



# Newsletter Autumn 2018



## From the Director

Greetings Friends of Inner Fire, near and far!

With September comes the completion of our third year and what a remarkable year it has been. We are putting down our roots and growing-up!

We expect to receive the certificate of occupancy for the East Wing of the new Inner Fire building by December, and look forward to being able to welcome up to eight seekers in January. These developments will make a profound difference to both the feeling of a safe home and a nurturing community within which a seeker can do the important work they have come to do. Like with all else here, the events of this East Wing taking form add to our remarkable story:

We had hoped to lay the foundation before the snow fell last autumn to get a head start in the Spring so seekers could move in by May. However, inevitable events prevented this from happening. One day, our engineer alerted us that a thaw was expected in February. We con-



tacted all those involved in preparing and pouring the foundation and indeed, the thaw happened and everyone was ready! Within ten days we had a foundation! It was exhilarating! As the snowflakes of the next blizzard began drifting down, the forms were being taken off.

Believing that 'Beauty feeds our Soul while Food feeds our Body'...all aspects of the Inner Fire home are considered in relation to whether this too will nourish the seeker's soul. For instance, rather than the typical rectangular windows, we have softened and enhanced the architectural experience with windows crowned by a half moon arch. Each seeker will work with a local artist to create a beautiful stained-glass piece which will fit into the half-moon, thereby ensouling their room. While the seekers rest and receive their liver compress after lunch, I can imagine them drinking in the beauty of the colors...and of course, during the winter months, looking into the lit room from outdoors will also stir seeker's souls.

Another ensouling 'touch' is the shelf set in the recess to each seekers' room. Every Monday during the morning walk the seekers will look into nature surrounding them and select flowers, leaves, twigs, moss or whatever they are drawn to and arrange a bouquet for their shelf. The diversity will be wonderful as we all notice different things. This opportunity is also a good training to 'look out' and notice what the change of seasons bring.

A Healing Community means healing on all levels. Therefore, as many of you know, we will have solar panels and heat pumps, as we aim to be a net-zero facility. In order

to complete the East Wing, we need to raise a further \$26,000 for the solar panels. Please help us - we are so grateful for



any donation you can manage! We have already raised \$700,000 which is reflected in the extensive site work, permitting, driveway, sprinkler system, fire alarm, well, underground power, septic system, and all the building associated with the East Wing – insulation, plumbing, electric, drywall, flooring, siding, roofing, etc..

Just as "it takes a village" to raise a child, it is a reality to me that indeed, Inner Fire has been "birthed" by a remarkable community which stretches across our diverse country as well as the oceans. As one person from Australia in response to Dr. Kelly Brogan's interview (see our web site) exclaimed, "Simply knowing Inner Fire exists gives us hope."

I want to thank each of you for the reality of your positive thoughts and the generosity of your many financial donations. If ever in the area, please come and visit! **We have a new Facebook page. Please re-like us at <https://m.facebook.com/innerfire.us/>**

Most Gratefully,  
Beatrice

## Excerpts from an Interview with Madeline

*Madeline is a Seeker. She is a young woman who has been at Inner Fire for a few months.*

**Q:** How did you hear about Inner Fire(IF)?

**A:** I heard about IF from a family friend. He was in the area and drove by and saw the sign on the road.

**Q:** What made you interested in the IF program?

**A:** I was diagnosed with a diagnosis that I believe wasn't true. So I've tried to find ways to better myself without meds. I'm on meds currently but am getting off them now and strengthening myself. Originally my family couldn't afford the program, so I looked all over the internet for a similar program but IF is the only one like it. Then my grandfather passed away and left us an inheritance and my family decided to put some of the money towards me going to IF.

**Q:** How do you see the program supporting you to strengthen yourself?

**A:** Well, before coming to IF, I knew it would be hard.

There are a lot of things that we do here that I really didn't like to do. For example, I really didn't like to garden or harvest and I never learned to cook while I was at home. I also didn't like to hike and we do a lot of hiking on the weekends. I really accept the wisdom of the program and the Guides offer a lot of support. I try to work very hard to get the most out of what is being offered and to work on myself.

I really want to learn the ropes of gardening and all of the steps until you put a meal on the table. The other thing that has been really helpful is that Laura and Beatrice, who work in the office, are very organized and helpful. Everyone here helps me and all of us to feel like a family. That helps us connect with one another and helps each of us meet our potential.



**Q:** Do you have specific goals for your future?

**A:** I want to remove all the meds that I'm currently on and learn how to cope with the stresses in my life. I want to be a teacher and either go to a Waldorf teacher training or a community college and live with friends. I want to travel the world. IF is helping me reach my goals by helping me acquire life skills and that's what I want.

