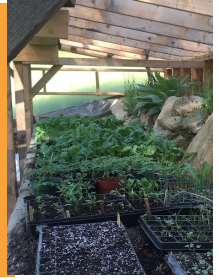




inner fire

Newsletter
Fall 2019



Greetings Friends,

On September 8th, we began our 5th year. Twenty-seven striving individuals have engaged in our program and many, upon leaving have included rhythm and a more conscious diet into their reclaimed lives. We are always so grateful to hear from former Seekers as their lives continue to unfold.

In January, thanks to you, our generous donors from around the country and the world, Seekers moved into the East Wing, a space of peace and beauty which can sleep eight.

The gardens, now tucked in for the winter, have expanded, abundantly feeding the community through the growing season. The fruit trees have been pasted with the biodynamic paste and there is still more fire wood to be split and stacked for winter!

The seasons in Vermont are wonderful and offer such a variety of practical, grounding activities. We are grateful for the brilliant autumnal colors and look forward to the subdued November colors metamorphosing into the cobalt blue skies and dazzling white, white snow of winter!

What is Success?

. . . this is a question I ask myself. The closest I have been able to get to any kind of an answer begins with the understanding that we do not 'fix' people and we certainly cannot promise that an individual will never have challenges again after they leave Inner Fire.

We foster each seeker's ability to recognize and connect with what I refer to as one's 'Divine Creative Self', sometimes referred to as the "Observer" or "Witness", - that part of ourselves which is never hurt, abused or anxious . We also strive to see all challenges as opportunities for further growth. If a seeker is able to develop this connection with their 'Divine Creative' Self and knows that they can handle any challenge that comes their way (though they may not like it!), then this is Success.

Beatrice, Executive Director



To make a tax deductible donation to Inner Fire please send checks to:

Inner Fire 26 Parker Road, Brookline, VT 05345



Reflections on the Foundational Wisdom of Inner Fire

by Laura Young, Office Manager

It has been just over two years since my first day as Office Manager at Inner Fire. If I could describe Inner Fire with two words, it would be: "Ancient Wisdom."

There is something about "Ancient" that we tend to resist, but are drawn to all at the same time. The "old" seems archaic and boring or too hard, but the beauty is that it strengthens our will and determination to move forward. We are so used to quick ways of doing things, like using a dishwasher to wash our dishes, or taking a pill to "feel" better.

The physical acts of chopping wood, shoveling snow covered driveways that others would plow, or cleaning rather than paying a house cleaning service - these all shape and strengthen our inner world. You either hate it and want your TV, iPod and cell phone back with the comfort and ease you once knew, or you wake up one day and realize, "It's gonna take some work to become strong" either again, or for the first time.

I would say this is a turning point for most of our Seekers. Some were once strong and determined, but the cloud of medication has weakened them. Others may never have had the strength to begin with, but recognize that something isn't working and are open to hard work and commitment. It is these people who Inner Fire best serves, philosophy-wise and work-wise, to bring the wisdom of old and fan the spark into a flame and blaze that will drive away the cold, wet, blanket of darkness, medication, depression and anxiety. Often Seekers say, "When I am chopping wood, I don't hear voices." "When I am planting seeds or harvesting, I don't talk to myself."

Inner Fire offers structure, rhythm, and wisdom that

reaches one's soul and reshapes one's etheric. If you don't know what etheric means, like me when I first heard it, grab a dictionary and check it out! Years of unhealthy patterns are so hard to break, but we have seen Seekers let go of things like: being awake all night and sleeping all day, running away from community when they feel uncomfortable, staying lost in their world of voices, excess weight, sugar habits, physical weakness including poor digestion, food allergies and weak muscles.

Seekers who invest in the hard work here, leave in better physical shape - we have hills they walk up and down multiple times a day! They are more confident in themselves and their ability to engage interpersonally, at ease with expressing *their* feelings, and more adept in navigating *their* emotions. They have found the freedom to breathe more deeply and thereby to let go of their past and the patterns that paralyzed them.

