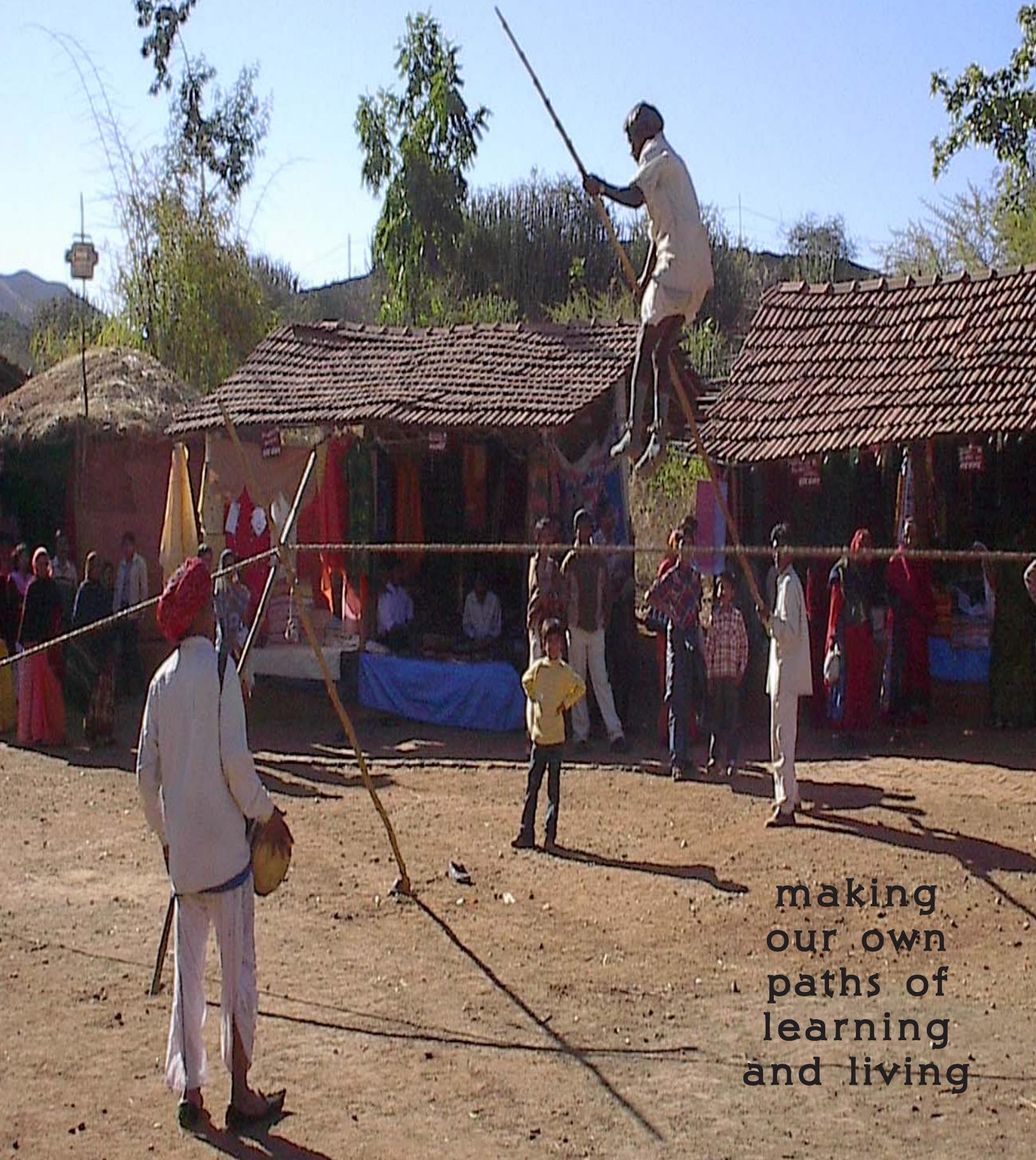


swapathgami



making
our own
paths of
learning
and living



the walkouts-walkons network

The Network is a collection of people engaged in exploring individual pathways outside of institutionalized structures. As *swapathgamis*, we trust our own creative intelligence over the prescribed lives of the Ready-Made world. By 'walking-out' from unhealthy and isolating lifestyles, we are 'walking-on' into endless possibilities. Anyone can be a *Swapathgami*, and all are invited to join us for:

Learning Journeys – to connect individuals and groups engaged in exciting thinking and doing.

Celebrations/Gatherings/Public Dialogues – space to explore crucial issues and to build strong relationships between people with common concerns. Possibilities for future collaborations often evolve during these events.

Communications – print, film and web resources to share experiences of walking-out and walking-on.

Communities of Practice – collaborative explorations and sharing of skills. Past groups have focused on a diversity of projects including (but not limited to) film making, music, eco-livelihoods and *kabaad se jugaad*.

For more information, explore our website:
www.swaraj.org/shikshantar/walkoutsnetwork.htm
You are invited to share your experiences as a Swapathgami co-creator!

van utsav forest festival auroville, india march 5-12, 2006

Over 100 people, *swapathgamis*, members of the Families Learning Together Network and new friends, gathered in Sadhana Forest, Auroville, India. They participated in numerous learning exchanges, both in the forest and in other parts of Auroville, sharing musical instruments, natural dyeing (shown left), natural and organic farming, re-forestation, alternative energy, massage and self-healing, upcycling from waste materials... and of course, the joys of living in a community (cooking, working, hauling water, etc.). Lots of questions, ideas and experiences were explored on possibilities for simpler and healthier living. For those interested in knowing more about forest festivals, contact Bharat Mansata <bharatmansata@yahoo.com> or join the vanutsav@yahoo.com



Swapathgami Cycle Yatra October 25-31, 2006 Rajasthan, India

Travel 200 km by bicycle without any money! 14 *swapathgamis* experienced this journey last year; it was an unforgettable adventure (see www.swaraj.org/shikshantar/walkouts_cycle.htm) A new route, new group of friends, and new set of experiences await us this year. Contact Shammi Nanda <shammi_nanda@yahoo.com> for more info and get ready to ride!

Stay tuned for the 'Kabaad se Jugaad (Waste to Wonder)' meet, the 'Swapathgami Music Jam' and the 'Natural Farming, Natural Learning, Natural Living' meet - all coming up soon!

just keep planting

When Paul was a boy growing up in Utah, he happened to live near an old copper smelter, and the sulfur dioxide that poured out of the refinery had made a desolate wasteland out of what used to be a beautiful forest.

When a young visitor one day looked at this wasteland and saw that there was nothing living there — no animals, no trees, no grass, no bushes, no birds ... nothing but fourteen thousand acres of black and barren land that even smelled bad — well, this kid looked at the land and said, "This place is crummy." Little Paul knocked him down. He felt insulted. But he looked around him and something happened inside him. He made a decision: Paul Rokich vowed that some day he would bring back the life to this land.

Many years later Paul was in the area, and he went to the smelter office. He asked if they had any plans to bring the trees back. The answer was "No." He asked if they would let him try to bring the trees back. Again, the answer was "No." They didn't want him on their land. He realized he needed to be more knowledgeable before anyone would listen to him, so he went to college to study botany.

At the college he met a professor who was an expert in Utah's ecology. Unfortunately, this expert told Paul that the wasteland he wanted to bring back was beyond hope. He was told that his goal was foolish because even if he planted trees, and even if they grew, the wind would only blow the seeds forty feet per year, and that's all you'd get because there weren't any birds or squirrels to spread the seeds, and the seeds from those trees would need another thirty years before they started producing seeds of their own. Therefore, it would take approximately twenty thousand years to revegetate that six-square-mile piece of earth. His teachers told him it would be a waste of his life to try to do it. It just couldn't be done.

