

All religions of the world proclaim that there is but one God, the Father of all in creation.

I am that Father.

I have come to remind all people that they should live on earth as the children of the one Father until My Grace awakens them to the realization that they are all one without a second, and that all divisions and conflict and hatred are but a shadow-play of their own ignorance.

Although all are My children, they ignore the simplicity and beauty of this Truth by indulging in hatreds, conflicts and wars that divide them in enmity, instead of living as one family in their Father's house. Even amongst you who love Me and accept Me for what I am, there is sometimes lack of understanding of one another's hearts.

Patience have I suffered these things in silence for all My children. It is time that they become aware of the presence of their Father in their midst and of their responsibility towards Him and themselves. I shall break My Silence, and, with My Word of words, arouse My children to realize in their lives, the indivisible Existence which is GOD.

~ Meher Baba

from *My Dear Children*, quoted in *The Awakener*, Vol. 9, pg.33

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Vol. 6, Issue 2



Meher Baba Center of Northern California

# INsights

Community Newsletter

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Newsletter wallas:

Lisa Greenstein, Doug Ross, Adrienne Shamszad, Matthew Talbot, Alan Talbot & Karen Talbot

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## Dear Reader

In this issue:

Cindy Lowe's recent concert is reviewed by Jess Maron, Naosherwan is interviewed by Matthew Talbot, and the April Forgiveness Seminar is reviewed by those who attended.

Sunday, June 16, is the Annual General Meeting at 1 pm. All voting members are encouraged to attend as we will elect a new Board of Directors. We will also review the past year, pass a new budget, and select a new Nominating Committee.

The slate of candidates and the AGM announcement was recently emailed to the membership elist. If you feel that you are a voting member and did not receive the email, please reply and request to be added.

All previous issues of the newsletter are available to read at

[www.meherbabameherbaba.org](http://www.meherbabameherbaba.org)

Jai Baba!

~Lisa Greenstein

## Cindy Lowe and Friends in Concert

By Jess Maron

People came from all over the Bay Area to a full house at the Meher Baba Center of Northern California to hear Cindy Lowe, who called her band, "The Old Geezers and the Whipper Snapper". Cindy shared the stage with lead vocalist Adrienne Shamszad, backup singers Alexandra



Cons and Winifred Kershaw, percussionist Kappé Rousseau, and bassist Keith Gunn. Also, much thanks to Tom Brustman for setup and flawlessly controlling the soundboard.

The room was filled with lots of love and smiling faces as Cindy led us through an intimate path with her, Mehera, Mani, and, of course, Beloved Baba. Cindy and Adrienne's mass public appeal touched generations stretching from the young at heart to other whippersnappers filling the Center. The audience demanded an encore. Cindy, accompanied by her talented band, more than delivered.

We're looking forward to hosting more events like this in the future and welcome your suggestions on how your Center can best be utilized. Please also consider making a donation to help keep this facility maintained, not only for our existing community, but also for new people yet to come to Baba.

[www.meherbabameherbaba.org](http://www.meherbabameherbaba.org)

editors note: Thanks to Jess we now have a PayPal link on the finance page of our website!

## Naosherwan Nalavala interview

Interviewed by Matthew Talbot

### 1. Why did you decide to create GLOW Journal?

The concept of a Meher Baba journal came about in 1965 when the Dehra Dun Centre asked me to create a magazine commemorating Meher Baba's 1953 stay in Dehra Dun. It was published under the title of THE SPARK.

Encouraged by the success of the publication, under instructions from Meher Baba Himself, it was decided to launch a quarterly magazine, titled THE GLOW (a name selected by Meher Baba from a choice of 3 names). In the later years, the title was changed to GLOW INTERNATIONAL. This is the 47th year of publication.

### 2. How do you select the stories to go into GLOW Magazine?

Meher Baba instructed Eruch Jessawala, Adi K. Irani and Mani S. Irani to assist THE GLOW with discourses, Baba stories and photographs. When I was staying at Meherazad in 1969, Eruch opened up the Meherazad archives for me to record material. I did. And so did Adi K. Irani. He not only gave me all his diaries to transcribe, but also Chanji's diaries and letters. I had them copied over a 3-year period and returned them to the Trust. Over a period of time, hundreds of Baba lovers sent in articles, features and their stories of meeting the Beloved. And they continue to do so.