The departure of Seekers from Inner Fire is often complex, like when one leaves home - a gaining of independence. It is our intention to support each Seeker in their healing journey as they strengthen their inner world and develop life skills needed to survive in this world. When a Seeker shapes a better living situation, creates their own new rhythm and begins making positive choices for themselves, we know they have succeeded in embracing and choosing Ancient wisdom and strengthening their own Inner Fire!

*Inner Fire, has become a **catalyst** for rethinking the current medical model by offering a choice many frustrated and disheartened individuals seek.*

At a recent international conference in Rotterdam, Beatrice's presentation, " Suppose 'Mental Health' is a Reductionist term for 'Soul Health'," was received with enthusiasm and genuine interest. Many excellent questions came her way. For some, it was a novel idea that it is even possible to recover from undigested soul experiences (traumas) without the mind altering, psychotropic medications.

*We need to remember that the human being is not made of unrelated parts.
The Soul informs the mind, which is far more flexible than initially believed.*

"The rise in 'soul health' challenges is a reflection of our societal priorities. Our children are barometers, reflecting how little we understand the development of the child as well as the changes needed for a healthy, more humane life for humans and the earth." - Beatrice Birch

Farewell to Dr. Nels Kloster and Welcome to New Staff

“ I feel totally empowered! He listens to me.”

These are the words of a Seeker after consulting for the first time with Nels.

Since we opened in 2015, **Dr. Nels Kloster** has graciously and conscientiously guided the slow and careful tapering of courageous Seekers, thereby supporting them in their journey toward healing. As we have recently been joined by Dr. Adam Pruett, the Inner Fire Community would like to share our deep appreciation for Nels' support any hour of the day or night, as the tapering process is rarely easy. We certainly would not be where we are without you, Nels, and we are very grateful that you will continue with us on our Advisory Board and hope to see you at our occasional gatherings here at Grace Brook. Thank you!



Adam Pruett, Psychiatrist: I am very excited to be joining the team at Inner Fire. I went to medical school at the University of Alabama School of Medicine and completed my residency at Emory University. For almost 10 years, I have been practicing inpatient psychiatry. Approaching 40, I was burned out and feeling less hopeful about the future. Luckily, I started to educate myself to find ways to make the profession rewarding again. This June, I started a year long fellowship with the Integrative Psychiatric Institute that provides a functional medicine type approach to mental health. Likewise, I started reading Robert Whitaker's books and learned of his relationship to Inner Fire. Through him, I was able to meet the executive director at Inner Fire, Beatrice Birch, and the rest is history. So much of psychiatry has been focused on people's weaknesses. When staff meet with Seekers, it is so refreshing to see them lift people up and focus on their many strengths. The results I've witnessed at Inner Fire have been amazing. I am excited to be part of the team that helps each seeker with a customized medication taper approach.



Kailama Morris our Somatic Breath Therapist, has a degree in Criminal Justice and completed a ten year training with the Power of Breath Institute. Over a period of eight years, she co-taught Empowerment Trainings and Facilitator Trainings via the Power of Breath Institute, a two-year program for breath therapist certification.



Henri Koshen, our Life Coach and Overnight Guide, with a degree in Fine Arts and Design, brings his experiential therapeutic background in counseling and non-violent communication to Inner Fire. Henri feels that of all his creative endeavors, living life consciously and lovingly is the deepest, most exciting, timeless and enriching experience of being human.



Troy Gangle our Day & Overnight Guide, Troy spent five years of intensive study at a Zen Monastery. He has worked in multiple fields including a sanctuary for abused and abandoned farm animals, carpentry, and under served populations such as homeless families, children in the foster system, and those living with trauma, abuse and neurological challenges.



Aaren Weiner our Day & Overnight Guide has a breadth of experience in the healing arts including yoga, dance, somatic, intuitive plant medicine, nutrition, meditation, expressive arts therapy & community work. Aaren is working toward certification to teach trauma-informed, anti-imperialist yoga and movement.



Seeker and Guide work together making kimchi, a type of fermented vegetable essential for gut health. The link between gut health and mental health has been well documented. This GAPS diet helps heal the gut thereby easing psychological challenges.

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<http://innerfire.us/>

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