So he tried to go on with his life. He got a job operating heavy equipment, got married, and had some kids. But his dream would not die. He kept studying up on the subject, and he kept thinking about it. And then one night he got up and took some action. He did what he could with what he had. This was an important turning point. As Samuel Johnson wrote, "It is common to overlook what is near, by keeping the eye fixed on something remote. In the same manner, present opportunities are neglected and attainable good is slighted by minds busied in extensive ranges."

Paul stopped busying his mind in extensive ranges and looked at what opportunities for attainable good were right in front of him. Under the cover of darkness, he sneaked out into the wasteland with a backpack full of seedlings and started planting. For seven hours he planted seedlings. He did it again a week later.

And every week, he made his secret journey into the wasteland and planted trees and shrubs and grass. But most of it died. For fifteen years he did this. When a whole valley of his fir seedlings burned to the ground because of a careless shepherd, Paul broke down and wept. Then he got up and kept planting.

Freezing winds and blistering heat, landslides and floods and fires destroyed his work time and time again. But he kept planting. One night he found a highway crew had come and taken tons of dirt for a road grade, and all the plants he had painstakingly planted in that area were gone. But he just kept planting.

Week after week, year after year he kept at it, against the opinion of the authorities, against the trespassing laws, against the devastation of road crews, against the wind and rain and heat ... even against plain common sense. He just kept planting. Slowly, very slowly, things began to take root. Then gophers appeared. Then rabbits. Then porcupines.

The old copper smelter eventually gave him permission, and later, as times were changing and there was political pressure to clean up the environment, the company actually hired Paul to do what he was already doing, and they provided him with machinery and crews to work with. Progress accelerated. Now the place is fourteen thousand acres of trees and grass and bushes, rich with elk and eagles, and Paul Rokich has received almost every environmental award Utah has.

He says, "I thought that if I got this started, when I was dead and gone people would come and see it. I never thought I'd live to see it myself!" It took him until his hair turned white, but he managed to keep that impossible vow he made to himself as a child.

What was it you wanted to do that you thought was impossible? Paul's story sure gives a perspective on things, doesn't it? The way you get something accomplished in this world is to just keep planting. Just keep working. Just keep plugging away at it one day at a time for a long time, no matter who criticizes you, no matter how long it takes, no matter how many times you fall. Get back up again. And just keep planting.

- Adam Khan, Self-Help Stuff That Works, 1999
www.youmeworks.com

at a crossroads

I'm right now at a crossroads in my life. Everybody who I meet asks, "So what next?" And I tell them the truth, which is that I'm planning to take a year off and travel around. If I talk to somebody about my interests, they say "Oh, social service?" or "Oh, NGO-type?" or "Oh, why don't you do IAS, you can be of great service to the nation, we need people like you." Now they may not be wrong in what they say, but most people keep repeating what they have heard from somebody else. Their 'packaged language' shows me they haven't thought things through with much depth.

It happens not only in schools but also in society, especially among those who don't know who they are, and just get trapped in grabbing everything to try and make them feel better about themselves. And this attitude is prevalent in schools *because* it is prevalent in most of society. The schools only continue to run because they train kids to become slaves in a society. If schools were places where kids could become free, then parents would pull their kids out, because then the school isn't 'practical'.

I feel it's not the people, but the system, that is the problem. And those who defend the system are invariably those who it gives a sense of power. They are actually the biggest slaves. They don't even try to fight, and become tyrannical a good bit of the time. From there comes a lack of accountability, lack of democracy, lack of freedom, everything.

I see a lot of people constrained in what they do because of the 'financial trap': earning money to send some to their parents, to support their own families, to have enough "backup for a rainy day". I'm not saying that we shouldn't care for our families. But why is it reduced to money and 'stuff'? Isn't being there and giving time, attention, energy and freedom important? And what about the tradeoff? To earn money, people often sacrifice time with their families now. Everybody knows this. But why do they continue to reduce their lives to money?

- Dhruva Seshadri, Tamil Nadu, India
<dhrugese@gmail.com>

why did you walk out of ... ?

... a 9-5 job

I have never walked out of school or college, even though I hated them both bitterly. But I have walked out of workplaces. The longest I have held a job is four months and the shortest 1□ months. I have simply never managed to fit in. There are far too many things I want to be able to do as an artist and no 'job' on earth seems to be able to give me all of that. I have been freelancing for two years now, which has proved to be extremely unstable monetarily. So recently, I decided to give the 'job' one more shot. I was accepted in a leading art auction house as a graphic designer. It was an extremely prestigious company, but I snapped at the last moment and decided to stand by my guns and continue freelancing. My creativity would have choked and died inside any 'office'. I lost out on a very plush and stable income, but at least I can now tailor my career the way I want.

This route has given me the opportunity to explore art more widely than I could have ever expected. I recently finished making (from scratch) an animation film, even though as a painter, I have no training in animation. The film is about unlawful land reclamation and displacement of fisherfolk. I also made conceptual designs for a multimedia project on AIDS awareness. I am working towards a painting exhibition in January. I also do freelance graphic designing.

The above combination would simply not be possible from the confines of an office, a place that I have come to see as an intellectually, emotionally and physically wrecking torture chamber, where, apart from everything else, the employee-slave always comes last. The toothpaste he/she is selling is far more important, the boss's Swiss account is far more important. These jobs give one the illusion of 'surviving', of 'making ends meet', or 'affording that special holiday' with one's friends or family. But the fact is they suck you dry. Sure you're left with a lot of money – but no time or health to spend it. It's ironic that over-demanding jobs have wrecked more lives and families than alcohol!



I am not sure what to do about all this as a young person. Many urges to 'go out there and do something about it' are thwarted by the sense of fighting a lost battle. Yet, from a more optimistic stance, for those of us who are as yet unsure of what to do and how to do it, whether it is a personal protest or a more public one, it pays to wait and watch, to be quiet, observe, learn, and hope to understand... Perhaps that is the first and most crucial step to leading a less offensive life.

- Aditi Chitre, Mumbai, India <aditchitre@gmail.com>

... university teaching

For the four years that I taught at Penn State University, on the first day of class, I would take an informal poll of my students. "Complete the following sentence," I would say, "using whichever of these four answers comes closest to describing you:"

"The reason I am at Penn State is..."

- A. To get a degree so I can get a good job.
- B. My parents expect me to go to college, and I don't want to let them down.
- C. College comes after high school, so here I am.
- D. To satisfy my thirst for knowledge.

Semester after semester, the results of the poll were extremely consistent. Typically about 80% or more of the students answered A. Answers B and C garnered 5-10% each, while answer D never received more than 5%. "In other words," I told them, "you are not here to learn." I explained that I have no judgment behind this evaluation, that it is just a fact. "If we ignore this fact, we're going to be pretending to each other all semester. You see, the problem is that even if you are not here to learn, I am indeed here to teach. What are we going to do?"

For four years, I have been struggling to find an alternative to the usual response to this near-universal situation at the university. The usual response is, since the students don't want to learn, to *make* them learn, use the motivational apparatus of grades and the habits of obedience, emotional dependency, and so forth. This strategy appears to work, at least until the day after the final exam, when they forget everything they "learned". Everybody — students, teachers, and the institution — go on pretending that an education is happening.

By bringing this issue out into the open on the first day of class, we were able to enjoy an unusual level of authenticity and trust. That honesty, however, only brought deeper levels of my own hypocrisy to light. The first level of hypocrisy I discovered had to do with the fact that I was still assigning grades. Hiding my culpability behind the locution, "I have to", I made the choice to give grades in order to keep my job. Why was that more important to me than my stated reason of "why I am here" — to teach? I chose to give grades because I was afraid. I was motivated by the very same survival anxiety that motivated the students who answered A.