### 3. How has GLOW Magazine changed from its inception decades ago to today?

In the early years, we focused on Baba stories, Baba events and narrations of Darshan programs. Today, we largely focus on Meher Baba's words and Discourses, many of them never before published.

### 4. If people want to provide content for GLOW Magazine, how would they go about doing that?

They would write to us, suggesting a theme or subject. If it was a subject with a universal appeal, we would encourage the writer to send it to us as a GLOW exclusive. Each article goes through a very careful editing process.

### 5. Can you take us through the standard process for editing and organizing an issue of GLOW Magazine?

There are two ways for us to obtain features for THE GLOW: we come up with a subject and request a writer to work on a feature, with an emphasis on Baba's words, and, we receive articles that are edited and sometimes sent back to the author for revisions, additions, deletions. For photographs, we rely heavily on a vast storehouse of photographs and slides (several thousand) in Beloved Archives. Once the articles are edited, we position those that are based on Baba's words towards the front of the journal and those that are related to events or reports of centre activities, book and music reviews towards the back of the journal. The contents are sent to a long-time professional designer in Wisconsin and the journal is then printed at Sheriar Press in Myrtle Beach.

### 6. Why did you originally create the Beloved Archives?

The primary purpose of Beloved Archives is to carefully restore and preserve all material associated with the life, work and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba and, more importantly, to make all this material accessible to seekers worldwide.

**Beloved Archives: The Meher Baba Archival Foundation** is a 501 ( c ) 3 non-profit, tax-exempt foundation registered in the United States. Although many of the items in the collection were originally given to my family by Meher Baba and His close disciples, these items are now housed in Beloved Archives in Hamilton, New Jersey. More than anything else, we are anxious to preserve and share the material that Meher Baba has entrusted to us. While it is vital to carefully preserve material on the life and work of the Avatar, we feel it is equally important to share the material with seekers and lovers of God. And that is the mandate of Beloved Archives. I am often asked, did Meher Baba Himself say anything to you about sharing? Yes, in May 1965 when I met Meher Baba at Guruprasad in Poona, He gave me the mandate to tell the world that He is God in human form. In the later years He gave me specific instructions about disseminating His message through GLOW INTERNATIONAL. This mandate He sealed by presenting me a medallion with the Mastery in Servitude symbol. I understood Meher Baba's intent to have me share His Message of love, truth and unity amongst peoples of all faiths. Beloved Archives is a non-denominational archive for seekers everywhere.

### 7. How did Beloved Archives start?

Beloved Archives essentially was set into motion when my parents, Keki and Freiny Nalavala, first met Meher Baba in the 1940's. Both my father and mother had an innate sense of preserving every piece of paper, every object that Meher Baba touched, every piece of

correspondence, and all books, discourses and photographs. Consequently, Beloved Archives is a collection of saved and preserved material on the life and work of Meher Baba spanning over 60 years.

## 8. What do you have at Beloved Archives?

Apart from the collection of the Nalavala family, which itself is fairly extensive, Beloved Archives has materials from several collections: Chanji, Gulmai Irani, Adi K. Irani, Adi S. Irani, Mani S. Irani, Eruch Jessawala, Francis Brabazon, Kishan Singh, Col. M. S. Irani, Murshida Ivy Duce, Kitty Davy, Elizabeth Patterson, Bili Eaton, Adele Wolkin, Enid Corfe, Delia de Leon, Ganna Walska, Mercedes de Costa, Meredith Starr (we have his photo album), Graham Phelps Stokes (we have his archival collection), Rom Landau (we have his archival collection), to name a few. Beloved Archives also has a large collection of artifacts, including the corrected copy of Meher Baba's Master's Prayer and a lock of Babajan's hair.

The collection has one-of-a-kind material, specially the material inherited from Col. M. S. Irani, a critic of Meher Baba, who collected an enormous amount of material in its original format in order to launch scurrilous attacks on Meher Baba. These materials ended up in the hands of my mother's maternal uncle, Major Sohrab Bamji, also a critic of Meher Baba, who eventually handed it all to us. It is an incredible record of Meher Baba's life, ironically collected and preserved by the Avatar's critics.

