CONCORD

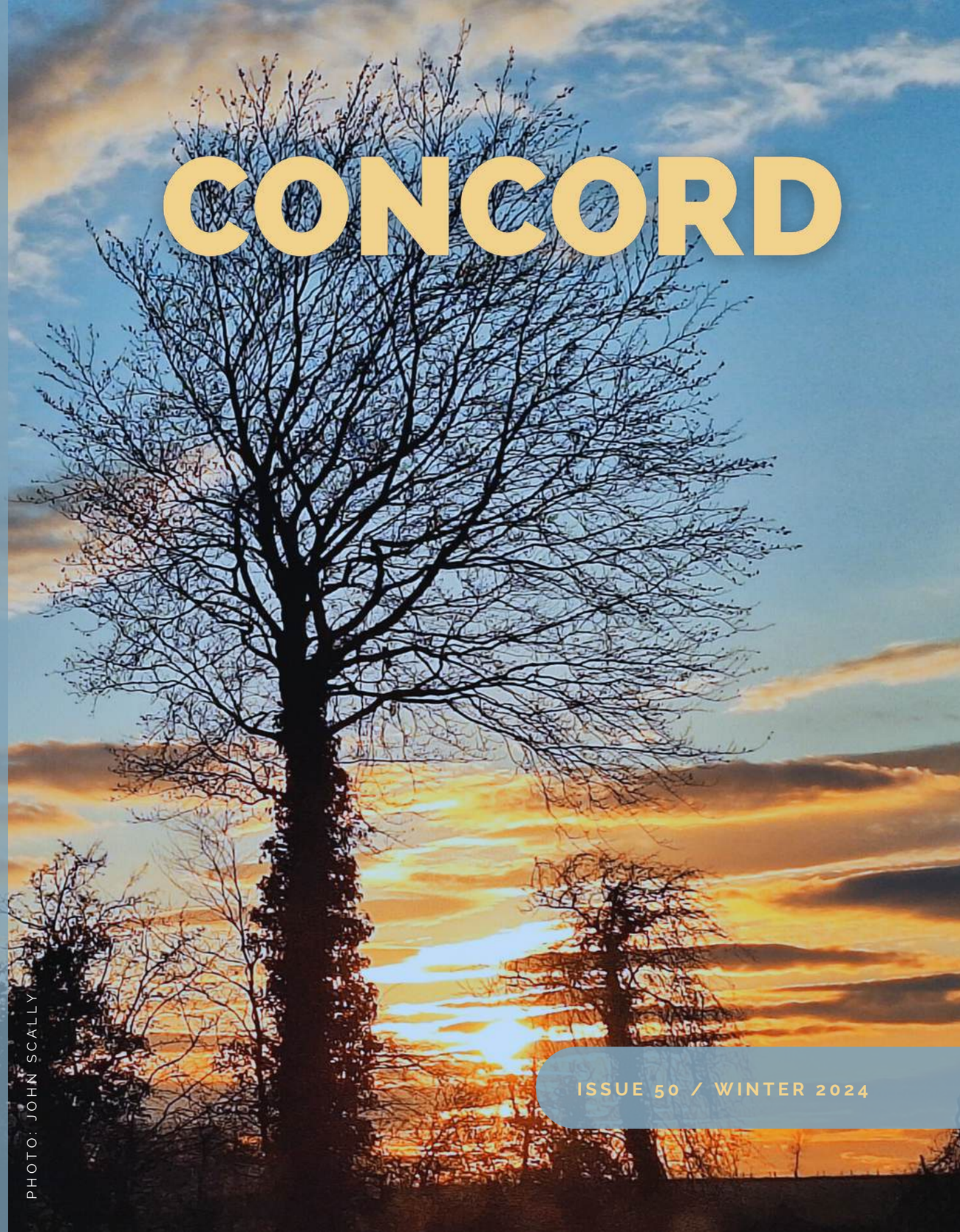

PHOTO: JOHN SCALLY

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Concord Institute is an education charity dedicated to promoting greater self-reliance and personal responsibility in maintaining our health, what we refer to as "self-health".

Rooted in an integrated model of health, wholefood nutrition, bodywork, self-enquiry dialogue and self-expression, are key to our holistic approach. It draws on a comprehensive understanding of the human condition encompassing the physical, psychological, social, and spiritual dimensions of our lives.

The Institute offers courses, workshops, and other forms of training and education to people who are interested in a new dimension of possibility for their lives.