Also, the grading was a systemic poison that corrupted every aspect of my relationship to the students. How can you have an authentic relationship with someone while you are holding the equivalent of a gun to their head? Because that is what it is. Students believe that the grade will have some bearing on their future success, security,

and well-being. Grades are also an embodiment of judgment. Yet hadn't I been telling them that I hold no judgment over their motivations and decisions? Hadn't I told them, "I do not want to *make* you learn. I think it is the teacher's job to make class so fascinating that you choose to come of your own free will"? I felt like a fraud, and some students felt betrayed at the end of the semester. I could hardly look them in the eye.

My assertion "I am here to teach" led me to discover an even deeper level of hypocrisy. After a couple years, I realized that my desire to teach was accompanied by a crippling agenda of "being smart", looking good, and being right. One day, I was talking about the perils of genetically modified crops, when I looked around the room and saw two-thirds of the faces had glazed over. I stopped and asked, "Okay, let's be honest here. How many people in this room frankly don't give a shit about genetically modified crops?" Over half raised their hands.

Here I had been, pretending to be speaking to people, pretending to be in a dialogue with them, and most of them didn't care about what I was saying. I wasn't actually speaking to them. I wasn't respecting them as listeners. It was as if I'd been speaking in Chinese, and they'd been nodding their heads until they eventually glazed over, and my mouth kept motoring on. Please don't think this was only because I was lecturing too much. The group activities, the partner activities, the assignments, all had the same air of phoniness, of going through the motions.

As these realizations became clearer and clearer, I would console myself by emphasizing my successes. Hey, at least I was reaching some of them, right? And hadn't I received dozens of letters with words like, "This class changed my life" or "This is the best class I have ever taken" or "You have voiced what I have always known to be true in my heart"? Wasn't I one of the most popular teachers on campus? Yes. I suppose I could have rationalized my continued presence at the university. However, none of these considerations could erase my feeling that I had violated my own integrity.

When I decided to leave the university, and vowed never again to participate in a coercive institution, I experienced an exhilarating feeling of freedom and self-determination. Now, as I move toward other venues of teaching, learning and relationship (seminars, workshops), my words have power. My integrity is golden.

- Charles Eisenstein, Pennsylvania, USA
<charles.eisenstein@gmail.com>

Check out Charles' work on the Deschooling Convivium <www.panentheia.com/productions.php> and his new book, *The Ascent of Humanity* <www.ascentofhumanity.com>

exposing the 'poverty' game

My connection with Africa was solidified before I was born, but my first conscious memory was as a child. I wept at the commercials of those poor Ethiopian children, pleaded to my mother to call the hotlines that promised food and shelter. She would try to comfort me (or maybe comfort herself), as we were too poor to donate. I developed a fantasy of creating a huge contraption that would remove salt from the ocean. It would have a sprinkler system on the end of it that I could use to spray most of Africa, removing the desert and allowing people to grow fruits and vegetables from the massive amounts of seeds I would send. I did not understand debt and structural adjustment programs then; I did not understand colonialism, or top-down power dynamics, or that there could be another agenda besides wanting to alleviate poverty. All I knew was that human beings were hurting from challenges that could be readily fixed.

Years later, I am asking my supervisor, "So, we are working to end poverty, right? Working our way out of a job?" My supervisor looked at me and said, "No. There will always be people who will want to donate to a US-based intermediaries and get a tax write-off." The shocking reality fell upon me that we were working towards different ends. That was the beginning of the end. It is like with a lover: the very thing you overlook out of love is what sabotages the relationship in the end.

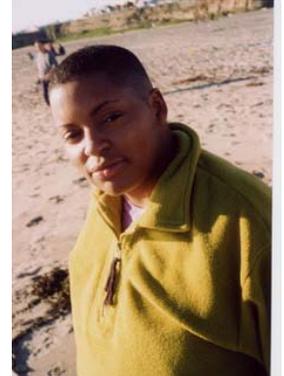
The longer I engaged organizations working towards development in Africa, whether through grantmaking or through providing services, the more I discovered, that development was a narcissistic need to release guilt for privilege and ancestral legacies of privilege. Development was about personal redemption in the face of those legacies (feeling good about not being like those that came before) and an ego-based need to be the savior (the answer to people's poverty). This bizarre God-complex was steeped in old beginnings (in the bibles of missionaries) and now showed up in beautiful leaflets and power point presentations.

Everyone was interested in their own agenda, and so critical time, resources and energy were wasted. Further, there was often exclusion or token inclusion of the populations they served in designing policies and practices. So Africans existed as the effects of services as opposed to being the driving force behind them. Plus, US-based intermediaries themselves need funding to operate. Functioning in survival

mode, they are too busy chasing donors and foundations to keep their doors open to the larger issues.

All this adds up to the fact that poverty is required for people to earn salaries, to feel good about their donations, for African studies departments to exist, for large development agencies to defer funds away from culturally competent and inclusive poverty alleviation efforts and instead produce expensive glossy pamphlets about how "we're losing the war on poverty." I would go so far as to argue that the profession is designed not to eliminate poverty but to keep it in place.

It gets worse. Every time I hear about corruption in international development, I want to scream — especially in the context of philanthropy. I want to ask, "Where exactly do you think the money that you give away comes from?" Trace that river of money back to the source, and you will find the blood of Native Americans, the rape of the earth, and the systematic exploitation of Africans through slavery and other unspoken forms of corruption. It is convenient historical amnesia that supports philanthropists to stand in positions of self-righteousness, now concerned about the money being spent incorrectly. Philanthropy, especially international grantmaking, must be one of the biggest hypocrisies of this century.



When I encounter Africans with that gleam in their eye, grateful for the international development organizations who have done anything for Africa, I feel sad, because I know the irony of histories that allowed those organizations to be in Africa in the first place. I feel sad, because I see how these organizations do not shift larger poverty paradigms and take more than they give. The exploitation of Africa has lead her to a fragile place, where the perception that "help is needed" and must come from the very sources of her exploitation. It is a vicious cycle.

I have had to unlearn all this, in order to listen and walk alongside indigenous wisdom, offering my own only when requested. I have had to cross my own class and power issues to ally with indigenous efforts. Consciously and constantly, I have to work to ensure that I am not enforcing very old paradigms under the guise of doing good. I have to walk my prayer for the liberation of Africa, which includes liberation from my own conditioning.

- Kisha Montgomery, Oakland, USA
<kisha@creativesoul.us>

Often, we must discover the un-truths we have been taught before we trust our own judgment. What were you told that you later experienced to be untrue? How did you come to discover the hollowness of prescription-living?

waking up

how do you spell L-I-F-E?

December 1999. Another cold night in Delhi. I am with two friends with whom I share a history of friendship that knows no bounds. Shivering in the cold, I shift the hot glass of tea from one hand to another trying to keep warm. In an eerie silence, we share the known as well as unknown with unspoken words and communicate the unspeakable through the language of soul.

Seven years have passed since we spent those days and nights on the roads of Delhi – when we felt lost in the narrow work-a-day world deluged in ignorance and self-formed insecurities, when we found that we could no longer communicate with our fellow humans as we appeared to be speaking different languages. We were fortunate to have found each other in closer co-ordinates or else I wonder if we could have maintained our sanity. The roots of our kinship traced back to our school days, when the world outside used to generate a feeling of exciting curiosity. We were just waiting to be out of those dull schools - out in the real world.