Over the years letters, diaries and print materials were given to Beloved Archives with the understanding that we would share this material with seekers everywhere. Over a 47-year period, Beloved Archives has sincerely and diligently disseminated this material through the Meher Baba journal, GLOW INTERNATIONAL, and several books published over the years. For example, the book *THE ANSWER: Conversations with Meher Baba*, published by Beloved Archives, is a collection of questions and answers preserved in the diaries of Chanji, Meher Baba's secretary in the 1930's and early 1940's. While Beloved Archives has been the publisher of Meher Baba's words, the copyright of the Avatar's words has always rested with the Avatar Meher Baba Perpetual Public Charitable Trust in India as decreed in Meher Baba's Will.

Beloved Archives is divided into five parts: **print material, photographs, tapes, films** and **artifacts**. The documents have been preserved year-wise and all the documents have been digitized.

As for photographs, we preserve a rare collection, including archival photographs of places associated with Meher Baba going back to 1894, the year of the Avatar's birth. These photographs were taken by Raja Deen Dayal, India's first Indian photographer. Beloved Archives also has a collection of photographs of Meher Baba that had deteriorated completely (you could not see the Master in the photographs). They have since been restored at considerable cost one-photograph-at-a-time to their original "look" by a Romanian restorer in New York.

The artifacts in the Beloved Archives collection are primarily from Meher Baba's mandali and closest disciples: Mehera, Mani, Naja, Khorshed, Amavaz Dadachanji, Gaimai Jessawala and Padri. Again, some of the artifacts were given personally by Meher Baba himself to the Nalavala family.

All artifacts are on display at Beloved Archives in New Jersey, including two chairs that Meher Baba sat on. The tape collection is of the mandali, people who have met Meher Baba, and the recordings of Murshida Ivy Duce. The film collection includes all the films that have been distributed by various sources around the world and a few from private collections. We now have hundreds of tapes transferred as MP3s and over 200 films. Seekers come to the House of the Beloved to hear the mandali share their stories and watch Baba films.

The Beloved Archives collection continues to grow each day. In 2009, Beloved Archives obtained the Meher Baba segment of the archive of the opera singer Ganna Walska, who met Meher Baba in 1932. Earlier the Archives obtained the collection of Mercedes de Costa, a Hollywood celebrity who met Meher Baba in the same year. Recently, the Foundation was very fortunate to receive the entire collection of original slides taken both at the East-West Gathering and at Myrtle Beach in 1958 by an American Baba lover. The slides have since being cleaned and restored by experts at Sufism Reoriented. In 2009, we obtained the entire collection of Graham Phelps Stokes and Rom Landau; all the material collected has been scanned and is available for seekers to review at Beloved Archives.

## 9. What is your long term plan for Beloved Archives?

With limited funds, Beloved Archives has taken the necessary first step in preservation by scanning all documents and photographs. This is an enormous job and is ongoing. At the same time, all our tapes are being digitized and some are being transcribed (with the possibility of publication in the future). Many of the one-of-a-kind photographs have been completely restored.

As funds become available through tax-deductible donations, Beloved Archives will continue with this massive restoration and preservation project.

Beloved Archives has had some preliminary advice on storage, treatment and preservation. All of Meher Baba's artifacts like sadras, sandals, coats and other garments have been expertly preserved by a trained Baba lover, who has learned preservation techniques from the experts at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York. As for Meher Baba's hair and other personal artifacts, mainly from the 1920's, Murshida Ivy Duce had them preserved in blown glass in 1978. They are preserved at Beloved Archives.

When I was a teenager I had a dream: I wished that we could record each day of Meher Baba's life. Soon after Beloved Baba dropped his body, my dream became a reality; I had access to the diaries of disciples who recorded their lives with Meher Baba (if they were in his presence).

Consequently, Beloved Archives has a near daily record of Meher Baba's life from 1921 through 1969.

The initial plan for Beloved Archives has been fulfilled in 2011 with the purchase of the House of the Beloved in Hamilton, New Jersey. We have now been able to put all material in one place, in a physical building where volunteers can conduct inventory, catalogue, create records on databases, duplicate certain materials for wider dissemination, conduct long-term conservation and treatment and eventually create an environmentally sound atmosphere for people to come in and do research on the life and times of Meher Baba. It is a unique place to study the Advent of Avatar Meher Baba. Our long term plan is to continue to extensively feature material from Beloved Archives in GLOW INTERNATIONAL. In addition, four books of archive-oriented unpublished material are now in various stages of production.

