mary Hogden Took A Good FIRST Step

There was a time when Mary Hogden's life was a nightmare. She ran away from home as a teenager, hooked up with an abusive man, became a drug addict, committed crimes to support her addiction, did two prison terms; she was degraded and a total failure by her mid-twenties. As Mary puts it,

It was at this point that I felt as lonely as I have felt in my entire life. I was totally devastated and I hated myself. I took a hard look at where my life had been and who I was. I didn't have anybody in my corner. I was hurt; I was desperate.

Mary spent the next five years in Delancey Street, a long-term recovery program that started in San Francisco and now has branches and offshoots in many other cities. As she got herself together, she clearly realized, as Bo often says, that "me and mine are not a big enough goal." Mary chose to dedicate her life to helping others out of the same messes she had emerged from. In 1990, she opened FIRST, a recovery community in Winston-Salem, NC, which now has sixty residents and an impressive reputation for helping addicts to turn their lives around. We know and love Mary and enjoy our friendship with the whole FIRST community.

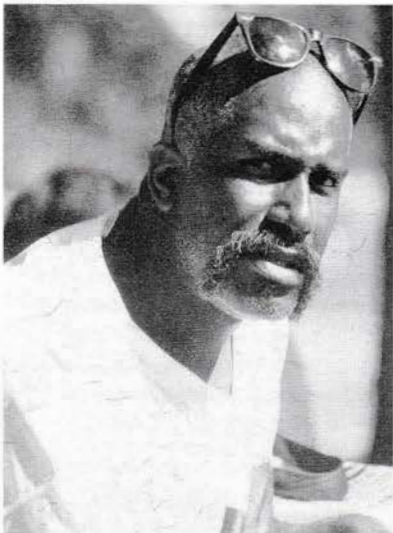


David Lewis is FREE AT LAST

Born in one of the toughest cities in the nation. Dropped out of school at fifteen. Sentenced to ten-to-life in San Quentin when he was nineteen. Spent seventeen years behind bars by the age of thirty-nine. David Lewis didn't have much going for him when he finally decided, in a prison cell shaking and swaying from the big earthquake of 1989, to make his life count for something.

Today, David is a humble, hardworking community leader who is responsible for the new-found hope of thousands of addicts, people with AIDS, and many others who were headed for San Quentin or the morgue. He is a powerful reminder of how much we can change.

FREE AT LAST, which David co-founded in 1993 with Priya Haji in East Palo Alto, CA, is a multi-purpose community center which he describes as "an emotional emergency room." People come there in need of food, drug counseling, relief from abuse, or just plain kindness. They come at the rate of about a hundred per day. During FREE AT LAST's first year of operation, the city's notorious rate of violence dropped an astonishing 87%.



FREE AT LAST sponsors several small residential programs and continues to plan and create every sort of program or facility which the community may need. Its staff and volunteers come from the same streets and understand the same difficulties as the people they serve. David is no Big Boss or Top Dog; he is a member of the community too. Like Mary Hogden, he is more grateful than proud. He was as good as dead, and now he lives. He loves others and is loved by others. He has given up self-centered living and realized his connection to the community and the world. We look forward to David's friendship and commitment for many years to come.

NEWS, NOTES, AND OFFERINGS

RAM DASS UPDATE

On February 19th of this year, the much-loved spiritual teacher Ram Dass suffered a massive stroke, as we reported in the Spring/Summer newsletter. We are glad to report that Ram Dass is managing pretty well — thanks to all the prayers uttered for him. He is getting out often, doing swim therapy and speech therapy. He is paralyzed on one side, but has gotten most of his speech back. He deeply appreciates all the blessings so many of you have sent his way.

OUR OWN WEB SITE

We now have a website and are on-line. We thank Internet Unlimited in Sacramento, CA for donating a 20MB web site on an ongoing basis, and to Don Slepian in NJ, and Peter Tavernise of Duke University, for getting us started on how to design it. We will keep the site up-to-date with upcoming events, newsletter articles, new items in our catalog, etc. Check it out at <http://www.humankindness.org>

THE SIMPLE LIVING NETWORK

SLN has worldwide resources listed on its web site. Included are Simplicity Study Circles by state and country, and an online newsletter. To reach them look them up on the web at <http://www.slnet.com> Sorry, they don't publish written copies, but public libraries may have free access to the web.