Now that we had grown up, the real world that we saw around shocked us – dry, scratching itself to death. Everyone is going round in circles with a bent back, caged in a narrow geometry of suffocating life – infact, only a simulacrum. Wherever we see, everyone is scratching himself or other, bleeding and scratching.....scratching and bleeding, until no skin is left. Everyone is just a bundle of his own tragic stories waiting to be told as soon as you touch him with a kind word. Search around for a true man and you will find none. We were groping in dark searching out for more hands; found none other than our own. Misunderstood and alone, we shared between us something for which we had not even known words till then.

To find words for what we felt, we realized we needed to break off from the world around us. We decided to give up the game of the corporate world and threw ourselves into different directions in search of expression. With sickened hearts, we felt horrendous in the treadmill which they tried to dignify by calling it a 'life'. If you asked anyone to explain or define life, what was the be-all and the end-all, you got a blank look for answer. Life was something which philosophers dealt with in books that no one read. Those in the thick of life, 'the plugs in harness', had no time to answer such idle questions and asked 'You've got to eat, haven't you?'

From whatever little I had observed, I knew that the men who were most *in* life, who were moulding life or infact who were life themselves, ate little, slept little and owned little. They had no illusions about duty, or the perpetuation

of their kith and kin, or the preservation of the State. Nobody could command their service because they had of their own pledged themselves to give all.

"Lucky you", is what we hear the most when some old friend finds us traveling or spending our time in our own way. Everyone makes assumptions to justify why I could break away and why he could not and then walks away. I have seen that there is no use telling anyone that breaking away is not that difficult and there is a possibility in everyone's life to do so. This is because whatever simplistic solutions you may describe that you stumbled on the way in order to make life happen this way, the other person starts treating that method or way as a special piece of fortune that you alone were granted by providence.

All along the way, we have been taking different routes in this learning journey. Different activities at different times have been filling our days and nights – we have been trying to follow the voice of inner curiosity to decide whether we want to listen to music today or we want to lie in solitude or read a book, write own diary or whether we want to leap out in the nature, out on the road with our bags, vagabonding.

The most regular question is the source of finance to make all such activities possible. There is no one answer, since we never really planned for it. We have faced unpayable debts, loans and embarrassments, as well. But over a period of time, we found ourselves managing with whatever little dough one of us could earn in between, by the way of a job taken temporarily or some project that landed in our pockets without striving for it. We have been sharing and revolving money and all resources, without terming it as any one's own. We never gave an ownership tag to any material thing or money between us. Whatever is available to one becomes available to all – forgetting the mathematics and sciences of financial world. No one keeps account of who consumed what or who spent how much. It has created space for all of us to break out and spell life in our own way at different times.

What I have learnt though in this period of life and what I try to tell other people, whose most natural first question to me is about the source of money, is that it's the least important question once you are out in life. The real question that awaits you out there is totally different – it is about how you would like to spell life. Life holds various meanings – all true in their own way. 'How you are going to find your own truth' is the most important question that awaits you there – the rest is all details.

- Aashish Singla, Chandigarh, India
<aashish_s@hotmail.com>

manual workout

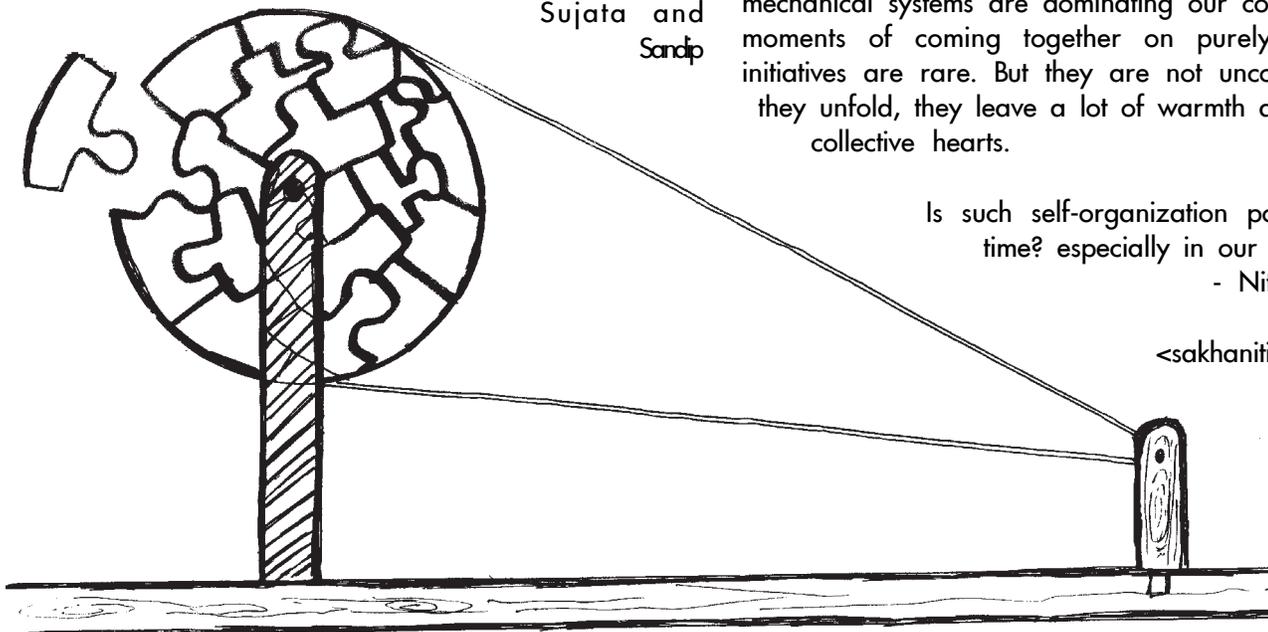
The *charkha* (spinning wheel) arrived all bundled in a nice package. It was opened by Anil to discover that it had to be partially assembled.

Soon, Sujata, Supe, Sunita, Sandip, Sampada, Sakhi and I gathered around it to make it functional. Someone lamented that they should have supplied a manual — it would have been easy. The energy was fresh and raring to go. I remarked, "We don't need a manual. Let us do it with our common sense." Soon enough, parts began to find their right places. Through trial and error, and with lot of discussion and humour, the *charkha* gradually began to function, but not quite. It would begin and then come to a halt.

I remarked that in Udaipur, Manish was egging me to learn the functioning of the *charkha* at Shikshantar when I was spinning, and I had avoided it. Now, I think it was a blessing in disguise. If I had known how it functioned, perhaps I would have acted as an expert, and the wonderful energy that emanated from the group's involvement would have gone missing. This energy attracted curious onlookers with their sometimes caustic remarks! Most remarks were about the absence of a manual. Vikram quipped that it was because of its absence that manual hands were at work. These hands discovered an amazing capacity to learn and shape things. I said that 'manuals' were symbols of a ready-made world and markets and probably destroyed our ability to imagine and make things work, individually and collectively!

Sakhi, Sangita and I added a few tips based on our spinning at Shikshantar.

Sujata and Sandip



Walking out from fast and easy consumerism is the first step to decreasing our dependency on institutions that devalue personal power and local traditions. Practicing the skills we have, sharing them among friends and stewarding the resources of our specific environments allows us to live in a more meaningful way.

u make it!

helped one missing piece, which was causing a lot of guessing about its role and where it would fit, to find its rightful and crucial place in the *charkha*. It was the 'controller' through which the raw thread needed to pass before going under the rollers! The joy was palpable. Members of the Abhivyakti team were helping each other with their feelings and thoughts, because they had hope that in the end, everything would emerge alright. Pravin was there as well, freezing everything on his Canon EOS digital camera.