We are also in the process of bringing into the fold a new generation of Baba lovers who will know and understand the purpose of preservation and, most importantly, learn to share and spread the Message of Avatar Meher Baba. Beloved Archives is the perfect vehicle to do so.

## 10. What can people expect if they take one of the Three Day Intensives?

Last year, we held the first of a series of Intensives, *SECRETS OF THE SPIRITUAL PATH* by Dr. Ward Parks. The intensive focused on the "Three Perennial Paths to God" as recognized in most of the world's great spiritual traditions and explained in considerable detail by Avatar Meher Baba Himself. These three pathways, described in the Hindu tradition, are the Path of Action, or Karma Marg; the Path of Knowledge, or Jnan Marg; and the Path of Devotion, or Bhakti Marg.

Meher Baba lays out a penetrating blueprint of these paths or "margs" in His Discourses. In Hindu tradition one finds developed treatment in the Bhagavad Gita. Yet the topic of the three paths is indeed applicable to all of the world's great religions and spiritual traditions; it offers one important avenue for bringing them into interrelation and dialogue, as Meher Baba, Avatar of the Age, draws them together as "beads on a string."

In April this year, Dr. Parks conducted a Three Day Intensive, *UNDERSTANDING INFINITE INTELLIGENCE*. Meher Baba's Infinite Intelligence delves into the depths of esoteric truths never before revealed to humankind. The book's theme is an ageless one: God as Infinite Intelligence.

The Intensive focused on major cosmological ideas as they appear for the first time in Infinite Intelligence. Key concepts discussed at the Intensive included: the journey of the soul; the three spheres (gross, subtle, and fine) in their relation to the three waking states (of ordinary wakefulness, dream, and sound sleep); the role of Ishwar as Creator-Preserver-Destroyer; and the process of sanskara-removal through the four yogas (karma, dnyan, raj, and bhakti).

We are now planning a series of 7-hour Intensives on the LESSONS FROM THE NEW LIFE.

**11. How has the local community reacted to the opening of the Beloved Archives?**

The Meher Baba community throughout the United States and in India, England and Australia have welcomed Beloved Archives as a repository of material on the life, work and teachings of Avatar Meher Baba. An hour away from New York City, Beloved Archives opens up a whole new spiritual world that one can call its own.

**12. How can people help support GLOW Magazine or Beloved Archives?**

GLOW INTERNATIONAL is a unique publication, in essence founded by the Avatar Himself. We would like all those who love Meher Baba to subscribe to it and support it. Beloved Archives needs considerable assistance with funding. We are a non-profit tax-exempt foundation and all donations go towards preservation of material related to Meher Baba's life, work and teachings. Initially, before the purchase of the House of the Beloved, we received funds towards the purchase. Since then donations have slowed down. In order for us to sustain ourselves over a period of time, we would need to set up an endowment and the means to make Beloved Archives self-sustaining.

For Beloved Archives to be sustained for years to come, it is important for it to be financially viable. Towards that end, friends of the Foundation will need to continue to make contributions to keep it alive and well. We are now in the process of setting up a Team of Companions, a global advisory group to assist with the various aspects of the Archives.

All are welcome to contact us at mail to: meherbaba@aol.com. Donors are welcome to contact us for advice on sustaining Beloved Archives.

**Forgiveness Seminar Review**

The Seminar was facilitated by Soleil Brigham & Laurent Weichberger with Dick Anthony at the home of Karen & Alan Talbot April 27th & 28th, 2013 (see previous issue for description)

To me, the most remarkable thing about the workshop was the high degree of trust that participants showed one another. The result was a high degree of honest sharing and open vulnerability. That, in turn, led to expressions of caring and love seldom seen. Talking about forgiveness turned out to be a good vehicle for getting the group to come together. The guidelines of sticking to I-statements and avoiding giving advice worked well for the most part. Laurent did a good job facilitating by striking a balance between guidance and flexibility. We got offtrack into doing therapy at one point, but Laurent finally pulled us back. I found myself wishing at times he would remind us to use I-statements, but group members sometimes filled in. I was heartened by the level of loving and genuine communication among the people who came.

Jai Baba, Billy Baum ~~~~~

This workshop was enlivening and wonderful! It was filled with Baba's love and really helped to bring me out of some foggy confusion and back into a light, clear and open space! I was able to release a particular issue I wanted support with, and I feel much more confident and capable to approach that particular relationship with forgiveness. Many many thanks to those who organized this event!

