



UK Newsletter

April 2009

Dear friends,

Welcome to the first Wake Up UK Newsletter! This is not a regular or established publication, but we have some news for you all, and rather than bore you with an e-mail, we thought we would have some fun and write a newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading it!

Patrick and Alan

P.S. Please read at least the first article – we need *your* help to shape the future of Wake Up UK.

Contents

1	Community of Interbeing AGM and the future	2
2	Report from the Spring Retreat	2
3	Youth Retreat in Plum Village	3
4	TTT Spirit Newsletter	4
5	Contacts	4

1 Community of Interbeing AGM and the future

Alan and I (Patrick) went to the Annual General Meeting of the Community of Interbeing¹ (that's basically the Plum Village tradition in the UK) and talked to them about Wake Up UK and where it's going. They were all really supportive and excited about it getting going and will help us organise retreats, raise funds if we need them and give us some experience in the practice. So that's really useful!

We decided that it would be best to try and organise 3 weekend retreats a year roughly around school and university holidays (Easter, Summer and Christmas). If we do this we can get into a nice rhythm, get to know each other and it will be easy to come together and practice. Once we've got this sorted there is so much potential for Wake Up in so many ways: a newsletter ;) a website, monastic visits, school and university meditation groups, a group trip in the summer. So we can try and find our feet in these 3 retreats a year and see what comes out of them.

This is where you might come in. At the moment it's kind of difficult to organise retreats, as either one person does it all or emails are sent out to everyone on the mailing list – neither of which are very good ways of doing things! **So I think it would be great if we could get a team of about 5–10 people who would be committed to organising these retreats.** The commitment level would be reasonably low, it would need you to respond to emails probably twice a week or so, and help out as much as you are able to on the practical side of the retreats. We can have a team email address so we can all share the email load. I don't want anyone to feel pressured to do this but it is important that we get at least 5 people so that these retreats happen :) **So please if you might at all be interested, even if you don't feel qualified, or experienced in the practice, or whatever, get in touch with me. There are no requirements except enthusiasm!**

We can all contribute in our own ways to Wake Up, so if you feel there's some way you can do so please get in touch :)

2 Report from the Spring Retreat

The Wake Up Spring Retreat in Winchester went really well! We had about 12 people staying for the whole weekend and 16 overall who came for smaller bits. We had three beautiful spring days in which to enjoy the sunshine and relax together. We had very calm and still walking meditation, sitting meditation, deep relaxation in a field, mindful exercise (mainly chi-kung and stretching in early morning mist!) and mindful eating (often outside in the sun). And then some more lively bits: lots of games and playing, including an acrobatics session and running down a big hill very fast, dharma missions (where we performed short [usually very funny] scenes to each other that explored difficult situations for us youngsters) and tea meditation where we shared songs and readings. Deep sharing and listening was really enjoyable, to hear everyone's own stories and joys with the practice and to share with each other how we practice as young people.

We also listened to a great Dharma talk by Thay, watched a very relaxed film about an old Cuban band called Buena Vista Social Club, and went to Winchester Cathedral to meditate and look around the really beautiful building. We did lots of touching the earth and getting in touch with our ancestral, spiritual and land roots. We didn't really do all that much directly related to

¹<http://www.interbeing.org.uk/>



Walking meditation along the River Itchen

finding joy in everyday life (the theme of the retreat) but that didn't seem to matter as everyone seemed to find some joy there that we can take into our ordinary lives! Overall it was a really great retreat full of sun, laughter, relaxation and joy :) Jasmine will hopefully have some photos to share on the facebook group or the website before too long. Any sharings from anyone else on the retreat would be welcome there too!

3 Youth Retreat in Plum Village

For our summer retreat it might be cool to try and go as a group to Plum Village. The Community of Interbeing are happy to offer some money for anyone who would find it hard to travel there. There is a youth retreat at the end of August (though the dates aren't set yet) and though I might not be able to go myself I think it would be really nice if a group of us did.

Or there is a Community of Interbeing family retreat at the New Barn centre at this time (24–30th August) that we could do some Wake Up stuff alongside. This would be easier in terms of travel, but would need more organisation as we would be leading the Wake Up part of it, whereas at Plum Village it would be led by the monastics. It would still be very fun though, and very possible. Please let us know what you think about the options so we can make a decision which one we go for (we could try and go for both).

4 TTT Spirit Newsletter

Many of you may have received the wonderful TTT Spirit Newsletter earlier this year². The editors Luan and Han have offered to let us contribute articles – so if you would like to share about your experiences in the practice, you have some practical advice like how to cook vegan chocolate cake, or if you would like to share some art, poetry or photography, please send it to one of us or post it on the Wake Up website, <http://www.wkup.org/>.

5 Contacts

Please email me if you want be part of the retreat organising team, and let me know about your ideas for the summer.

Enjoy your breath!

Patrick



Written by Patrick, designed by Alan.

²If not, you can read it here: http://www.scribd.com/doc/11576601/TTT-Spirit-3?secret_password=bjt6zw0ic24xz0pxqv