Vaishali Supe, Sunita and Sampada, along with Anil and Sandip, remained till the end. They found some fittings were loose, discovered why some parts didn't function and got it right in the end. The *charkha* is spinning alright. It has ignited team energy, stoked our creative potential and has already started spinning dreams in our hearts — of wearing dresses spun from our own hands and efforts!

Nothing was planned, no efforts were made to mobilise anyone, no directions were handed down. The process evolved as a good example of the self-organizing ability that is present in all of us.

Three cheers to that! Such endeavours are magical. They are also spiritual. In an age where Industrial and mechanical systems are dominating our conscience, such moments of coming together on purely self-directed initiatives are rare. But they are not uncommon. When they unfold, they leave a lot of warmth and joy in our collective hearts.

Is such self-organization possible all the time? especially in our organisations?

- Nitin Paranjape,
Nashik, India

<sakhanitin@gmail.com>

learning all the time

4.30 AM

No alarms, no wake-up calls, but the man woke up (he looked like a boy more than a man, though he is 24). He picked up the torch and checked the time in his watch. He got up from the mat. Under him the bamboo floor creaked. It was a small temporary shack standing on four poles middle of the farm. It was made for guarding the cultivation from wild boars. He came out of the shack, shouted into the darkness to scare away the boars. This was the last time that night. One night's work was over. He climbed down and walked towards his home, which was on another hill.

5.30 AM

After milking the cows, the man prepared himself for the next duty. He wore three shirts one over another, a jacket and a rain coat as a prevention against the cold weather and rain. He checked his backpack and made sure that everything was in place. He took a 10-litre can of milk and started climbing down the hill. He had to collect milk from other farms before he got to the town.

6.00 AM

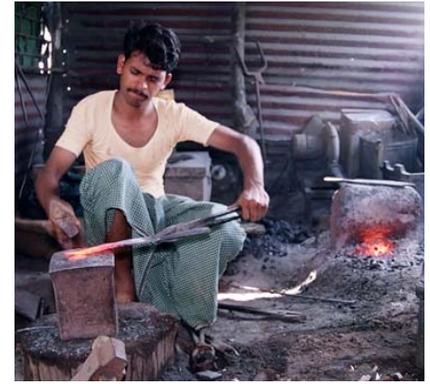
As the shrill sound of the old M-80 scooter came nearer, men, women and hotel owners got ready with bottles and small milk cans. The man zoomed into the crowd. He took out various sized containers and started selling milk. After finishing these 50 liters, he had to collect and supply another 50 liters, which came directly from a dairy.

8.30 AM

The man washed the milk can and his dress, had a bath in the cool river, got into ironed trousers and shirt (only one shirt this time) kept his scooter with all the gear related with milk distribution besides a shop. He took the backpack containing a slide projector and took a bus to a distant place, where a whole college was waiting for him. It was World Environment Day, and he was to inaugurate a Green Club and give a speech. After his slide show, students surrounded him with questions, autograph books, and asked for his address. Satisfying them and expecting that some of them would be in touch with him, he goes back home. He had to get back soon, as he was supposed to take photographs of ants for a children's weekly. That night, he had to clean the new microlens he had fabricated from old binoculars. Oops! Before climbing the hill, he had check his emails, as there was no electricity or computers in his home!

This was a day from my life in Kerala two years ago. I roamed in search of knowledge, experience and, of course, a way to support my family, who made it all

possible. I performed with a drama troupe, spent almost one year as a taxi driver, dipped into the glittering film industry (no, not acting! but as an assistant cinematographer), took up freelance photography, did a series of programs on



All-India Radio and so on. I made lots of friends of different age groups, from different social backgrounds, and got lots of experience and knowledge of the field.

When I look back, I can see how alive my education was — without schools, strict teachers and timetables, homework and all the nightmares my friends went through. I didn't separate my play and my studies. I remember one of the questions that led me to physics. It was about the jumping lid over the rice boiling-pot. Who pushes it out? My parents must have had a very tough time with all my questions through their busy routine. When they were not able to answer, I used to go to their friends: scientists, politicians, advocates, lecturers, engineers, farmers, people with traditional knowledge... No one was spared from my curiosity. I had hundreds of teachers, for every subject, in a sense. When I was 10 or 11, I used to make musical calling bells and tiny light displays. I did it as part of my plays. But that was the basis for my interest in electronics, which made it possible for me to become an amateur wireless operator (Ham Radio). I know it developed naturally into my interest in computers.

As a kid, I used to climb trees. That flexibility comes in handy, when I have to run to take a photograph, or to place one foot on a motorbike's seat and the other on a glass-studded wall. As a twelve-year-old, I learned how to cook, keep daily accounts and do 'self-management' (i.e., taking care of chores). Now, working with the Organic Farmers Association of India in Goa, far from my home in Kerala, all this helps me to survive.

The most important skill I think I gained (in my childhood free from schooling) is the instinct to think a way out of problems. When I had to get up at every hour or so to scare away the wild boars, I invented a timer which worked with the pressure of water. Later, when I wanted a microlens, I assembled one by myself, using our old binoculars. Diversity of lessons was my life. It still remains the same. Each day, I find new lessons for the everyday challenges of real life.

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remember the last time you walked?
 when you walked with people you didn't know but with a shared dream
 when you walked to ask a question, to raise a voice, to show togetherness
 when you walked for justice, for peace, for truth
 when you walked for people whose faces you didn't know
 and it didn't matter ...
 when you walked for life?
 let's walk ...

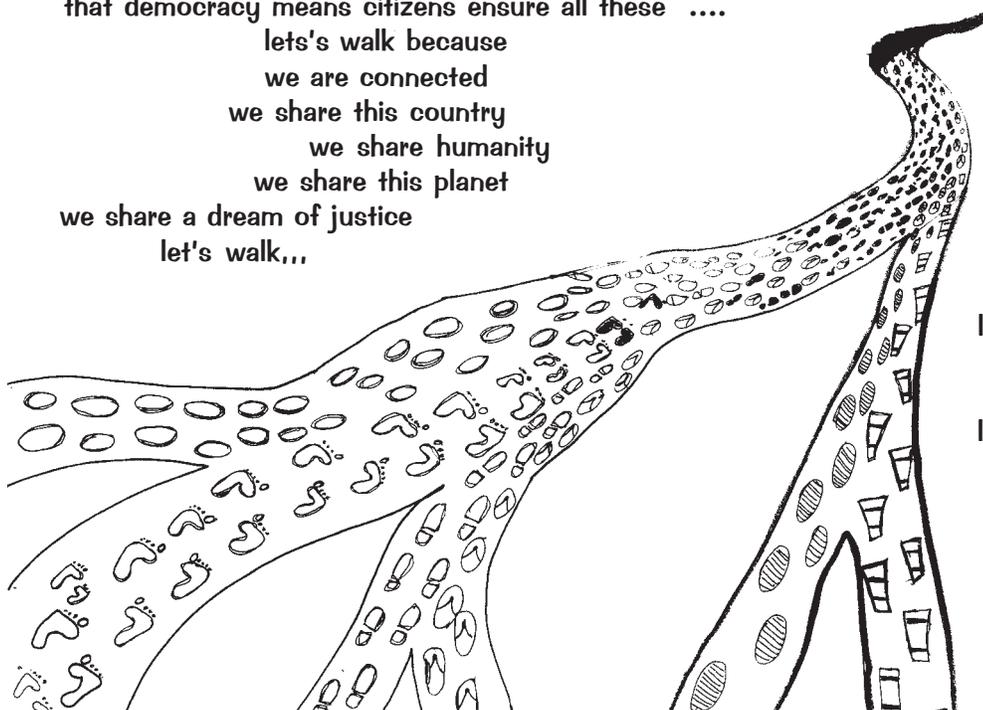
as blatant lies pile up
 as propaganda takes malicious delight in miring individuals
 as the possibility of bulldozers razing homes looms large
 as the dates of villages being submerged draws closer
 let's walk...

