



INsights

Community Newsletter

Life is not meant to be rich in spiritual significance at some distant date, but is so at every moment, if only the mind is disburdened of illusions. It is only through a clear and tranquil mind that the true nature of spiritual infinity is grasped as something which is not yet to be, but which already has been, is, and ever will be an eternal self-fulfilment.”

“When every moment is rich with eternal significance, there is neither the lingering clinging to the dead past, nor a longing expectation for the future, but an integral living in the eternal now. It is only through such living that the spiritual infinity of the Truth can be realized in life.”

Discourses by Meher Baba, page 118

March, 2009

Vol 2, Issue 3

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Dear Reader



This issue is dedicated to the memory of Baba’s dear Arnavaz Nariman Dadachanji. Arnavaz passed to Baba on February 18, 2009. She lived in close proximity to Baba from childhood and truly dedicated her life to Him, as one can sense by reading her autobiography, Gift of God. Thank you to all who have generously shared your treasured memories of time spent with her.

Ben Leet and Lisa Greenstein, Editors
Cherri Nelson, PDF conversion

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Memories of Arnavaz

by Alisa Dreyfuss



Photo of Arnavaz by Win Coates, with kind permission from Susan White

I hardly remember the 1st time I actually met her. It seems as if I have somehow always known her. There seems no beginning to my connection to her and I know there will be no end. She was and always will be my friend, mentor and deeply loving supporter.

It was Arnavaz who always had the right words for me, as if channeled directly from Baba, when I was troubled by something in the world. I recall one year being there after having had a very rough patch with my mom and sister. I had for the 1st time stood up to a pattern or role I had been playing in my family that was no longer serving me or the

family. It was deeply troubling for me to do this and I felt confused and scared by the attempts I was making to change this pattern. Full of insecurity and guilt I arrived in India hoping to find some peace with this in Baba's Samadhi, some balm for my heart and some direction.

It was Arnavaz who gave that to me. She reached out to me, sensing I was troubled. She called me to talk to her. We spent a few hours talking and I spilled my guts about all that had transpired and how I was feeling. Arnavaz carefully listened and among the things she said there were 5 words that came through her and resonated so deeply in my heart and delivered the healing balm. They were: "You have done nothing wrong." This was exactly, little did I know, what I needed to gain the clarity and find the strength to continue on in this healing pursuit. She said many things to me that afternoon which helped me a great deal in trusting Baba and the rightness of this, but what I remember most was the way she tenderly took care of me, nurturing me in almost a motherly way. This was the summer of 2000.

This was the beginning of my deep association with her. In the years following, this type of intimacy and depth between us grew. Every year I went to India and every year Arnavaz and I would spend time talking. I shared very intimately with her over the years, about my life, my work, my kids and my relationship with Robert. She never judged, yet she gave me guidance and perspective that was always deeply helpful. I felt she saw and understood my struggles and pain from both a worldly view point and a spiritual one. She gave me perspective and support while always helping me see how to trust and surrender more fully to Baba and how His love is operating in my circumstances.

"Look at His picture, tell Him your pain and struggle, and ask Him to guide you on what to say, and then just act, leaving the results to Him."

"Not a leaf turns without His wish and will."

(Continued on next page)



Memories of Arnavaz (Cont.)

by Alisa Dreyfuss

“Just Love Him, give it all to Him and let Him handle it.”

These are messages I heard again and again from her and they have really taught and impressed on me what it means to bring Baba into your daily life and allow Him to take over, to rely on Him more fully in a personal way.

Words fall short in my ability to express my gratitude for all she gave me. Her love, friendship and guidance were a blessing to me from Baba. The way she would light up and smile when I would arrive every year and the ways she would hug me will be with me forever. I felt truly and completely loved by her and that not only helped me mature and heal personally, but also helped me grow in my love and obedience to Baba.

In June of 2007 I was given a most surprised opportunity to give something back to her. After her caregiver suddenly decided to leave in Feb 2007, Shelley was scrambling to find people to take her place. Shelley e-mailed me and asked me if I could come for 3 months, March to June, to care for her. She said I was among the 1st people Arnavaz mentioned. Touched beyond measure, but mired in Mayavic responsibility, ultimately I was only able to come for 1 of the 3 months. I regret that still, but now can see it was as Baba willed it because it gave others who needed that opportunity a chance to serve her in this way as well.

June 2007 I spent my last days in her physical presence. What blissful days they were. I had the opportunity to spend the whole month living at Meherazad and 4 out of 7 days of the week with her care-giving. The days were long — 8:30 a.m.-8:00 p.m. — with a 2 hour break in the afternoon. She was not like she had been. The old talkative Arnavaz was replaced with this quieter, sublime beauty. Sitting with her in silence while she slept or read was some of the most blissful moments I had with her. Occasionally she would talk but it was mostly to reflect on her life or give me some snippet of wisdom.

“Did I really spend all those years living and loving God?” She would marvel again and again with pure astonishment and gratitude as if this was a shocking revelation.

“Accept what he gives you — just go through it. You can go through it kicking and screaming, or you can go through it with equanimity and grace — either way you are going through it.”