## Capital Campaign Update

With the first part of the new building well on its way to completion, the Inner Fire board is shifting into high gear on the capital campaign for the further building phases. Phase 2 will focus on a Speech & Drama Barn and other therapeutic spaces, to be completed by 2019. Phase 3 will focus on the remainder of the main building, which will include 4 more residential spaces as well as common and office spaces. The goal is to complete this phase in 2020. The final phase will involve the purchase of the current Inner Fire home Grace Brook Farm and the 43-acre parcel of land it sits on. We aim to make this purchase and complete the capital campaign at the latest by 2021. At this point the campus will be complete and will be able to accommodate 12 seekers

at a time. The total goal of the campaign is \$2.6 million, of which about \$700,000 has been raised to date.

If you would like to make a tax-deductible donation, please mail a check to Inner Fire at 26 Parker Road, Brookline VT 05345, or visit the website at [innerfire.us](http://innerfire.us). Thank you for helping us reach our goal; every penny counts and is greatly appreciated!



*Never before in the history of the world have so many people been so intensively medicated, via both legal and illegal drugs, as they are in the U.S. today. This fact presents new challenges to those working to help people regain their mental health equilibrium and may obviate traditional treatment methods. At the very least, it demands new approaches that firstly, undo the damage that many of these drugs induce and secondly, address the root issues, life pains and challenges that may have led to the initial use of drugs, both legal and illegal.*

## From the kitchen

At Inner Fire, "May this meal be blessed; and peace and joy in our hearts and on this Earth." are the last words of our blessing each time we sit to eat together. These words reflect the intention that at our table we share gratitude and awareness and friendly conversation, as well as a colorful palate of simple, wholesome, local and organic foods. In a daily rhythm that supports the healing process, we celebrate, at these regular times of coming together, our connection to the gifts we receive from the land, from the farmers, the animals and the networks of life that provide us with physical support and sustenance for our lives.

The seekers are actively engaged in the entire process of nourishment. They learn to plant, cultivate and harvest the plants in the garden. They process the harvest into sauerkraut,

tomato sauce for storage, kimchi, pickles, herbal teas and more. And of course they learn to cook, or expand their cooking skills if they already



know how. It is a very satisfying and grounding experience to sit down at the table knowing that we were actively involved in every step of this food's becoming. And it is a very empowering experience to know that I have the ability to do it all again.

At Inner Fire we use a GAPS-informed, as well as a simple, common-sense approach to a balanced, whole-food, organic diet that aims to deeply nourish and support the healing and detoxification of the body. We avoid simple sugars and carbohydrates to a large degree, but do offer some oats, quinoa and rice. We don't eat bread or flour products, no wheat, no sugar. Our diets consist of an abundance of fresh organic vegetables, fruits, meats, soups, dairy, grains, etc. While this diet can be quite an adjustment for some, it has also given a real experience of growing stronger and healthier. In combination with the whole Inner Fire program, regular rhythms of sleep, work and recreation, artistic therapies and lively social dynamic, the nutritional component offers a joyful and educational opportunity to take responsibility for one's health and wellness.

Audrie Brown

## The Creative Living Community has opened its doors in Brattleboro!



The Creative Living Community (CLC) is an intentional substance free living community designed for individuals wanting to live in a mutu-

ally supportive environment. Preference is given to people recovering from psychological trauma, including but not limited to graduates of Inner Fire. The community can provide long-term residence, but also aims to prepare those who are interested for more independent living.

On Sunday, September 2, 2018 we welcomed two residents, one former Inner Fire Seeker, and one an overnight guide, to their new home. The residents are settling into this new place and Joyce St. Jean, our Transition Guide, is working with the residents to

create the structure and support they need.

Joyce's life work has been helping improve the quality of people's lives. She has worked to support people who have multiple barriers to employment create opportunities to become economically self-sufficient. She also worked in housing, education, and owned her own business. She enjoys taking projects from conception to completion. We are so lucky to have found such a perfect person to bring this project to fruition.

Joyce has worked diligently with the landlord to secure the rental. She has sought and received donations for household items to furnish the house from both the Inner and the greater community. Clean and functional living room armchairs, area rugs, faucet water filter, tapered candles, place-

mats and napkins (cloth) are still a need for the house. There are also two additional rooms to be filled. Please contact Joyce at [joyce.innerfire@gmail.com](mailto:joyce.innerfire@gmail.com) if you have any items to donate or would like to refer a potential resident.





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