to get out of houses, schools, offices and shops
 to walk on the road for it is common and shared by all
 to face the heat and dust
 to connect within, with others and with some more others
 let's walk...

for Narmada
 for people whose houses have been ore would be submerged
 along with fields, friendships, temples and memories
 for all those who are disenfranchised in world's largest democracy
 for those houses are being razed to ground
 along with their hopes, neighborhoods, jobs and whatever little there is
 for those who are citizens without a place in the city

let's walk because we know
 that development means equity, justice and respect
 that development means verdant nature and pristine rivers
 that development means security and safety against any form of tyranny
 that development means food, homes, work and peace
 that democracy means citizens ensure all these

lets's walk because
 we are connected
 we share this country
 we share humanity
 we share this planet
 we share a dream of justice
 let's walk...



taking the walk

There were hundreds, young, old, sloganeering, singing in front of the Supreme Court, many who had lost their homes, others who were moved by the callous orders and actions, everyone deeply saddened, angered, hurt and challenged, demanding justice, seeking an end to displacement and dispossession. My story is not about the politics of urban development, land mafias or even upper middle class desensitized judges. It is about people, energies, emotions and me — and a walk which took place on July 13, 2006.

from Gandhi's peaceful home to the president's palatial home
 from dams to demolitions the issues are the same

And if you don't think walking makes any difference
 let's remember the walks from history
 let's remember Gandhi, Martin Luther King, Badshah Khan

let's remember the millions who have walked
 let's remember to **walk the talk**
 let's walk...

- Jaya Iyer, New Delhi, India
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cambios (changes and exchanges)

For some time now, I have been thinking about how to live without money. I knew it was possible in my local place in India, where we have traditions of exchange.

But would it be possible in another place? I had the chance to stay for six weeks in Oaxaca, Mexico. While there, I tried to exchange things, skills and ideas instead of spending money. I knew that it would be challenging to do this, and I thought it would be especially difficult with the people whose language (Spanish or local) I couldn't speak. But my experiences surprised me a lot!

One week, I met Sandrine, a sculptor who works with ceramic. I was interested in working with clay and had some experiences doing so back in Udaipur. When I came to Sandrine, she asked me to pay her 150 pesos. She explained that this is a kind of full-time job for her, and she charges everyone who comes to work in her studio. I asked her if we could instead exchange somethings instead of money. Together, we decided to cook some Indian food and then to work with ceramic.

Sandrine invited Maribel (one of her friends) to learn how to cook different food. And another friend of mine, Annie, was also interested in sculpting, so she joined as well. The four of us cooked chapatis, basmati rice and broccoli without oil. After, we worked with clay for about four hours. Sandrine shared some basic techniques she learned from different indigenous artisans. We can use these techniques to work with any kind of clay and can make anything in our imaginations. For example, she showed us a simple technique for taking the air out from the clay. I remembered that half of our sculptures broke when we fired them during a clay workshop back home in India, simply because we didn't take the air bubbles out of the clay.

While cooking, we shared our personal stories of learning different things. Maribel told me about her brother who also is learning with traditional healers. Her brother never went to any institution, and he has been practicing healing for the last three years. Maribel said she would take me to meet a healer in Oaxaca City, to experience *Temazcal* (a kind of therapy). All of this was shared without any promise or transfer of money!

Another time, I traveled to a village called Mitla. I had a few free hours, so I went there alone and without any plans. I met a family in a shop, where they sell *khadi* (handmade cloth). They weave in their house and sell their fabrics in the market. We started talking about what they do and what I do in India.

While talking, I noticed the woman had a lot of pain in her foot. I had been learning about natural healings, and so I was happy to tell her of some herbs, which she could easily find to heal herself. Out of the blue, she gave me a T-shirt as a gift! Another neighboring shopkeeper gave me a frock for my daughter, and one more gave me a shawl for my wife! I then asked for a T-shirt, which I wanted to pay for, but the women refused to accept money. After receiving such generosity, I felt I wanted to offer more to them. So I made some jewelry and gave it to them. In a tourist place like Mitla, all this seems impossible! But it happened.

In making things from my own hands, a different language emerged. It made it possible for me to easily learn Spanish. I didn't need to join a class, but learned just by directly interacting with people and using the language of my own hands and work (and their own work) as the starting point.

I had wanted to find a different way to form relationships with people. Instead of offering money and receiving products, I was able to make friends and engage in dialogue by exchanging. I should clarify that it was different from bartering. It was not so much an exchange of things, as it was an exchange of skills and knowledge, i.e., "I know how to do this; what do you know how to do?" On both sides, a curiosity and energy for learning and sharing was present. Plus, we weren't dependent on any institutions — not monetary or educational or any — to make our exchanges. We created our own rules for engagement.

After coming back, I have noticed that where there was an exchange, we are still in touch and sharing ideas over letters and the internet. Where there wasn't an exchange, today we aren't in touch. I learned how real relationships are formed.

I can strongly say that it is possible to re-create a culture of exchange, a culture of gifts, a culture of relationships anywhere, everywhere. And I also have confidence that I could live in this way, without money, for a long period of time.

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book review: how to take an exam...and remake the world

I began reading How to Take an Exam... and Remake the World hoping the book would offer techniques to help students beat the Establishment's people-sorting system at its own game. As it turns out, Bertell Ollman's book does this and more.

The cover of Ollman's book snagged my attention first: upside down headshots of Karl Marx scowling, Groucho Marx smiling, and Albert Einstein sticking his tongue out -a curious pantheon. Skimming through the text, comics, and over 200 bulleted tips about how to prepare for factual, oral, essay, and practical exams, it became clear that Ollman was a serious iconoclast. On the other hand, as a professor of political science at New York University, a member of the credentialed intelligentsia, I wondered how much he could be trusted.

Given my wariness, I was charmed when Ollman admitted right up front that since the future of so many individuals rests on whether they can pass (often stupid and meaningless) exams, he would share the vast repository of exam-taking skills he had collected in the decades he'd been part of the educational establishment. His generosity, however, had strings attached. Readers get all his tips, but Ollman gets to 'harangue' them about a subject he is far more interested in, i.e., the nefarious characteristics of capitalism. So, as Ollman explains, "The book is organized rather like a fruit and nut cake: to get to the fruit you've got to eat the nuts."

By the time I read the third chapter, I had visions of Ollman being staked and burned by colleagues — not necessarily for his Marxist views, but for so shrewdly exposing the underbelly of the teaching profession, and for spotlighting the educational establishment as a device for allocating social privilege and reinforcing class division, all while ostensibly promoting 'equality'. Ollman's book is an excellent anti-capitalistic and socialist primer. The definitions, lessons, and critiques he provides are clear and insightful and all the more memorable, given the scaffolding he supplies with personal anecdotes, cartoons, statistics, quizzes, myths, radio transcripts, and one (hilarious and subversive) classroom bingo game.

Coincidentally, while reading Ollman's book, I caught a pertinent segment of Ken Burn's documentary about Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson, who built the University of Virginia (which, significantly, was the first university in America that was not founded on a religious order) had never intended that the school have exams or grades. Jefferson didn't want matriculation either. He simply wanted people to come when they felt like it, to study what they pleased, and to leave when they felt educated.