I want to choose grace. I saw that reflected in her in those last years. She was so graceful and accepting in the face of what she had to endure in her illness and her limitations, so full of radiant Love you could not help but be humbled and feel the presence of the Beloved.

My favorite time of the day with her was just after lunch and rest. It was the time she would get a dry brush and massage. At first I was nervous about this part as I had no experience massaging the mandali (no training in massage either), but she quickly put me at ease in her perfect way. “I love the way you massage me — your touch

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Memories of Arnavaz (Cont.)

by Alisa Dreyfuss

feels just right," she told me. I loved touching her. She had the most beautiful skin and her energy felt so full of youth and grace. So much was transmitted between us during those massage hours.

Finally the evening was for videos. This was the most challenging, but really the most humorous part of the day. Picking a video she would like and could follow, adjusting the volume so she could hear but not too loud that it would hurt her ears, when to explain the action and when to sit quietly. It seemed you could not do it right. Spiritual training happened during these hours. Challenging, but delightful in its way. The highlight of all this was the ending with a Baba video.

The joy of watching these videos nightly with her, watching her expressions of Love for Baba, feeling the palpable love in the room, feeling my heart open to receive His presence; it was a Divine Part of my experience with her. After the Baba video, then Arti would be said in her room. Finally she'd be readied for bed. Last but not least was the goodnight hug.

These embraces will stay; I can still feel and remember vividly. I am so grateful to have been given the opportunity to spend such intimate time with her over the years but especially at the end.

Thank-you Beloved Baba for that rare gift of Love.

More Memories

by Alan and Karen Talbot

The first time I met Arnavaz was in November, 1973. I was returning to the U.S. and was hanging out with her nephew, Merwan Mistry, in Bombay. He had been my roommate at lower Meherabad (before the P.C.). He was getting his visa to come to the U.S. for his medical internship. The U.S. Embassy was near Ashiana, so we had lunch with Arnavaz and Nariman (who died in 1974). It was a splendid time.

When I sold my business in May 1977, I was able to go to India for many weeks before law school began. This also occurred in the summer of 1978. For some reason, Arnavaz and I connected immediately. After the usual greetings at Meherazad, she and I would gravitate to the end of the veranda. Then Arnavaz and I would spend one or more hours together. I enjoyed enumerable Baba stories and her sage advice regarding the Baba life. In fact, on at least two occasions, Eruch came from Mandali Hall to request my presence there. I was the only one not in Mandali Hall.

Alan Talbot



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More Memories (Cont.)

by Alan and Karen Talbot

My sweetest memories revolve around watching Arnavaz with her great nieces, and her great nephew, Jamshed. She really loved being with young people and with her family members. In December 2007, she was lying in her bed and had her two great nieces, Gulruhk and Meher, by her side. Meher was singing beautifully. Arnavaz's hand was gently holding onto each girl, and her face was beaming with Baba's Love. In January 2009, I saw her hugging her great nieces and her nephew. The love flowing between them was measurable and could be felt in the room.

In late December 2008, and early January 2009, Arnavaz radiated Baba's love for all those who had the opportunity to visit with her. Many of us knew that when we said our final goodbyes that we would not be seeing her again. She gave each of us a love token of His Beauty.

Karen Talbot

Love in Action

by Scott Makeig

Love in action. In the early 70s, I believe, Arnavaz and I happened to be at the samadhi on the day after the Amartithi program, with nearly no one else nearby. As we began to walk back toward the Pilgrim Center, a swirling dust devil windstorm kicked up and a nearby tall wooden pole that had held up the Amartithi pandal began swinging around wildly. Without thinking, I bolted back to the shelter of the samadhi porch. When I turned around, I saw Arnavaz standing quietly in the open where she had been. A rueful lesson about poise struck me -- Why had I thoughtlessly left my companion in the emergency? Its impact deepened when, with a loving smile, she explained that Baba had told them that when they faced a crisis they should remain calm and remember Him.

Remembrance of a Pilgrim

by Ellen Van Allen

When Arnavaz went to Baba all of those working on the play were told the bus was going to Meherazad and most of us took the opportunity to go to say our goodbyes there. As we rode on the bus my thoughts would wander, then return to Arnavaz. Every time I thought of her I would see beauty in whatever was around us, even in the middle of Ahmednager. It was like seeing with a different set of eyes. When we arrived Arnavaz was laid out in Mandali Hall looking beautiful and (to my eyes) very strong, with offerings of flowers all around her, and Baba's Birthday decorations making the room even more lovely than usual. I mentioned my experience on the way over to Kacy and she said "That was very appropriate because Arnavaz was Baba's beauty."



OK Baba, OK

by Louise Barrie

For two years in a row, '07 and '08, I had the good fortune to spend a month with Arnavaz, as a caregiver. I was there from 8:30 a.m. until 8 p.m., with a midday break.

When I would first arrive in her room she would be dressed, teeth brushed, etc., but she would be dozing, having gone back to sleep. When the bell would ring for Arti, I would gently wake her and she would put her hands together for Arti. She faced a beautiful photo of Baba on the wall. I faced Baba's room where the women were saying Arti. After the prayers, I handed her a photo of Baba (kept at her bedside) with also a photo of Mehera put into the same frame. This she would kiss and hold to her heart, sometimes for a long time.