Avatar Meher Baba Ki Jai! Sean Twohig  
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I was so moved by it all. I have never participated in anything quite that deeply personal with this community, that turned out that connective and healing in the end. Good stuff. There really is something to this work that is in line with what Baba says about inner links of his lovers. I saw that so clearly this weekend. The thing that would have made it better for me was what I had suggested and we wound up doing, which was small break out groups mixed in with large group sharing. More of that would have allowed the material to be taken deeper and would have made more effective use of the time. The main highlight for me was seeing, hearing and witnessing people opening more deeply to the group. Revealing truth and shame. So powerful in linking all our hearts and revealing each of our essences more. I haven't ever felt more connected on a heart level to this group. Really potent opportunities for us as a community. I hope that Laurent and Soleil will do a few more such gatherings before they likely move to Ashland in Aug. I would be happy to be involved with coordinating such groups.

Jai Beloved Baba, Alisa Genovese  
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My experience of the forgiveness seminar weekend was that it provided opportunities that not only satisfied and nourished my specific needs to share with my fellow, local Baba family on this important subject, but it also provided different opportunities for other participants with quite different needs. I also noticed that there was a great deal of listening and mutual understanding expressed by the participants along with some added contention that served to clarify the themes and points people wished to raise.

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I liked the format. I liked Laurent's ability to maintain the structure and the format. It did seem as if some individuals got more time and others got less. There was a sense that some people could go on and on and others were not allowed. This felt sense did not for me destroy the take away feeling I had at the end of two days that the experience was worthwhile and helped to kind of loosen old hardened layers of resentment. I noted that some participants who were leaders in the group shared more generically than personally. I felt for a couple of days afterwards a heightened mood and a deeper sense of empathy for all the participants - even those I did not resonate with in terms of the content of their shares. I felt that another workshop before Laurent and Soleil leave the area is necessary. Taking a topic such as going deeper into conflicts (hidden strata) could begin to be loosened more. The idea of a committed group with clear ground rules and participation commitment really appeals to me. I spoke to one other person afterwards who felt strongly that starting a committed group using this special sort of sanctified model gotten from Don, passed down through Laurent, is a good idea. Lastly the importance of everyone's involvement being sort of protected from retaliation - overt or subtle - be clearly emphasized, not necessarily kept anonymous as in a 12 step meeting, but show held safe within the guidelines of non - violent sharing. I would like to thank Laurent, Dick, Jennifer et al for their work in making this event happen.

Deborah Tyler

I really enjoyed the workshop. It was very valuable to have everyone's contribution. Also I really appreciated Laurent's and Soleil's facilitation. All in all, a most Baba-full weekend.

Fred White

It was a complicated group with deep material. The upshot for me was: I found it emotionally engaging and satisfying... and also draining. The exhaustion was not bad and speaks to the depth of the experience. I liked the "messiness," the divergence of needs and experiences, for the most part. It was a very large group and difficult to run, manage and otherwise maintain a semblance of control or focus with so many people. Our solution to the groups size for one feedback session (to disperse into 3 smaller groups) meant we all missed two-thirds of that experience. That was not a successful solution for me. The average age of the group's members was medicare-gray and many participants have been traveling down the Beloved's road together for 30 or 40 years. Therefore, some members had specific agendas concerning that journey and their individual relationship with this Baba group. The weekend was an attempt at "Housecleaning Revelations at the Door of Forgiveness." Others may have had different, more personal, agendas. This is to say... it was a start, or a middle, or a something in this group's process. There is, of course, more to share, reveal, expose, enjoy and dance to. The most important summary I left with was that I felt closer to all the members of the group and knew them a little more deeply by the end of the weekend. I felt very appreciative of Laurent, Soleil, and Dick's good work, time and effort in the preparation and running of the weekend. My vote would be to continue the process with another weekend in 3 or 4 months. The Community building monthly group at the center will also continue this work. I invite more of our Beloved's community to join this dance, knowing we all have our experiences of participation, "good and bad." Our need to connect and support each other emerged time and again. If our focus remains on Avatar Meher Baba with the heart of forgiveness, I believe we'll grow more, deepen more, and connect more together.