Two centuries later, instead of having institutions of higher education that function, as "academical villages.... of continuing

In this section, swapathgamis share resources for fellow Walk-outs/Walk-ons in the spirit of co-learning and co-creating. We invite you to share your experiences of places, people and things, and tell us about any great opportunities you know.

resources

revolution, enlightenment, and rationalization," we have schools and universities with pathetic standards of civic obligation and scholarship, and whose unstated purpose is to produce personnel to support the self-interest of the ruling elites. What Ollman wants his students to understand is that their curriculum is gravely constricted, that they are both distracted and prohibited from learning much of anything outside the dominant paradigm, and that the higher up they feed on the educational chain, the more entrenched they will become in capitalist rhetoric and neo-liberal ideology.

Given these sorts of insights, it was a mystery to me why Ollman doesn't discourage students from *attending* school to begin with. Nevertheless, tens of thousands of students are drudges in the system, and since universities cluster the generation with the most potential transformative power in one place, a subversive primer for this particular stratum of society is particularly valuable.

Ollman's clarity about the absurdity of so many standard schooling rituals provoked me to wonder what conclusions Ollman might have come to about revolutionary pedagogy if he had written a comparable book for teachers, i.e., the 'How to Give an Exam' book. This reminded of something Winston Churchill once said about his schooling experience: "I should have liked to be asked to say what I knew. They always tried to ask what I did not know. When I would have willingly displayed my knowledge, they sought to expose my ignorance."

Though I don't claim to understand why any sane person would tolerate all the indignities of being 'educated' within the walls of the Academy, or accept the risk and ridiculous expense of getting some accreditation that may literally *never* 'pay off,' those who are in school and determined to carry on will find Ollman's book enlightening. After all, you can't break the rules of any game, much less see how warped they are, if you *unwittingly* play by the rules.

- Camy Mathay, Madison, USA

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the service of servas

It's said that travel broadens the mind, but does it? Most travelers come to India to experience its vast cultures and peoples, however how much do we really learn about the country when most of the people we meet are the result of relationships limited to commerce? Guest house owners, waiters, travel agency employees and souvenir shop owners do not represent the vast majority of Indian citizens. One of the ways I've met regular people has been through an international organization that brings travelers and locals together to talk about life, work, happiness, politics and world peace without a hidden commercial agenda. The agency is called Servas. It has a long list of folks who are happy to open their homes to travelers, to show them what life is like for Indians.



To become a Servas member, you have to contact the representative in your area, listed on the Servas website <www.servas.org>. You then are interviewed by the Servas representative to make sure you understand the values the organization promotes. Once you pass the screening interview, you buy a membership. There's a sliding scale for membership depending on what country you're from. As a member, you ask for a list of Servas hosts in the regions you're traveling to and then contact them prior to your trip. The lists give details (age, hobbies, etc.) so you can stay with hosts that match or, even better, that challenge your interests.

In Udaipur, I stayed with Deen Dayal Dashottar. He lives in a complex that includes the Mahatma Gandhi Peace Foundation meeting hall. The rambling hall was my home. When Mr. Dashottar was a young boy, he happened to see Gandhi on one of his cross-country tours. It was the start of a lifelong dedication towards the principles of the world's most famous peace activist. On my first day in town, Mr. Dashottar and I shared lunch together at his home. He talked about his life and favorite hobby; spinning cotton (*khadi*), one of the pillars of Gandhi's philosophy. The next morning, we walked in his garden, and he showed me his small collection of cotton plants in front of the meeting hall. Not only does he spin his own cotton (which he donates to the poor), he grows it too. Mr. Dashottar is almost 90 years old, but his do-it-yourself approach would put most Canadian anarchist punk rockers to shame.

Middle-class India is growing in leaps and bounds. Renu and Jagat Singh Mehta's family is an example. They live in a new three-bedroom home. When I arrive for a visit, Jagat's eight-year-old son is watching Pokeman on TV; outside his 20-year-old is working on a brand new silver Enfield Bullet motorcycle. Renu used to teach painting at Udaipur's university. Some of her original work decorates the family home. Besides painting, Renu also spends a few hours every week organizing a local composting project that has over 1,000 members.

video volunteers

We all believe we can make a difference, Now's the time to live it. We at MAM Movies invite Volunteers and Interns to work together with us in creating something out of nothing.

No qualifications needed, just the spirit to follow our hearts. We encourage newcomers to give some of their time in creating something meaningful through cinema.

There's no Boss in the MAM Team. We all do what we love to do. So more than we telling you what to do, we would ask you about what you would like to do.

If you are interested in volunteering your time, here are few guidelines.

1. It is **UNPAID**.
2. Currently we have two categories for volunteers —
 - a) In- house: Work with our Mumbai office.
 - b) Universal: Work from wherever you are.
3. In-house volunteers would be requested to commit for a specific time period, which could depend on their flexibility. Volunteers can also a start a new project or work with us on a existing one.
4. Universal volunteers can help us from where ever they are, through the internet, and help us network in the cities they are located in.
5. We are a very small start up company, focused on independent cinema without any star names attached to us. We believe we are all stars. Write to us with any queries or if you would like to join the team.

Living in tune with ourselves,
the MAM Team

<mammovies2@gmail.com>

<http://mammovies.com/volunteer.html>

My one week stay with Servas hosts in Udaipur showed me an important side of India that I would otherwise miss. I'll likely meet other Indians who ask what my life is like in Canada and I'll be happy to talk with them. But it won't have the same depth as watching Mr. Dashottar spin his cotton, as he says, "Develop your atma, spirituality, relationship to humanity."

- Daryl Richel, Edmonton, Canada

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zero waste center - kerala

When Sheela *chechi* handed me a coconut and asked me to make something from it, I knew I would have fun here. I decided to make something for their exhibition that would be a new product for them too. I started that morning, and three days later, I had my creation: a bangle stand that took the shape of a tree on an island. It was the most beautiful thing I had ever made – and easier than making the coconut bowls and containers I had been working on before. That patience, concentration and hard work came in handy. It also prompted me to ask, "If we only focus on making one product, then do we ever take time to explore what else can be made?"



I was at the Zero Waste Center (ZWC) in Kovalam, Kerala. They are actively promoting zero waste in the region. They host workshops for their different units, like 'Jute Bags', 'Coconut', 'Pioneer Paper Bags', and others from the community who want to learn. I had

traveled there with Sumi, and together, we hosted a workshop on paper items, like lampshades and curtains. It was challenging for me to share in the workshop, but Sumi speaks Malayalam, so we were able to manage. And also the paper items themselves were enough of a tool for communication, so language wasn't that important.

I was inspired by many aspects of ZWC's work. They create new products by finding ads in magazines and then considering how to make those products from coconut, jute, cotton cloth, or paper. ZWC also has a bio-gas plant, about two km from their office. They gather food waste from local areas and bring it to the globe-shaped plant. The gas that is released during the decomposition of the food is funneled through a pipe and runs an electricity generator. This energy alternative was working well, but local politics forced it to shut down. It made me sad, that the government never allows any positive work to happen.

Zero Waste Center-Kovalam emerged as a response to the waste created by tourism and local consumerism. The Zero Waste Kovalam campaign also worked to ban garbage incinerators and Coca-Cola factories. They produce a variety of coconut, jute, paper products and host organic fairs throughout Kerala to bring more alternatives. To learn more about the Zero Waste Center, visit their website <www.zerowastekovalam.org>.

opportunities

At a local hotel management institute, ZWC implemented a waste segregation room. They built a large container from bricks, which separates waste into several parts: plastic, paper, metal, glass, food – wet and dry, etc. That institute also has a bio-gas plant, which provides them with their energy needs. These two innovations together save the institute Rs.10,000 per month. Such simple processes of sorting and re-using waste can be an inspiration to other hotels, which I hope to share with hotels here in Udaipur.



