



Brahma Kumaris World Spiritual University North America Green Angels

An Environment Initiative Newsletter
July 2015



Opening Ceremony of the UNFCCC COP20



ed all the youth around the world,” Juan said. While reading the statement, Juan put in his most elevated intentions and his best wishes in order to reach the heart and the mind of the people and the parties present in the event. He reminded them to address climate change and ensure a healthy planet for all of us and future generations of humanity. This was the reason why we were all there at COP together because creating a genuine path to a safe, healthy, prosperous world with zero carbon emissions is possible. He told them that the voice of Pachamama (Mother Earth) has to be acknowledged and the voice of the youth has to be a part of the process of making decisions.



India-One Solar Thermal Power Project—An Update



For more than 15 years the Brahma Kumaris has been actively involved in the research and demonstration of alternative renewable energy concepts. Currently, we are constructing “India-One”, an innovative 1 Mw solar thermal power plant at the Shantivan Campus of the Brahma Kumaris spiritual headquarters, Abu Road, Rajasthan, India. This ambitious project uses 770 newly developed 60m2 parabolic dishes and features thermal storage for continuous operation.

The plant will generate enough heat and power for the campus of 20,000 people and provides a sustainable model for decentralized solar energy generation in India.



“India-One” is executed by the World Renewal Spiritual Trust (a sister organization of the Brahma Kumaris) and partly funded by the Ministry of New and Renewable Energy Sources (MNRE), India and the German Ministry for Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety (BMU). For more details, visit www.india-one.net



Here’s a link to a video (5 minutes) on India-One :

www.youtube.com/watch?v=sizTT_7PEJs



The Green Angels Newsletter will be a constant source of information for all of you in the future. If you have any environment related news or articles or information to share with others, please send it to us at the following email address:

greenretreatnorthamerica@gmail.com



North America—4th Annual Green Retreat 2015 Mind over Matter : The Confluence of Two Living Systems



July 31—Aug 2, 2015
Peace Village

The current state of the world is a reflection of the state of our collective consciousness. Everything is interconnected, and our thoughts, words and deeds have an impact on the world. In this retreat, we will collectively:

-Explore how the living system of thought influences the living system of the Earth, using scientific examples from quantum physics.

-Deepen our understanding of the connection between awareness, attitude, vision, action and the world.

-Participate in interactive workshops designed by the BK Environment International team helping facilitate the outreach of

green issues & practical spirituality,

-Enjoy forest walks & full moon meditation to serve the elements and nature.

This will be a balanced weekend with time for the self, nature, and service, where we can immerse ourselves in the ocean. Please register and send your information to Peace Village Retreat Center at registration@peacevillage.org



We are delighted to welcome special guest Neville Hodgkinson, who is a senior BK brother, a writer, journalist & medical and science correspondent of several newspapers in the UK including The Sunday Times, Sunday Express, and Daily Mail. He was one of the first to describe the intimate links between health and happiness in terms of modern scientific findings. His interest in mind-body medicine led him to take up the practice of meditation and spiritual study in the early 1980s.

**GREEN ANGELS NEWSLETTER INSERT
IN MEMORIAM—A TRIBUTE TO
Br. Anthony Strano (July 26, 2015)
First Death Anniversary**



TO GOOGLE OR TO DOODLE? THAT IS THE QUESTION

By Anthony Strano



It had been a long trip traveling throughout South Africa to various cities including Johannesburg, Port Elizabeth, Durban and now Cape Town. I would be leaving on the afternoon flight to Athens.

I wanted to go somewhere just to relax, and my local friends suggested Kirstenbosch Garden, one of the largest and, as I realized later, one of the most beautiful gardens not only in Africa but in the world. The garden stretched over many acres and the huge mountain behind it, called Table Mountain, provided a soaring backdrop.



As I wandered about, the many flowers and trees beamed their colors onto me. It seemed as if the Roman goddess Flora had come for a visit and helped paint them in multiple shades of green and other colors. The mountain connected the gleaming vegetation, to the vault of African sky, which, like a giant star sapphire, dazzled in iridescent blue.

While there I felt I was strolling through a painting.

When we first arrived in the garden, I explained to my friends I wanted to unwind, which meant no talking, photographing but simply strolling, lolling, meandering, gazing, pausing, listening, sitting, and just slouching about—that is—to use the Doodle side of my brain. I had done a lot of Googling lately... analyzing, evaluating, processing, investigating, directing, teaching, organizing, codifying, classifying, experimenting etc. I felt deeply that the relentlessness to discover new facts must stop for a few hours.