Concord Institute
FOR INTEGRAL STUDIES

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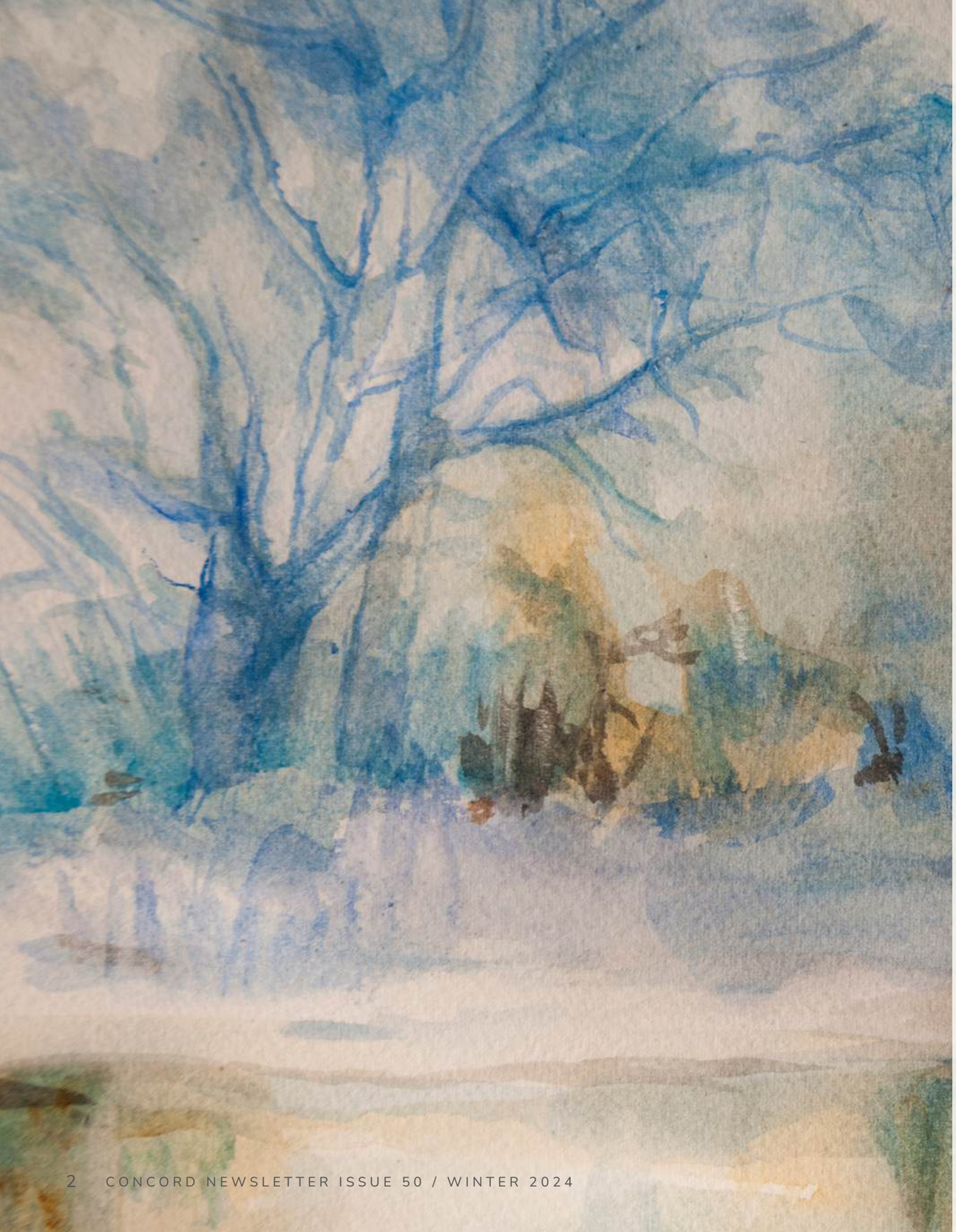


A Message from Our trustees

As the year draws to a close, this newsletter comes at a time of major transition for Concord Institute.

We have said goodbye to our premises in Finsbury Park as well as our second home Oxon Hoath in Kent and have embarked on a new journey.

We wanted to use this moment to acknowledge the numerous volunteers who have offered their time and energy to maintain the newsletter's existence. The newsletter started as a dream by two volunteers, Gail Wylie and Joe Clare, nearly 20 years ago, printed in black and white. No digital copies back then! The baton was then handed on from one volunteer to another to keep it alive and evolve its expression. It has become one of the quiet touchstones for the community. An opportunity to share, create and connect with each other.

At this time of significant change, the newsletter becomes even more critical in being a hub for the artistic expression of the community. We would like to thank the current team for keeping the dream alive.

If you would like to contribute and volunteer a piece for a future edition, please get in touch.

In the meantime, we wish you a happy and restful winter holiday and look forward to seeing you (either online or in person) in the new year.

Tim Crowther, Anne Bogaerts & Nicholas Allan
The Trustees

Home Within: Concord's Transition Beyond Thane Works

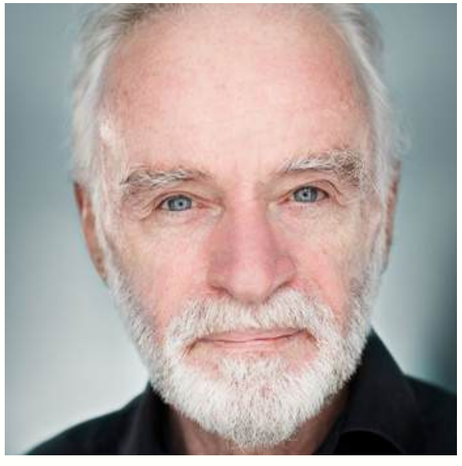
PHILLIPA JAMES

At the end of November, Concord Institute said farewell to Thane Works, its cherished home for nearly two decades. This journey is another chapter in a story of movement and growth that began in 1977 at the East West Centre, a space alive with holistic health and educational programmes, and later found roots at Blackstock Mews in 2000. Thane Works, nestled near Finsbury Park, welcomed the Concord community in 2005, providing a sanctuary for transformative learning, bodywork, culinary delights and shared experience. Each of these places has held us, yet each move has reminded us that Concord is not defined by its walls. Rather, it is the collective spirit of its people that has sustained and enriched its essence through time.

As we prepare to step into a new era, Concord Institute embraces the opportunities of an increasingly online world, a shift that became vital during the pandemic years. The transition to online has broadened our reach, allowing people from around the globe to connect and engage with our programmes. While we have not ruled out a new physical space in the future, we will focus on hiring venues for key residential courses and hosting many online events from December. In this time of transition, our focus turns to an exploration of home—not just as a physical space, but as a state of being. Concord has always guided participants toward being at home within themselves, rooted in their bodies and capable of generating their lives from that grounded place. Even without a fixed building, our home continues within each one of us. We are not losing a space; rather, we are expanding our understanding that home is not where we gather but how we hold ourselves and one another. This next period invites us to navigate and nurture this community, wherever we may be, as we continue to foster transformation, together.

Tribute to Dónal Cox

With heavy hearts, we remember Dónal, a cherished and pivotal member of the CHF community from its very beginning, who recently passed away. His presence touched so many lives, and his contributions helped shape the community into what it is today. In honour of his memory, several long-standing members have written heartfelt eulogies, each one capturing the profound impact he had on us all. These tributes serve as a reminder of the warmth, wisdom, and kindness Dónal brought into our lives and will forever remain a part of Concord Institute's spirit.