Douglas Anderson

For me it was not so much about forgiveness as it was about hearing others and being heard. Not so much about forgiveness as Love. We began the meeting by a reminder and demonstration that Baba's sign for Love and Forgiveness are the same. Baba would draw his hands, semi clenched as if holding something up from his stomach and at chest high open his hands push and release what he was holding." You are forgiven, I love you" I need more of it and think we all would like and need more Love and Forgiveness. I hope this is the beginning of a trend. I need less anonymity. I would like to know others in the Baba community and would like to be known by them at a deeper level than is common place. My feeling is there were some participants who never got to address their needs regarding forgiveness So lets do it again.

Harold Jamison

What I liked about the workshop was that it was a safe place where I was able to speak truthfully from the heart. I felt that what I said was received by the others respectfully. Everyone was given the opportunity to share their feelings on whatever topic was brought up by the facilitators. They did an excellent job of guiding the group, asking thought provoking questions, listening attentively, sharing their own experiences of forgiveness, and keeping us on topic and on time. Their warmth, sensitivity and gentle sense of humor comforted me as I explored my experiences and attitudes toward forgiveness. For me the highlights of the workshop were the insights I gained and memories that surfaced, showing me where forgiveness is needed in my life. I also liked the ending when we sat in silence for 15 minutes. The only thing that could have improved the workshop for me would have been to have a few days between Session I and Session II. I needed time to digest all that transpired on the first day before heading into day 2. For me it was a valuable experience. I would definitely do it again, and hope Laurent and Soleil will consider giving one more workshop before they relocate.

The forgiveness seminar was very well constructed. Everyone had a chance to speak openly. There were good feelings all around. The monitors did a fine job. I enjoyed the separate session on Sunday. We had a good laugh in the midst of a serious topic. Well done.

JB alan (Talbot)

The workshop was perfect. Couldn't have asked for better. Thought Laurent and his fiancé did a great job of leading the meeting. I loved the atmosphere created by the people who came and sat in a circle and do believe they represented the heart of many wonderful and sympathetic feelings to hold the space for all of us. I didn't think I had any issues about forgiveness but was attending the workshop since I was curious. Wasn't long into the meeting before a picture of my former boss came zooming into my mind. I couldn't even pray for her because the feelings were so intense and made any thoughts useless to control the feelings. In the workshop I decided to go deeper into the feelings and images about her and knew I would have a supportive and respectful listening. In the small workshop that is what happened and I got such good feedback, that while I know I still have to do the prayer work, I no longer feel overwhelmed and realize that the origins of these feelings go way back in time to trauma that she suffered and that I am not the specific object of these belittling feelings. This past weekend when I met with a friend who had recently had her as boss, although our conversation presented the temptation to belittle the boss, I was able to share that tearing her down and enjoying taking her down, would only make the issue worse and make us have to backtrack all over and begin the issue of forgiveness all over again. My viewpoint was well received and I believe the boss has another person praying for her as well.

Janice Magrath

What I liked: I liked the topic. I liked that people were open and shared their personal experiences. I liked the setting and the weather and the food. Even though it was a big group, I liked the feeling when we were all together. However, I also liked the smaller groups and that felt good too. I really get a lot out of people sharing their experiences. What could have made it better for me: In the beginning there were a few ground rules that I thought were very good. We were asked to speak with "I" not "We". And, we were asked to not comment on someone's share without their permission. The facilitators did not enforce these ground rules and that didn't work for me. It would have been much better for me if they had. Why announce ground rules and then ignore them? It made me feel unsafe and led to sharing that was sometimes difficult to listen to. Also if the ground rules weren't supposed to apply to the facilitators, I feel it would have been good to state that. However, it seems they should apply to all.

With a chorus of wild turkeys for background music, the Forgiveness Workshop led by Laurent Weichberger formed a warm circle of listeners and speakers. Some of us described dreadful struggles, in which no resolution seemed possible. Others told of the marvel of being freed of resentment for years of suffering, by finding forgiveness in one's heart. Mani's description of Baba's gestures for love and forgiveness took on more and more meaning as we all made the gestures ourselves. On the second day, we formed smaller circles- each circle with its own atmosphere- and reached farther into our own lives to tell stories. The work Laurent began with us has the chance to progress, as quite a few attendees are interested in meeting with him again before he leaves the Bay area. By His grace, I hope to see this heart-flooding work continue.

