

## Inner Fire Mission

Inner Fire,  
a healing community,  
offers a *choice* for adults to  
recover from debilitating and  
traumatic life challenges with  
minimal or no use  
of psychotropic medications.  
We believe  
in the power of choice.



inner  fire

Spring/Summer  
Newsletter 2026

## A Glimmer of the Healing Journey, it is not straight forward...

*Beatrice Birch, Executive Director*



There are exceptions, but most people are drawn to Inner Fire for support in tapering. Some have been on psychotropic medications for half their lives, experienced multiple hospitalizations, perhaps have been cold-turkeyed by their prescriber and then re-hospitalized.

Some discover Inner Fire early in their journey.

Having accompanied striving individuals from age 19-75 for nearly eleven years, I have experienced a lot. Everyone is unique and so is their tapering journey but one thing everyone shares are undigested soul experiences.

As if the tapering, with all the withdrawal symptoms, is not challenging enough! During and after that tight-rope walk while supported by the daily practical and therapeutic work and the loving care and insights of the Guides and Therapists, the issues one sought medical support for in the first place are waiting to finally be embraced. Rather than taking an interest in the person's biography and challenges, the psychiatrist/prescriber is caught in a system which allows at most 15 minutes to diagnose and medicate or they do not get paid.

*Cont'd on page 2*

## Inner Fire

*A poem by Seeker CL*

Feeling nauseous, wanna throw-up  
I'm empty, nothings in my cup  
Every limb aches and hurts a bitch  
How the hell will I get through this sitch?  
No sleep, bad dreams galore  
Tapering these meds I seriously abhor  
I will do it, I will get through  
And in the end I'll have something special and brand-new!



*CL with De-prescriber and Naturopath Clif Steinberg*

## A Glimmer of the Healing Journey

*Cont'd from page 1*

Imagine what it must be like to be a schoolchild having to sit behind a desk for most of a morning and afternoon staring at a screen and having little social interactions with teachers or classmates. Have we forgotten what childhood is about? Reacting to such an entrapment reflects a *healthy* child! However, rather than improving the education system and making it more nurturing and child friendly, children are "Ritalined". The message they receive is "You are inappropriate and you need to be suppressed." Ritalin is a threshold drug.

Fast forward: So, having been on medication to control one's behavior (which might have been a healthy reaction to a dire situation) from preadolescence through teen years and into one's twenties or longer, typically disconnected from one's inner life and feeling numb, they then discover Inner Fire. Is this the answer to their deepest wish to come off their cocktail of medications and reclaim their lives?

The decision to engage in the Inner Fire program is not always straight forward. Many individuals have become psychologically dependent on a system which asks little of them other than to keep taking their pills. Imagining that healing, balancing, digesting is one's responsibility is understandably foreign for too many. In addition, while under the influence of the medication (read the side effects), individuals, riddled with anxiety, have behaved in humiliating, shameful and embarrassing ways which in turn has lowered their self-esteem and confidence.

As one Seeker courageously exclaimed as she started tapering: "I do not know who I am going to find...I have been medicated half my life." Having very successfully tapered from their medication, another Seeker stated: "I am terrified by life, it is not what I thought it would be." Another successful taperer stated: "It's not fun, life is not easy" as they then began to come to grips with childhood traumas which they had not previously had the support to work through.

Those undigested soul experiences do not go away. They belong to us. Working with such challenges is simply life. It is what being human is all about.

*Cont'd next column*

We need to grow and deepen and cultivate our inner, soul spiritual life to evolve as human beings. How fortunate we are if we have compassionate (not sympathetic) support. The challenges are huge. The will to heal is admirable. The work is ever so real. We are battling for the Soul. To hear a Seeker state: "I am beginning to feel my Self again" is heartwarming.



*"Cultivating the Imagination" Hauschka Artistic Therapy*

## Kitchen Reflections

*Lili Hanft*



I came to Inner Fire in winter, when the earth was wrapped in a blanket of snow. It is the first day of spring as I write this, ice is melting and the brook is flowing each day more clearly, and plants are emerging from under the cover of snow, revealing themselves to me. As I have worked in the kitchen and with the Seekers I have also witnessed emergence: a spring-time impulse revealing new strengths and capacities as the cloud of medication-induced inertia begins to lift.