DÓNAL COX

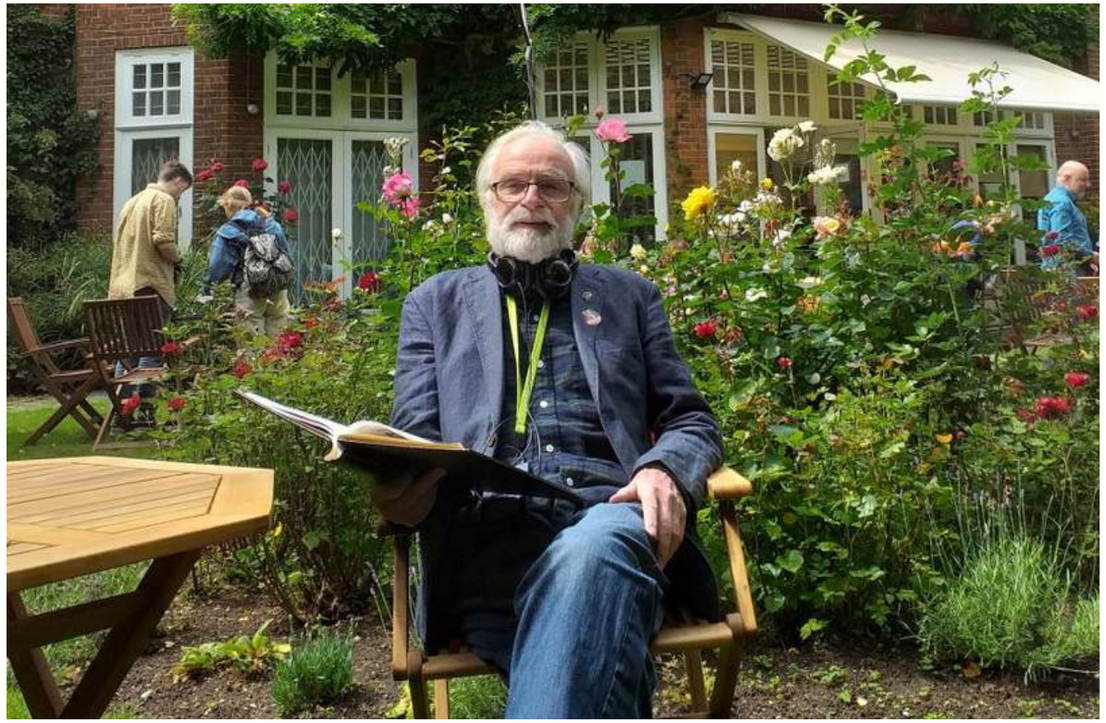
EULOGY BY TIM CROWTHER

It struck me when reading the lesson at my mother's funeral, looking out from the pulpit at a church full of mostly unknown faces, that I knew only a small aspect of her. Every person in the congregation had their own relationship with her as a relative, teacher, friend, or church assistant. So, it has been hard for me to start writing this eulogy for the late Dónal Cox as I did not feel up to the task or that I could do him justice. I have only my memories of Dónal through my interactions with him as enrolment manager and facilitator at The Community Health Foundation aka Concord Institute, and some social get-togethers, but he had friends and family I never met and many talents and achievements of which I know very little.

His time at The Community Health Foundation began shortly after its creation by Bill Tara in 1976. Dónal partnered Chris Dawson (who later became the owner of the specialist food company, Clearspring) in opening up the wholefood shop, East West Natural Foods, in the same Old Street building as the CHF. With others he developed the work of the Kushi Institute, bringing Michio Kushi from Boston to teach courses at the CHF premises. I first met Dónal in 1996 when I was invited to a Valentine's Day dinner at the CHF. Dónal gave an impromptu but highly eloquent and moving speech from the heart on the true nature of love. A few weeks later I attended an introductory evening about the **Being-in-Action** programme (which has now evolved into **The Opening**) where Dónal led the evening and included readings of poems by E. E. Cummings which left me in floods of tears. They were pointing at contradictions and a sense of inadequacy in myself which I decided to investigate rather than walk away from. When the break came, I registered for the programme without even having been invited.

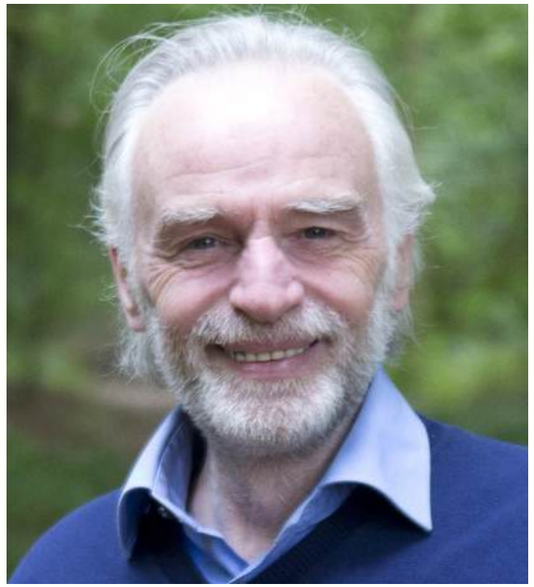
Dónal was the lead facilitator of my next CHF programme, The Foundation Course. This was a tough programme with very strict ground rules and the dialogue sessions were electric. We started out with 20 people but only 9 of them were able to ride the roller coaster to its completion! During it Dónal enrolled me into the Listening to Life programme led by David Norris, saying he wanted me to have "the gold-plated Foundation Course"! I was initially not keen to register, it all seemed too much to take on, but I thanked Dónal with tears running down my face when I completed. Dónal was a person who was always on your side, even though it might not have occurred as such at times, always seeing your potential and taking a bigger view of who you could be and what could be in store for you.

I spent a quite intense time with him and others being on the enrolment team for Being-in-Action and other programmes, but he made it fun. Sometimes we would break out to cook a meal and I learned much watching him invent a delicious macrobiotic feast from what were random available ingredients. He was refreshingly unafraid to say what he thought and able to bring good humour and create laughter even at challenging times.



So it came as a surprise to later find out that Dónal was not only a wise, sharp and compassionate Irish gentleman, full of vitality, love and humour, but also an accomplished actor, writer and voice artist. After an intense time as enrolment manager, during which he brought transformation to many lives, Dónal was drawn to restart the development of his his other skills, appearing in film, tv and theatre roles including "Night, A Wall, Two Men" and the Gielgud Theatre's award-winning production of "The Ferryman". With producer Liz Newberry he developed a one-man show, "Journey to the Fifth Province", reciting stories and Irish poetry with moving settings created by expert harp players, a production I saw several times with other Being-in-Action graduates. But Ireland has four provinces, so where is the fifth? The structure of the evening skilfully and secretly led the audience to a different seeing of life to stand in a new place for the first time, the fifth province - the heart.