Then, she would greet me — so lovingly. We would inquire of each other, how we had slept. One day I said to her, "Everyday I ask you how you've slept. You always say you've slept well, no matter what." She said, "It's better to be positive."

Then we would go through the day. She would take her meals on the verandah, just outside her bedroom door. I would have tea and chapatis with her and we would chat. She especially loved the garden during the monsoon. For me, it was unquestionably paradise. The atmosphere in Meherazad vibrated with the human side of Baba's divinity, with love.

Many times she said to me, "Repeat His name so that it becomes like breathing." One day I asked about her doing it. She said, "It happens automatically for me now..... Oh! I was taking His name." In her last days, I heard that sometimes when she would come out of a light coma, she would be saying His name.

At one point she told me that Baba had said, "Leave tomorrow in My hands." And also, "Endure what cannot be endured." Arnavaz said to me many times, "Just accept what He gives and deal with it." (with the emphasis on the 'deal with it'.) She said, "Whatever comes your way, say, OK, Baba, OK. Whatever You want, OK." I said, "So that's your mantra, OK Baba." Arnavaz: "Yes". She said, "We have to pass through everything. Life is always up and down.... just go through the day, one thing at a time."

One day I said to her, "You remind me of Baba in the way that you are so loving to the pilgrims when they come, and I know sometimes you don't feel well. But when they come in, you're so loving and welcoming. You make them feel good." Arnavaz said, "It's my duty to do this." Then, she said, "Thank you, thank you."

In being with Arnavaz, Baba has shown me what surrenderance looks like and also love. Surrenderance in the way she went through her life, through her day, and love in the way she treated others.

My last night with her, I asked her, "What are your days like for you, what's it like for you?" She replied, "I just take it as it comes." Then I asked, "Do you feel His presence?" She looked into my eyes and said, "I feel it all the time...We (as she pointed to me and herself) are just temporary, but He is always there. Forever."



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Poet's Corner

For Arnavaz
adapted from Hafiz

by Louise Barrie

This house hath been a fairy's dwelling place,
With love beaming and surrendered from head to feet
Was she who stayed with us for a space,
Then, as was meet,
Toward her immortal journey went her ways.

So wise was she, and the beauty of a flower,
Body old, yet still her youth with Him could be.
More than the stars Your love hath all power.
Glimmering in Your hands a beauteous meteor shower.
And thus she went in her appointed hour.

Your love it was that called her and she went.
In Meherazad we had lived with her,
Knowing the errand on which she was bent-
A traveler -
To sojourn for a while, then strike her tent.
How sweet it was on many a summer day
On the outside verandah by the garden
To be with her, with just this and that to say.
And all the while in her heart, she was running to Him away.

Why would we blame her for leaving us so?
She was called by the King of Love and His Queen
Back to her hidden people she must go,
Behind the screen
One day, we'll see them all again, this much we know.



Meher Baba Center of Northern California

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Announcements

Center Library Note:

Would you like to be a “patron”? We have a library for your reading pleasure and convenience. Our library is housed upstairs in a book case at the MBCNC Center on Stockton Street. We have had 14 borrowers over the past year. You may access a list of the holdings at the web page meherbabameherbaba.org; look for library, and open the book or video pdf files. When you visit the Center remember to check out the library books. We would also like donations. For a list of books we need, see the section at the end of the library holdings. Contact the Newsletter about donations.

Meditation hour:

The center will be open on Tuesday evenings, 7pm – 8pm for silent meditation.

The Trust

All who wish to share in the commitment laid down by Meher Baba through the Trust should contact Jack Mormon, ambkj@aol.com

Meher Baba Information

For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail info@MeherBabaInformation.org or write to:

P.O. Box 1101,
Berkeley, CA 94701.

<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>

Meher Baba Center of Northern California
6923 Stockton Avenue
El Cerrito, California 94530
(510) 525-4779

Meher Baba Center of Northern CA website

Meeting schedules can be downloaded in pdf form from website (above)

The center is open for drop-in and book store most Saturdays 1 p.m.–4 p.m.
(check [website](#) for details)

Directions to our Center:

From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit. Exit east, toward the hills. Cross San Pablo Avenue. Go under the BART train tracks, and less than a block after the tracks, turn left on Richmond Avenue. Head north on Richmond Avenue until Stockton Avenue (the first stop light), turn right on Stockton. About two blocks onward, the Center is located on the left side of the street. Address on previous page.

More Local Meetings (Continued on next page)



Meher Baba Center of Northern California

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Announcements (cont.)

More Local Meetings

Lafayette – Sunday Afternoons

Monthly meeting at the home of Kirk and Marlene Allen.

Please call to confirm. (925) 284-4066

Sacramento – Several Gatherings Each Month

Times and locations vary.

Contact Marilyn Buehler (916) 812-9496 info@premsay.com

See more information on the [website](#).

Los Gatos – Sunday Evenings

At the home of Clint Snyder

Call (408) 395-6865

Contact for messages to newsletterwallas: meherbabacenter@gmail.com

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