I live in Udaipur, which is a tourist destination like Kovalam. Going there, and being a kind of 'tourist', I finally realized how much damage tourism does to the environment, to culture, our relationship to nature and each other. Only large-scale 'Traditional Arts' or 'Cultural Activities' get promoted, while all local work and small-scale cultural creations start to disappear. On Kovalam Beach, most of what is sold is made in Rajasthan, Kashmir, etc. – nothing from Kerala. Why would I come to Kerala to buy a shirt made in Rajasthan? I realized that people cater to tourists, which produces a lot more waste: plastic bottles, packaged foods, etc. This is all left behind for the local population to deal with; since the hotels and Tourism Department don't care, much less take responsibility for it.

We had a lot of discussions on Zero Waste while we were there. One point I especially liked was '1 to 111', which means that in solving one waste problem, you can create 111 jobs for people: artists, recyclers, collectors of waste, etc. Further, the raw materials become available for people to use for various work. I also realized that TV and other technologies/institutions are making us lazy, uncreative and more wasteful. The Government adds fuel to this fire and creates policies which increase waste, rather than eliminating it. We also talked about how Gandhi burned British cloth to ignite peoples' minds around freedom and shake the British empire. Could we find dynamic ways like this to shake up peoples' thinking on the 'waste' empire?

- Vishal Singh Dhaybhai, Udaipur, India
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nothing left to waste: an interview with shibu nair

What prompted your interest in Zero Waste?

When I was in school, my grandfather was a sweeper at a veterinarian hospital. He would often fall ill, and so I would go sweep and manage the waste there. At that time, I never expected to be dealing with the zero waste in the future. But I developed a kind of orientation towards keeping spaces clean and sorting things.

Later, I had a passion to go to the forest. My friends and I created a nature club outside of college, through which I learned of many environmental issues, like persistent organic pollutants (dioxins). They are toxic and challenge life on earth. 60% of world's dioxin is coming from incinerators. At that time, I found out that in Kerala, municipalities, housing complexes and hospitals were going to begin using incinerators to dispose of their waste. While Europe and the US are banning incinerators, all of these technologies are being sold to India.

We frantically sent a message across the world to gather information on incineration. Lots of organizations sent materials, including on zero waste. We told the government officials how the bad effects of incinerators would hurt tourism; he agreed and said, "But tell me what to do next." So we started talking about zero waste. That was the opening. We focused on the dynamics of waste, rather than its quantity or quality. We asked, who are the people here? what have they generated? what is their waste? and what are their alternatives?

What does zero waste mean?

Zero waste is not just handling waste. It is the basis for art, agriculture, farming... Zero waste is also not a new thing for Indians. If you look at old houses, the containers used, the way food was cooked, how clothes were stored — everything was zero waste. Somehow, the culture of consumerism and disposable products moved us away from this understanding. Of the waste in India, 60-70% is bio-degradable, and 15-20% is recyclable;



there is a market for metal, paper, glass. The toxic accounts for 10-15% of waste. The mixing of waste is the problem. If you have 100 kg of waste, 90 kg of it can be easily handled. But when the 10 kg of toxic waste is mixed in, you create 100 kg of toxic waste. By segregating the waste at the source, you can solve 90% of the problem. For the other 10%, we have to think about how we design products. If we can't recycle it, if we can't

reuse it, or if we can't compost it, we shouldn't be making it.

What are the main challenges to zero waste?

We have misconceptions about cleanliness. Companies selling toxic products give this misconception to the media, that plastic or packaged things are cleaner. We have to unlearn this. Also, our mindset is still that someone must come to our house to take our waste. This mentality always seeks slavery. It will have to change. No one else will solve your waste issue.

We think we don't need to plan; we can just go buy anything. Because we spend most of our time with work, we seek disposable products. This seriously affects our mentality — now to the point that we think of disposing of our parents! It is a dangerous situation. We don't value our relationships; they become disposable too, as everyone is looking at the utility of a person, like they are a product.

In urban areas, people are very distanced, because they want only comforts and convenience. They have toilets, a visitor's room, a dining hall, but there is no space to manage their waste. We have to bring that back. All cities must have their own system. Like in the Philippines, where the population is high and space is limited, they compost on the roadside.

How do you practice zero waste?

Zero waste is a process in your life. Whatever we do, we should think first. Before shopping, you plan so you can have a bag with you. If you speak to a local farmer, maybe you can get healthy food from him. You can avoid packaging and pesticides. To be a zero waste institution, you need a clear vision to make sure the things you use are toxic-free. If you have imagination and creativity, you can create lots of things out of waste.

The main thing is, zero waste believes in building relationships. We do not speak about technology. Only people who decide that "this is going to be the best for my community, for my locality," can work on zero waste. I feel that women's wisdom and children's curiosity push zero waste forward. They have that kind of thought, not blocked or colored by some other vision. Swapathgamis, people who have courage and wisdom to change their ways, will lead the way.

Shibu Nair is the founder of Thanal and the Zero Waste Center-Kovalam. An easygoing guy, he has a knack for explaining things well and telling great jokes! He can be reached at <shibu@thanal.org>.

learning webs : zero waste

GAIA (Global Anti-Incinerator Alliance, Global Alliance for Incineration Alternatives)

<http://no-burn.org>

This website gives links to other zero-waste sites and communities, as well as providing information on GAIA's own efforts through regional and issue-based workgroups. There are three main groups within this international alliance that focus on municipal discards, zero-waste, hazardous waste and medical waste. They also post interesting articles from all over the world about people fighting against toxic incineration.

The Ecology Center

<http://ecologycenter.org>

This site gives access to Terrain Magazine as well as a newsletter on zero waste. Other articles include bio-diesel conversions, community gardens, farmers markets, seed exchanges, teaching resources and waste reduction. An information hotline gives those who are far away help with information on a wide range of topics, from battery disposal to natural pest control.

Grassroots Recycling Network

<http://grrn.org>

GRRNs mission is to eliminate the waste of natural and human resources. The site provides inspiring suggestions about reducing waste in your own community, case studies, answers to frequently asked questions, as well as kits for local governments. GRRN suggests redesigning the way in which waste and resources move through society.

Zero Waste

www.zerowasteamerica.org

This site is a rich resource for ideas about recycling, composting, water treatment, health issues, informed consumerism (called 'avoid and substitute') and sustainable lifestyles. You'll find plenty of articles and photos on topics such as the negative effects of incineration and landfills, as well as links to other zero-waste sites and groups.

The Freecycle Network

www.freecycle.org

Over 3800 local chapters and two million members! The Freecycle Network is a way for people to find homes other than landfills for the stuff they no longer use. All items posted by members are free, legal and appropriate for all ages, from pianos to door frames. Join your local area chapter or start a new one!

This being human is a guest house.
Every morning a new arrival.

A joy, a depression, a meanness,
some momentary awareness comes
as an unexpected visitor.

Welcome and entertain them all!
Even if they're a crowd of sorrows,
who violently sweep your house
empty of its furniture,
still, treat each guest honorably.
He may be clearing you out
for some new delight.

The dark thought, the shame, the
malice,
meet them at the door laughing,
and invite them in.

Be grateful for whoever comes,
because each has been sent
as a guide from beyond.

- Rumi

an invitation

The power within *Swapathgami* comes from our own practical experiences and relationships. We invite you to share your essays, poems, cartoons, photographs, stories, quotes, films, books, websites, etc. Contact:

Shilpa or Ramawtar
c/o Shikshantar

21 Fatehpura, Udaipur (Raj) 313004 India

Phone: +91-294-245-1303

Web: www.swaraj.org/shikshantar/walkoutsnetwork.htm

Email: shilpa@swaraj.org

thanks! thanks. thanks & thanks @ thanks ^ thanks...

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