In the forgiveness workshop, I appreciated the light touch taken by Laurant and Soliel and Dick. There was no pressure to 'disclose', although the space for that was there. Something that did not work for me about the sharing was the going around in the circle, in a certain order, to speak. I prefer to speak when I am inspired to do so, or not. I understand that it's difficult to navigate this with a large group, yet I think a better solution must be there.

I liked Dick's selection about "forbearance", in loving and serving the world, even as the world so often opposes one, a kind of ongoing forgiveness.

I also appreciated breaking up into small groups, and being given a choice, as each group had a different focus.

I'm aware that many of us have a long history and there is a quality of love already in place, regardless of surface conflicts. I came away with this feeling of connection with people. It reminds me that Baba said in His last message on the alphabet board, that now is the time for us to find Him by cultivating the inner links between each other.

Louise Barrie

When the workshop was announced, I thought I would go because I thought it would be useful in my work as a psychotherapist. When the day arrived, I found myself in an open, curious frame of mind with the slightest bit of apprehension about the potential for old resentments in the BABA family, surfacing. When we arrived at the Talbot's I was warmed by the presence of so many people I have come to know through the Companions in Conversation and the Community Strengthening meetings. The strength of the heart connections I felt, surprised me. There were also a number of people I had not met before and a few, I'd had only brief contact with. After Laurent and Soliel and Dick gave an introduction to the topic, we were asked to go around and say something about why we had come. I began with the words, "I am mad at BABA". Just as I was about to complete the sentence, I paused, realizing that what I thought I was angry about, ( so much suffering in the world) wasn't, actually, right. In fact, I didn't know why I was angry. During the 2 hour lunch break, I felt a very strong current of love circulating between people. Several conversations were taking place and some people were sharing in a deep way. Later that evening, exhausted from the long, intense day, I found myself doubting and backing away from the feeling of love and connection. I felt uneasy--apprehensive that the harmony I felt would be upset, as we continued the process. On Sunday, when I woke up, it was clear to me that I was going to share a deeply painful personal situation with the group--a situation I had felt was supposed to be worked on privately, between Baba and me. The format for the day, was to break into small groups, each with a specific task. I went to the one for people wanting to work on personal issues. The experience was deeply moving. Hearing others' pain and conflict and pouring out my heart felt deeply cleansing. Baba had provided a nest of the tenderest compassion to lay down my pain. When we came back together in the large group to share our experiences, I realized my anger at Baba was gone. At the time, I didn't understand why, although I knew that sharing my pain had been essential. Upon reflection, I see that I had gotten tied up in a convoluted knot. I thought that I was supposed to bear my pain alone, with Baba. I couldn't see the hidden pride I had about shouldering my pain alone--nor could I feel the shame about the situation I was in. It wasn't until I "let go" that I could see how tightly I had been holding onto my pain. When I "gave" my pain to the group...when the floodgates burst, I felt washed clean by the compassion shining in the faces around me. This experience has opened up a desire to explore ways that we might be able to help each other surrender whatever it is that keeps us separate from Baba.

Ellen Peskin Baum

Soleil and I were invited to facilitate a seminar that we have titled Forgiveness with the Christ-Avatar, or sometimes Forgiveness with Meher Baba. The previous seminars had been held in Sacramento, Los Angeles, Chicago, and Myrtle Beach. All the previous seminars had been less than two days duration. With the extra day, we were able to expand quite a bit the offerings which we shared on the agenda handed out on Saturday morning. It was wonderful to see so many Baba sisters and brothers attend, as we sat in a circle in the back yard of Karen and Alan Talbot's home in Moraga. I counted 11 women and 11 men, including Soliel and myself. Because of the long standing work of Dick Anthony in this community, we had invited him as a co-facilitator. The days were scheduled to have two, two hour sessions each day, so four sessions total. This pattern of seminar work was the same that Don Stevens instructed me to use and Don and I had traveled around the world using this format, especially for the Meher Baba's Word & His Three Bridges seminar. This forgiveness work was the last work Don asked me to do before he passed away. He particularly asked me to return to a Baba group that was having trouble between the Board of Directors and some of the members, and so I did go there, and it was an amazing seminar. This seminar in Moraga afforded us plenty of time to explore issues around forgiveness in light of Meher Baba's wisdom. I shared firstly some ground rules to help us all feel safe in our sharing together, and I had learned some of the rules from Baba and Don, and some are just common sense. I also asked some questions, a sort of seeding of the seminar, about what I have come to call the Forgiveness Directions: what does it mean to forgive, how do we forgive another, how do we ask forgiveness, how do we forgive ourselves, what about forgiving Baba (or God) or asking Baba for forgiveness, etc. These questions were not intended to be answered in real time, but to be allowed to sprout. I was amazed at how quickly this seminar got rolling. After a few stories from Soliel and myself, the group jumped right in. Before long we were moving through very tender material coming from all sorts of people in the circle of Baba's lovers. In some groups there are one or two who like to share verbally and most are more quiet, but here in Moraga there was so much sharing that day one just flew by. At the end of Saturday afternoon, we made it a point to set aside time to do "forgiveness work." We spent 20 minutes going over some prayers that we can use to tune into the forgiveness flow internally, and also discussed connecting with Baba, in silence, directly. Then we did go into silence - for about 20 minutes - and when we came out, those who felt moved to share explained what they had done. Baba's presence was palpable to me, as He moved through our hearts within our circle of love. Day two was a similar experience, however there was so much sharing occurring that we broke into smaller groups working in parallel and did not spend time in silence on Sunday afternoon. Instead Soliel lead the group in a sharing of what each individual feels they need from their involvement in the Baba community. This was a powerful way to close the circle. I also did forgiveness work that weekend, and I am grateful for the opportunity I was given to facilitate and participate.