I would not be who I am today were it not for Dónal Cox.



EULOGY BY DAMIEN GALLAGHER

I first met Dónal at The Community Health Foundation in London 1996. His energy, passion and sheer enthusiasm were compelling. There were many great laughs and hard work over the years at the CHF and Concord institute. He was generous and caring and he taught me a lot in those early London years. Dónal was bold and fearless and poetry would flow easily as we all worked together. The quote I most associate with Dónal is this by George Bernard Shaw.

"Life is no 'brief candle' for me. It is a sort of splendid torch which I have got hold of for the moment, and I want to make it burn as brightly as possible before handing it on to future generations."

For me this best describes Dónal. May he find rest and new adventures.

EULOGY BY BILL TARA

I cannot remember when I first met Dónal. He just seemed to appear when the first macrobiotic activities started in London. He was important from the first, his infectious enthusiasm was a constant. When we set up The Community Health Foundation and moved to the Old Street premises Dónal and Jean Torné were part of the underpinning of everything.

It was his boundless excitement for a new project that animated others. He was eager to take on things he had no experience in and threw himself into working with Chris Dawson to get a shop operating. Eventually he was the first local student who began teaching what he was learning – he loved communication and was good at it.

Before I moved back to the states I decided to put on an evening of theatre, as long as Dónal was there to work with me. I took a text from Spoon River Anthology, and put it into a series of vignettes, Dónal created a new character for narration. It was the first time I had the experience to witness his abilities as an actor. He was brilliant.

I believe we all live past our passing in the hearts of those who knew and loved us. I know Dónal will live in my heart as a kindred spirit. I will always remember the wide eyed Irishman who loved Keats, who was breathlessly late and could frame the commonplace as miraculous – which seems an Irish trait. You touched so many with your wit and generous spirit. Safe journey my friend.

Conversations with...

JOHAN BOGAERTS WITH ROBYN CALLOWAY-WARDLE

Johan Bogaerts opens up about his journey with Concord Institute, reflecting on how the courses have shaped his life and connection with the community.

Tell us about yourself?

My name is Johan Bogaerts. I'm a divorced father of two children in their twenties, living in Antwerp, Belgium. I love the mountains and enjoy doing all kinds of sports, though I try to respect my ageing body. I spent many years working in a Japanese multinational company, interacting with a lot of people which gives me a lot of energy.

How did you first connect with Concord Institute?

After a divorce, having to manage a bankrupt company and having gotten tinnitus (a constant ringing in the ears), I went through a difficult period, not really knowing where I was going. I started therapy and after a few months my Belgian coach spoke about Concord Institute. Trusting her, after many months of trying to avoid it, I eventually did the introduction programme iEvolve in 2015.

Could you share some of the programmes you've participated in?

I have done several, but the ones standing out for me in the first years were The Foundation Course, Jumpstart and Being in Business. More recently HeartSpace was a programme that made a significant change in my life.

Why was HeartSpace so important for you?

In life things happen and I call them - sorry, just a translation from Dutch - "inconvenient happenings" - some are minor, some are major, but always relative to the one experiencing them.

In 2021 one such inconvenience took place. My father passed away. A father who formed me by not trying to form me, but by just being there. But he always worried that after my divorce I would remain alone, without new love in my life.

How does this experience relate to HeartSpace?

The months before the programme, I was in deep sorrow because my father had just passed on. And, believe it or not, after many years on my own, I started dating a lovely person, although I had a lot of doubts and fear of opening my heart and committing myself again.

And then came **HeartSpace** in my life, a course on "authentic human relationships". Thanks to the programme I experienced that I was afraid of a true committed relationship because I had closed my heart already, very early in my life. It was clearly not my divorce or one of my best friends that did not want to see me anymore that had closed my heart.

This was what I had thought, but it was actually already closed for a long time. And the reason why I closed it also became very present during the programme: afraid of being hurt, afraid of losing my parents, afraid of being left alone. A strange realisation, not logical at all, quite the opposite. But it was my new reality. Thought was being replaced by experience, by freeing myself from what I thought I knew. And the consequence of this new reality was my heart opening again. Without any effort, my heart opened.

In what ways has this realisation impacted your life?

First of all, my father's passing on got a grounded place turning the inconvenient emptiness into a place of convenient acceptance. And of course, there are still moments that I have difficulty accepting his passing on but then the programme comes alive; in other words, the authentic love that I felt towards my father during HeartSpace allows a place for the sorrow.

Johan and John in a Culinary course with Jean Torné

Second, after over 10 years of not wanting a relationship, I'm still in a loving partnership with the person I met just before HeartSpace. I do admit that sometimes I feel the urge to run away and be alone, but when that happens, I remember what I learned in the programme. It helps me let go of that fear, replacing it with an open heart full of love, without any expectations.

Thank you for sharing your journey with us. Is there a final message you'd like to leave with the community?

Sure. It is easy to say that one or other event changes one's life. I know. But I know that if I had not done HeartSpace I would not be together with my partner anymore and would miss the love that a true authentic relationship brings in one's life.

And last but not least, although my father never told us how to live, I think he doesn't need to worry about me anymore.