AFRICAN-AMERICAN CHRISTIAN NEWSLETTER

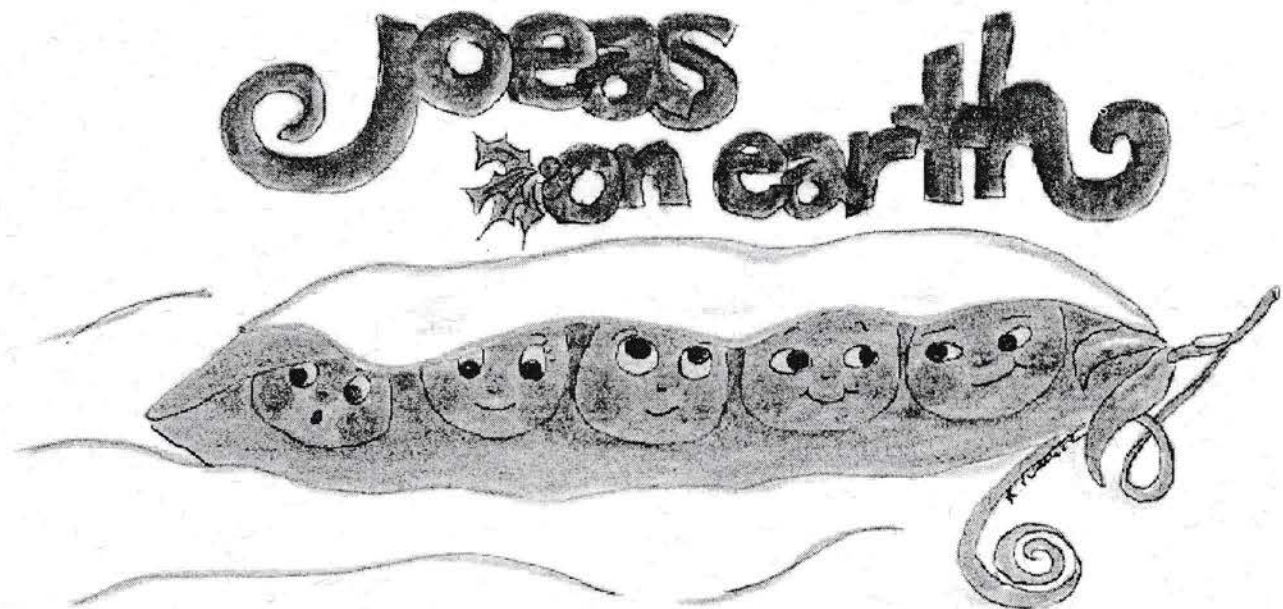
CrossBearers is an expression of African American and Ancient African Christian roots. It is produced by a small Orthodox Christian community called St. Mary of Egypt Orthodox Church, and is published close to quarterly. They welcome letters, poems, testimonies, art, lyrics, lives of African and African American saints, icons of African saints, and info on African Christian history. You can receive a free copy by writing to:

CrossBearers
PO Box 090492
Kansas City, MO 64109
email: frpaisius@aol.com

FREE BHAGAVAD-GITA LESSONS

The American Gita Society now offers free lessons on the Bhagavad-Gita to all prisoners. The Bhagavad-Gita is that famous chapter of the Mahabharata wherein Krishna instructs the warrior Arjuna in the deepest mysteries of Life and Spirit. To receive the lessons write directly to:

The American Gita Society
511 Lowell Place
Freemont, CA 94536-1805



a little good news

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Season's Greetings & Happy Holy Days

*The world would be better off
If people tried to be better.
And people would become better
If they stopped trying to be better off.*

*for when everybody tries to become better off,
Nobody is better off.
But when everybody tries to become better,
Everybody is better off.*

— Peter Maurin Catholic Worker Movement



artwork by Robert Buckner, Lawrenceville GA