Laurent Weichberger

For me the Forgiveness seminar with the SF bay area Baba group was the most intimate seminar I've participated in so far. It was my third time helping to facilitate a group in forgiveness processes and the first two day seminar, all the rest were only one day. Spending two days listening to such open sharing and discussion really gave me an intimate feeling of connection with a group of people I've never met before. My sense is that I tuned into the inner spiritual links which Baba talked about. When people share deeply about what's alive and true for them, and they feel heard rather than judged, it promotes intimacy in the heart, and especially so in a Baba group where His presence seems to manifest beautifully. For over a week afterwards my heart felt more open and tender, I felt I "met" Baba's Love and Presence within through the gathering. I definitely learned about myself and gained new insights into facilitating a group, how to share more from my own experience, and what does and doesn't seem to contribute to the well-being of others in the context of group work. Immediately after the seminar I felt very drawn to continue meeting with SF Baba group members to engage in this spiritually fruitful work. We have scheduled another session at the bay area center: Saturday July 20th, 10-4pm, also facilitated by Soliel and Laurent. It will be more of the same with some new process techniques and exercises and of course whatever twists and turns Baba initiates.

Soleil

My overall impression is that the workshop was worth doing for me and for most or perhaps all of those who came to it or facilitated it. There seemed to be more of a feeling of personal contact and unity among us during and at the end of the workshop than is sometimes the case. I hope that it will prove to have been a substantial step forward in our ongoing transformation into a community that more embodies the spirit of the New Humanity.

What has been happening more recently in attempts to carry the forgiveness process forward has been and remains more confusing and difficult for me, but I will communicate about that experience in a different statement in a different context.

Dick Anthony

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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 bookcase 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](http://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.

**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](mailto:ambkj@aol.com)  
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**Meher Baba Information** For introductory information about Avatar Meher Baba, e-mail: [info@MeherBabaInformation.org](mailto:info@MeherBabaInformation.org) or write to P.O. Box 1101, Berkeley, CA 94701.  
<http://MeherBabaInformation.org>  
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**Meher Baba Center of Northern California**

6923 Stockton Avenue  
El Cerrito, California 94530  
(510) 525-4779  
[www.meherbabameherbaba.org](http://www.meherbabameherbaba.org)

The meeting schedule is now included in our online calendar (web link above), and can be printed directly from the calendar.

**Directions to our Center:**

>From Highway 80, Interstate 5, going north or south, in El Cerrito, take the Central Avenue exit exiting 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 and phone are listed above.  
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**More Local Meetings:**

**Sonoma County** - Arti happens once a month, usually the first Sunday. Locations vary. Call Ellen Van Allen at 707-528-0357 for specific information.

**Los Gatos** - Sunday Evenings  
At the home of Clint Snyder  
Call (408) 395-6865

contact for messages to newsletterwallas: [newsletter@meherbabameherbaba.org](mailto:newsletter@meherbabameherbaba.org)

To subscribe: click on 'join our mailing list' in the side-bar above