Whispers of Light

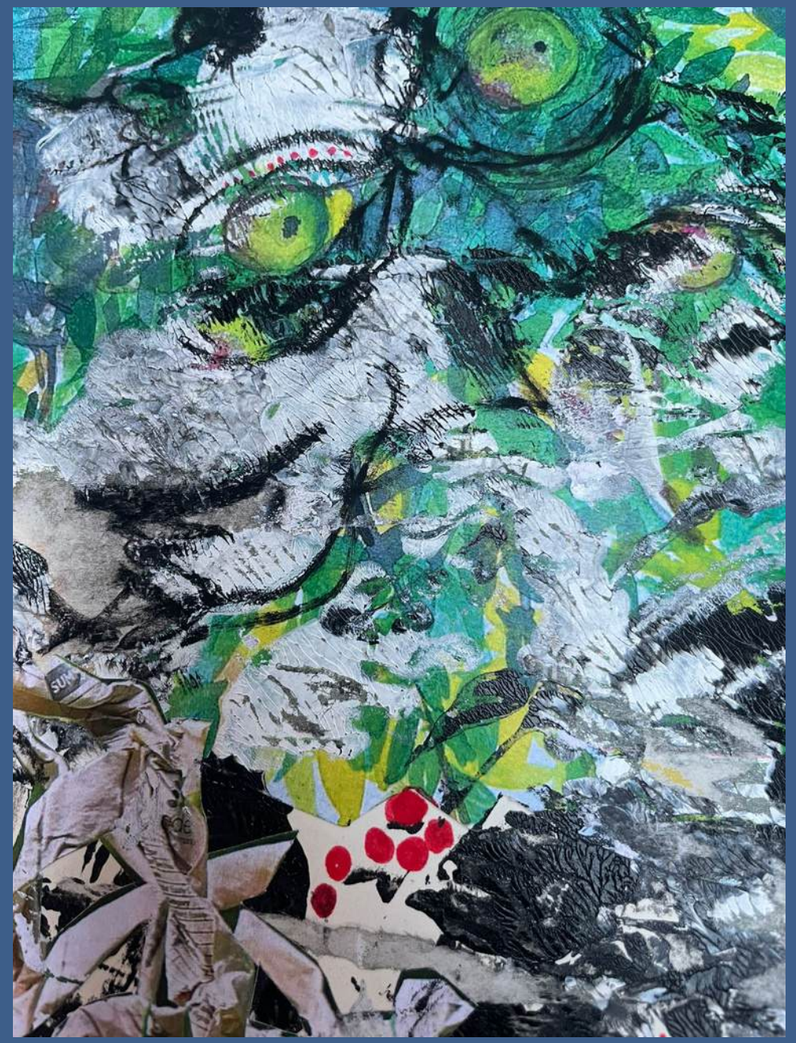
PAINTING BY LEIGH ZYWEK

LEFT & DEATH

LAURA VINCENT

Turn to your left and witness your Death!
To shy away, is to live ignorant of your own life,
Death accompanies you through life,
As your most loyal companion,
As your wisest advisor,
As your most authentic representation of the ‘what’ that you are,
Which is to say, a question.
When you forget the question that you are;
Which is to say, the question of possibility,
And instead get lost in ‘busy’, ‘doing’, ‘character’ and ‘it’.
Humans can get very lost indeed, in their minds,
And worse still end up feeling ‘important’ and ‘right’.
So, ask Death gently;
Is the end of my human life yet upon me?
And listen with every fibre of your Being.
Here is the space of your aliveness.
In this silence, lives the possibility of your whole life.

A WINTER’S TALE



PAINTING BY LUCY WILKIE

PHOTO JOHN SCALLY

The beginning. Some action. The end.
--- MATT WARREN

Who am I?

MALEN MENDOZA-BAXTER

I stare at an old woman's hands

Each line, a chapter of her stories

Every bump, a testament to her grief, triumph, pain, and joy.

Beneath the fragile, wrinkled skin, veins emerge

Like the roots of an ancient tree.

They burrow deep, searching Mother Earth for strength, for connection, for life.

Her gnarled fingers, fail to make a fist

For that was once a part of her story, but no more.

I see her life in her hands.

I knew her.

I thought I knew her

but now, I don't.

Who is she?

Who are you?

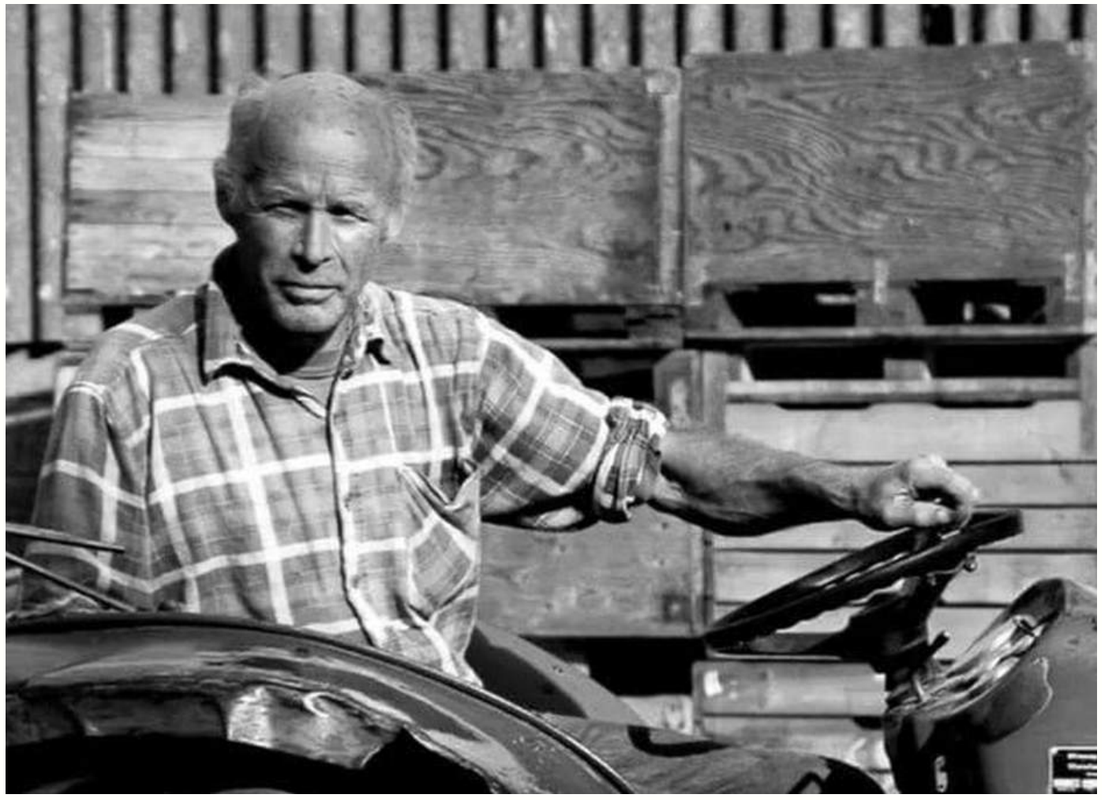
Who am I?