I stood quietly by a gurgling, bouncy stream; its water bubbled into and through my ears. In this dell of shade, water giggled everywhere I ambled on. Suddenly trees arranged in an amphitheater rose like emerald emperors in green silence. Open armed centenarians heaved their solid brown trunks against the iris blue of the sky. These cycads stood as if in a royal court. I felt from their primeval forms that they may have even known a dinosaur or two or, at least, their ancestors certainly would have.

Often when I went to a botanical garden of a country I would seek, ask and scout for information about everything. Before, during and after I would Google for information. I had been educated to create in my mind this search engine to access more understanding. So I never allowed myself the freedom to comprehend or perceive in a different way. With meditation I had started learning to give space to other ways of interacting and gaining insight. Meditation showed me not to grab and tackle my outside world, quickly creating my personal convenient meaning of it all. Instead, in silence, letting myself be still and observe without drawing any conclusions. Just to be still, to be present and allowing the trees, the animals, the waters, the earth, the sky, the mountains, whatever to speak to me without Interference from the mania for filtering and categorizing everything.

So, today no grabbing and no tackling the Facts. I wished to do none of that. I wanted to do nothing: NOTHING. Just saunter in quiet solitude absorbing scents, admiring the wings of tenacious bees, of carousing birds, of a kaleidoscope of butterflies gulping the petaled nectar, and sailing around the turquoise sky.



I had to stop myself as the Googling side of my brain unexpectedly jumped in to categorize, compare, scrutinize whenever I saw something catch my attention. "STOP," I said to my defiant jumping mind. The monkey in my mind had to be tamed! So, today no grabbing and no tackling the Facts. I wished to do none of that. I wanted to do nothing: NOTHING. Just saunter in quiet solitude absorbing scents, admiring the wings of tenacious bees, of carousing birds, of a kaleidoscope of butterflies gulping the petaled nectar, and sailing around the turquoise sky.

A friend once advised me: "Now do nothing, slowly." I stumbled on a wooden walkway umbrelled by the arms of many trees. I said to my mind, "Do not think," just watch.



Suddenly a huge tree blazed in front of me with flowers of crimson, dripping nectar. Actually it had been there for a long, long time but I only noticed it now. Tiny, tiny birds bobbing, hopping, sipped the sweet wine... ruby red splashing on their minute beaks.

Just gazing, beyond any thinking, I felt the wonder of this moment in Nature. I gasped as the miracle of Harmony revealed itself to me slowly. Suddenly a realization wandered into my mind: Harmony is when Differences complement, thus keeping the Equilibrium and, in consequence, perpetually sustain the Whole. This is Nature's code, the primary principle of her being.

Temptation came again... Read! Read the sign, how old is the tree? what is it? is it native? which birds come to it?... Note it down and file it. File it for later Googling. No I said to myself, once again. Do not be tempted by the thrills of thinking and storing and knowing. Keep Doodling and savor this Now. Surrender to the Flow. Feel the rhythm of existing in this Moment.

With this determined thought I just allowed myself to let the images impact me. I felt again that I was in an impressionist painting similar to Van Gogh's "The Starry Night"... swirls of color and swirls of feelings. I was flowing into the scene and feeling the ancient breath of the tree, holding its jade luminosity in my eyes; the ruby redness pulsing in my every vein.

However, occasionally I still had to pay attention not to be conditioned by regimented thinking. Let it be. Let it happen, I reminded myself. For these few hours stop the info-hunting, this deadly habit of the mind. Be still and remain uncluttered. Reality is not a set of facts, conveniently structured and controlled. Feel safe with not knowing everything, feel secure without holding onto any thread. Let go and let it happen.

Soon my attention was distracted by Googlers. Japanese tourists fervently snapping and storing their souvenir photos. Spanish tongues, Las Googlers, also with their machines and locomotive words. Also a variety of Anglo-Saxon flocks intellectually watching and analyzing.

Anyway today during these hours I had made a great decision to embrace Doodling totally... pause and allow. Pause and let silence create space for new feelings and new perceptions to come at their own speed and will, if they wish to come.

From today I was given the revelation of Great Doodling so in the future I would invite my friends for an exciting time to experience Doodling. With them set an aim to introduce breaks for doodling at our work place, at our home. Quite understandably some of my Googler friends would later shriek "heretic" and say this great waste of time is a sacrilege and especially to encourage others to follow such a doctrine. I am anathema to some of the Googling community. Nonetheless I am adamant that "Doodle Time" is the true source of creative regeneration because nothing is done. For only then fresh space is created. In other words just to stop and be thoughtless for a moment or an hour or even a day is the innovative way forward.

Why? It bursts open the ossified mind. Want to join this innovative Doodlers Club?

Googlers welcomed as long as all antiquated minds and modes are left outside at the Door of Adventure. You can Doodle through this website of the beautiful Garden, where I experienced my humbling epiphany.

The link for the garden: <http://www.sanbi.org.za/gardens/kirstenbosch>