Tribute to Graham Love

TIM CROWTHER

I was deeply saddened to hear of the passing of Graham Love, who participated in many programmes at Concord since the early 2000s. He stayed with me several times whilst participating in London, which gave me an opportunity to get to know him a little, and we would talk into the night. His surname was a true reflection of who he was - a man who sought the truth about the human condition and our place in the universe and who wanted to make a positive difference in the world.

His orchard farm produced an abundance of wonderful, delicious fruit, a basket of which he would always bring along to the JumpStart programme. He was a generous man who contributed his time quietly and attentively assisting on many programmes at Oxon Hoath, the last being Power, Intent and Evolution this year, where I last spoke to him. Would that there be more men with his qualities in the world.



The Meaning of Money

GRAHAM LOVE - DECEMBER 2023

It's been over a decade since I last participated in any programmes with Concord, as I've been deeply involved in running a business that produces local food for our community. This endeavour is part of our collective effort to reduce our carbon footprint in meaningful ways.

Back in the late nineties, I faced challenges running my family's fruit-growing business. The work I did with Concord at that time was transformative, helping me gain clarity and a realistic perspective on life. It motivated me to make a positive impact, however small, during my precious time on this beautiful planet.

Recently Deborah Murphy-Smith reached out to me regarding the "Meaning of Money" course. With the 2023 harvesting season behind us, I welcomed the opportunity to reconnect with Concord's inspiring work. The course brought together individuals striving to become more conscious and make meaningful changes in their lives.

The title "Meaning of Money" suggests that money itself holds no intrinsic meaning; it's the value we assign to it that matters. The course focused on raising our awareness of our current relationship with money and how we can use finances to realise our visions for a better life for ourselves, our community, and the wider world.

Reflecting on our ancestors, it's remarkable how they built our extensive infrastructure with limited resources and technology. They constructed railways, canals, and roads, built pumping stations, and developed water systems that vastly improved our quality of life. Their vision and dedication are inspiring, and we need similar passion today to create a sustainable and carbon-neutral society.

The three days spent on the "Meaning of Money" course helped clarify my vision and inspired me to keep pushing forward. My personal vision, shaped during the weekend, is to make our community more sustainable. I aim to establish a community interest company with my neighbours to create our own carbon-neutral energy supply by constructing a wind turbine. This turbine

would provide energy to the local community, and neighbours who invest in the project would become shareholders, benefiting proportionately from the energy produced.

Currently, a feasibility study is underway. We are informing and encouraging our neighbourhood to consider this initiative, and we are approaching planning authorities to address any potential objections.

We have the power, the passion and the persistence to achieve great things - I feel that 3 days attending The Meaning of Money helped to clarify my vision and inspired me to “Keep on Keeping on”.

What is it about being human that requires this essential relationship with money, this strange medium through which people interact and relate with one another?

“The intention of the course is to transform our relationship with money—from one that attempts to define us as human beings to one in which money serves our commitments and well-being.” --- **Greg Johnson**

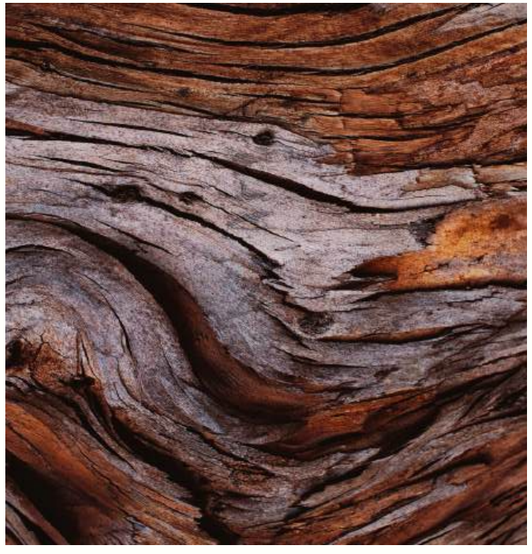
Distinguishing Reality

MARY O’NEILL

Mary is a visual artist and writer. She is the co-founder and creative director of Ordinary, a zine that encourages people to take a slower approach to living and to soak in the beauty of every moment – even those that seem unremarkable.

My reality is based upon tangibility. Though my mind may try to convince me otherwise, I always return to the physical. The present moment is defined by our existence within it; the feeling of the cool earth under my toes, the smell of garlic on my fingertips after I cook a tasty meal, the sound of my windchime in the breeze.

Thanks to the advance of information technology, the boundaries that constitute reality have widened, and we have begun accumulating information and ideas. Our careers, relationships, and identity are often based upon concepts that are not tangible to us. When we meet another, we give them an idea of who we are based upon a collection of facts about ourselves - where we’re from, what we studied, what our job is, who our parents are. We further build on this identity through experiences: the places we go, the friends we keep, the music we listen to, and the drugs we take.



This forms a false reality, a lens through which we exist. Conflict arises when something threatens these ideas. Despite this, we can immediately become present to true reality in an instant. When I spend too long looking at a screen, my eyes blur as they adjust to the forms around me. If I read the news too often, I forget that I am safe. The reality that exists in our heads is only true for humans. Plants and animals, as far as we know, simply coexist in the physical realm. They have existed and evolved in harmony for billions of years before humans began to prioritise their idea of reality. We all know how that’s going.

Bring your attention to the tangibility of the present moment that you are existing in. Where you are sitting right now, touch something close by. Maybe it's a smooth rock or the bus seat next to you. Feel it in your fingers. Savour the texture. That’s real and it is absolute.

Can you make the distinction?

Living with Food – Rebalancing and Moving Forward

ANNIE WEBSTER

Annie Webster, PhD, is a philosopher and educator with a passion for exploring the philosophy of everyday life, particularly around food, sustainability, and our relationship with the natural world. She leads online discussion circles, where she encourages deep, thoughtful conversations about how we live and the choices we make. Find out more about her work at wyephilosophy.com

There's a growing sense that humanity is disconnected from the very earth we depend on. We're not only destroying ecosystems that evolution has taken billions of years to create, but we're also losing our own power and purpose in the process. In previous online posts*, I've reflected on how this disconnection is demonstrated through our relationship with food. I've explored ideas surrounding what we should and shouldn't eat (the ethics of food), as well as what food is and what that reveals about us (its ontology). What I'm discovering is rather disheartening—the modern relationship with food showcases a low level of awareness and, when viewed from an ecological and embodied perspective, a stunting of our capacity to move forward.

During one of Jean Torné's Intensive Cooking classes, Jean shared a profound insight: "Cook to be one with the universe." Ultimately, he doesn't believe there is such a thing as 'good' or 'bad' food. Chocolate, for example, isn't inherently bad for us. What matters is how our body responds to chocolate and whether that response brings us into or out of balance. Jean is aware that this balance can change daily — today, chocolate might make me feel unwell, while tomorrow, it might lift me out of a depressive slump. This is the nature of nature—it's in constant flux, so it's not surprising that something can be beneficial only some of the time.

What does it take, then, to know when eating chocolate will be beneficial? With so many interacting complexities, we're left with the guidance to "trust that your body will tell you." But, this trust doesn't stop at the boundary of your body—it extends into our entire connection with the ecosystem, and thus, the universe. So why does our relationship with food reflect a lack of consciousness?

It's because, in general, we don't use this kind of trust or awareness when making food choices. We rarely consider or feel our connection to the larger universe. When I worry about plastic-covered celery, for instance, I focus on the idea that "plastic is bad," without connecting to the broader context. Perhaps, in this situation, the celery —which I'll mainly use for stock—will still bring me into balance when I eat it, despite the plastic. Or, if plastic is inherently a material of imbalance, maybe I should stop sourcing anything from the supermarket altogether. But then I'm faced with the excuse: "I don't have time to change my habits; I need this convenience in my life right now." This brings up another question: How conscious and connected is that type of thinking to the rest of the universe?

The bottom line is that our current relationship with food reveals the massive shift required to align ourselves with the greater ecosystem. I either need to understand my relationship with plastic on a much deeper level or break my shopping habits and find a more appropriate source of celery—and that's just considering celery. Both options demand energy, thoughtfulness, care, and a significant departure from my current life and habits. But this is what it takes to establish a balanced relationship with the universe. It's already a significant challenge for an individual—imagine the effort required for a community, a country, or a government to make such a shift.

If Jean were to advocate for an ethics of food, I believe he would start here. What's 'right' is to bring intention to every aspect of cooking. Despite the circumstances, gather the best ingredients you can, consider the soil, the farmers, the transportation, and the seeds. Use high-quality cooking tools, and educate yourself about cooking and nutrition. Most importantly, bring intention and care to the process, remembering that when you cook and eat, you're also consuming sunlight, rain, and earth.

The philosophy underpinning our relationship with food is vast, and I have been exploring it in my 'Philosophy of Food' circles. But as a philosopher, I can't conclude with definitive answers. Instead, I'll leave you with a couple of questions to ponder:

1. Is it better to eat microwavable meals with full awareness and understanding of how they came to be on your plate and how eating them impacts the larger universe, or to eat a carefully sourced, balanced, and cooked healthy meal on a yoga retreat just because it was served to you at dinner time?

2. Imagine two chefs in a kitchen, both cooking the same meal with the same ingredients. One is fully present and attentive to the process, while the other is distracted by a TV show. Will their dishes taste the same or different?

**The previous Living with Food posts can be found on Annie's blog on her website https://www.wyephilosophy.com, as well as her upcoming online philosophy circles and other events.*

Beyond the Spice Rack: Amazing Uses and Health Benefits of Ginger

MALEN MENDOZA-BAXTER

Ginger, a warm and aromatic spice, belongs to the same botanical family as two other celebrated spices—cardamom and turmeric. But what makes ginger truly special is its rich history, deeply rooted in the traditions of Southeast Asia. Originating and likely first domesticated in the lush regions of Maritime Southeast Asia, ginger's story spans across Brunei, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Singapore, and East Timor.

I've always had a personal connection to ginger—it's a staple in my kitchen. Whether I'm whipping up Indian curries, Japanese noodle soups, pad Thai noodles, or a Filipino 'tinola', I can't imagine cooking without it. It's a staple in my fridge (yes, fridge - it keeps longer!) But what amazes me about ginger is its dual role: an indispensable ingredient in the kitchen and a time-tested medicinal powerhouse. Indian and Chinese civilizations have been harnessing its medicinal power for over 5,000 years, using it to treat everything from digestive issues to inflammation.

Growing up, I watched our beloved nanny, "Mameng," brew sliced ginger in a pot of water until it reduced to a potent, fiery tonic. Sweetened with honey and flavoured with '***calamansi***' (a local citrus fruit), it was the go-to remedy for colds, coughs, and sore throats. The moment you took a sip, you could feel the warmth of the ginger working its magic, clearing your chest and soothing your throat. In fact, ginger's healing properties don't stop at tea. I vividly recall a homemade treatment for chest infections – crushed ginger mixed with corn flour paste, carefully applied to the back and wrapped in cloth. After a night's rest, your body felt rested, the heat and energy of the ginger had drawn out the "cold" right from within you.

Beyond its folk medicine roots, ginger has earned its place in modern health science. It's been studied for its antioxidant, anti-inflammatory, and even anticancer properties. Gingerols, the active compounds in ginger, are at the heart of its effectiveness. From quelling nausea to improving blood circulation, ginger truly lives up to its reputation as one of the few superfoods worthy of the title.

Beyond my own experiences, ginger is revered across many cultures. In Indian cuisine, it's a hero ingredient in gravies, vegetarian dishes, and even spiced chai. In Japan, it's used raw on noodles, pickled with sushi, or turned into candies. And in Korean kimchi, ginger is either minced or juiced to add that zing without the fibrous texture. No matter where you go, ginger seems to find its way into the heart of local dishes.

Coming into winter, having a spiced, warm drink of ginger on a lazy Sunday afternoon is such a relaxing recreation - whether it's a spicy masala chai, a refreshing ginger and mint blend, or a festive apple and cinnamon. It's a simple pleasure that connects us to centuries of tradition and the natural energy of this remarkable root.

Warm Golden Milk

Healing, soothing and delicious. A rich, mildly sweet drink made with almond milk and turmeric. This treat offers comfort without the sugar spike and crash. The blend of turmeric and other spices also give a warming nourishment, perfect for the winter months.

GINGER-TURMERIC PASTE
(15 portions)

- 90g turmeric root
- 50g ginger
- 5 cardamom pods
- 1 pinch nutmeg
- 3 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp black pepper, ground
- 250ml water

1. Peel the ginger and turmeric and grate them finely. Lightly crush the cardamom pods and put everything in a small pan with the remaining spices.

2. Add 250 ml of water and bring the spices to the boil once before reducing them over low heat for approx. 25 to 30 mins.

3. Remove the cardamom pods and purée everything to a fine paste with the hand mixer, or a blender.

PREPARE DRINK

- 500ml almond milk
- 2 tsp of the turmeric paste
- 2 tsp rice malt

1. Pour the almond milk into a pan and bring to the boil.

2. Add the turmeric paste and bring the milk to the boil, stirring constantly with a whisk.

3. Simmer over a medium heat for 2 to 3 minutes and then sweeten with the rice malt.

You may wear gloves when preparing the paste, as turmeric roots stain everything including your fingers. The paste will keep for about a week in a clean screw-top jar in the fridge. However, you can also freeze and use it in portions if you wish.

The 5 Spices Trail Soup

INGREDIENTS

- 2 Tbsp olive oil or sesame oil or ghee
- 1 medium onion, diced
- 1.2-1.5 litres rich vegetable stock
- 1 tsp cinnamon
- ½ tsp curry powder
- 1.5cm fresh turmeric root, peeled, finely grated (or 1 tsp turmeric powder)
- 1 pinch cayenne pepper
- 1 Tbsp finely grated ginger
- 1 bay leaf
- A few strands of saffron
- 3 medium potatoes or sweet potatoes, cut into small cubes
- 150g celeriac or 3 strands of celery, cut into fine slices or diced
- 2-3 carrots, cut into 4 lengthwise and in fine triangles slices
- 400g cooked chickpeas
- 100g cooked barley or wild rice
- 2 Tbsp of parsley finely chopped

DIRECTIONS

1. Heat some oil in a large pot, sauté the onions for a few minutes with some salt. Cook until translucent. Add 300ml vegetable stock and cook for 15 minutes.

2. In the meantime, dissolve the cinnamon, curry, ginger, turmeric, and cayenne in a small amount of stock and add to the soup.

3. Add the remaining vegetables to the soup with the cooked chickpeas and cook for another 30 minutes.

4. Add the saffron, the barley and the lemon juice, season and serve with parsley.

Note: To make the vegetable stock, gently fry carrots, leeks, parsley stalks, onions, garlic, bay leaves, peppercorns, sprigs of thyme, kombu seaweed. Be careful not to let them go brown. Add cold water, season with salt and allow to simmer uncovered over medium heat for approximately 60 minutes. Pour base soup through a sieve.

Honey Cake

INGREDIENTS

- 120ml olive oil
- 180ml wild honey
- 1 tsp lemon juice
- 180ml soya milk
- 1 egg

- 1 ½ tsp baking powder
- 380g einkorn flour. Sieved
- 2g salt
- 1 Tbsp lemon rind

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix the wet ingredients.

2. Mix the dry ingredients.

3. Fold the dry ingredients gently into the wet ingredients.

4. Pour the mixture into a baking tray.

5. Bake for 40 minutes at 180°.

Chestnut, Mushroom & Pumpkin Risotto

INGREDIENTS

- 300g ‘Biona’ risotto rice
- 2 brown onions, med dice
- 2 leeks, med dice
- 3 stalks celery, med dice
- 2 carrots, fine dice
- 3-4 garlic cloves, finely chopped
- 750g chestnut, oyster, or other mushrooms, cut into large chunks
- 400g kale of your choice, stripped & blanched (4-5mins)
- ¼ -½ Hokkaido squash, cut into 4cm cubes
- fresh or dry rosemary or thyme
- 150ml bottle white wine (optional)
- 3-4 Tbsp chopped flat leaf parsley
- olive oil or rapeseed oil
- salt

DIRECTIONS

1. Wash and precook the rice in a heavy pan or pressure cooker with ½ tsp salt and 2:1 water or stock, taking care to turn down the flame and place a flame diffuser underneath once it starts to cook. (30 minutes if pressure - cooked, 45 minutes if simmered).

2. In a large pan, sauté the onions, leek, garlic, and carrot with a small amount of salt, until the vegetables start to soften.

3. Add the wine and reduce slightly allowing the alcohol to evaporate.

4. In a separate shallow pan sauté the mushrooms in olive oil, WITHOUT any salt, so they don’t lose their water, 5mins. You must cook them over a high flame to allow the water they exude to evaporate.

6. In a large bowl toss the squash with 2-3 pinches salt & olive oil and oven roast it for 25-30 mins, at medium heat: about 180°-190°C.

7. Turn out the rice into a bowl and reserve.

8. Return to the vegetables (onions, leeks, etc.) and add the cooked rice, folding vegetables, and rice delicately; work over a low flame and cover with 1ltr of vegetable stock or water.

9. Gently simmer until it turns to a ‘porridge’ consistency, meaning most of the liquid has been absorbed before adding more liquid. adding a little more vegetable stock and salt.

10. Once it starts to get ‘creamy’ stir & fold in the thyme, rosemary, and cooked mushrooms.

11. Adjust the seasoning noting that the mushrooms are already richly seasoned.

12. Serve topped with the chopped parsley (not too finely chopped) and roasted squash. (if you’re so inclined, you could roast a bulb of garlic and squeeze it out and into the risotto) although you have added garlic at the beginning. Drizzle with a little olive oil.

13. Serve a side of coarsely diced kale, briefly warmed in a pan with its own juice and some pickles of your choice.

Notes:
Do not cut the vegetables for the base too large (this is called the “Soffrito”).
Let the alcohol evaporate after adding the wine.

Work over a medium or low flame to prevent the risotto from catching.

This method, which calls for precooking the rice is for brown rice. In case you are using white rice, do not precook it. To precook the rice you may simply cover the rice with water or stock, bring it to a boil, turn off the flame and let it swell for 20 minutes before using.
You may choose to serve the risotto with parmesan or pecorino.

““Life is renewed by death because it is again and again set free from what would otherwise become an insufferable burden of memory and monotony. Genuine reincarnation lies in the fact that whenever a child is born "I" - or human awareness - arises into the world again with memory wiped clean and the wonder of life restored.”

--- Alan Wilson Watts

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