For one Seeker, the most dramatic shift I've observed is in their ability to be focused, mindful, and conscious of what they are doing in the kitchen: where their fingers are in relation to a knife, when food splatters or falls on the floor, etc. In the beginning they struggled to be aware of these things, and cooking could get a little messy! But over the weeks we've worked together I've seen them come into their own, reclaiming their love of cooking and developing their competence.

*Cont'd on page 3*

## Kitchen Reflections...

*Cont'd from page 2*

Another Seeker, while a competent cook, struggled with fatigue and body aches - the result of tapering off their medication - that impacted their stamina and capacity in the kitchen. Here too, I've seen a beautiful transformation. While in our first weeks working together they would often sit down while chopping vegetables and were unable to do things like cut a butternut squash in half. Their strength and energy have now increased to a place where the morning together flies by as we complete an ambitious number of recipes (both the lunch menu as well as snacks and staples like lacto-fermented vegetables), and I often hear them softly humming or singing while working.



It did not take long for a newer seeker to show signs of blossoming. Just this past week they found themselves giggling as we tried blending cauliflower rice and coconut milk into a smooth "mashed potato" consistency with the noisy handheld immersion blender. Although they often ask to take breaks and to rest, they soon return to me in the kitchen to ask what they can help with next. At the end of our time together, when I asked them if they enjoyed the time spent cooking, they said, "Yes."

The Seekers are not the only ones who are growing in this transition from winter to spring. I, too, am finding my place in the dynamic life of Inner Fire, building relationships with the other Guides and creating a rhythm of menu planning, shopping, cooking, stocking up. As Beatrice says, "Guides are Seekers and Seekers are Guides". We are all here together, greeting the spring and growing into the calling of this season.

## Kathleen Bowen - Biography work at Inner Fire

*An invisible red thread connects those who are destined to meet, regardless of time, place, or circumstance. The thread may stretch or tangle, but it will never break.*  
*Ancient Chinese proverb*

What is this work?

Biography work is about discovering "who am I", "who are you", and "who are we".

It can awaken in us an interest in the world around us, in our times, and in the people we meet in life. We recognize that all human lives are of significance. We have come to earth to actively gain experiences and undergo transformations only achievable on earth. By observing events in our lives, meaning will be revealed. What is the task you have come to fulfil, your mission on earth? Who did you come to meet? What gift have you brought to share? What did you come to do?



As we become active and awake to our life story, a new relationship to the past arises so we can meet the future with openness and courage. This work awakens interest in the world around us and the people we meet in life, seeing the important role they have had in our becoming. The capacity to be responsible to ourselves and others in our community is strengthened. We meet ourselves with empathy and compassion as we follow the thread. Greater agency is taken up to meet challenges. Themes and patterns are noticed. Through working with our own life material we develop new soul capacities; we awaken the faculty to meet the world with imagination.

*Cont'd on page 4*

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*Inner Fire 26 Parker Road, Brookline, VT 05345*

## Biography Work at Inner Fire cont'd

How do we work together?

Creating a warm and welcoming space is quite an easy task in the beautiful space at Inner Fire. This space has been ensouled and it makes a difference as each Seeker is invited from the cozy warmth of the wood stove in the living room into the skylit room upstairs, ready to open a door in their life.

Images in the form of postcards are used to open stories. Modeling, drawing and writing bring our stories out of our heads to observe the details, allowing different perspectives to arise. For example, by remembering moments in childhood, of safety and joy, these can be brought forward as a place to revisit; strengthening the life forces. Poetry is brought to the sessions for inspiration and sometimes as a prompt to continue writing.

My role is to accompany each Seeker as their story unfolds. Asking open questions, listening with reverence and an open heart instills trust. Together, we bring our interest into the story, into the details that arise. Slowly, a layer opens and then the next and the next. We watch with delight as pieces come together and the bigger picture unfolds. We re-member who we are and take responsibility for actions and allow feelings to arise. We strive for balance, recognizing the trials in life and how they were met, celebrating the successes in life.

The movement from being a victim of our experiences to becoming a creator of our life is a goal. Our biography is our most prized possession. I am honored to be in the presence of each seeker.

*I know that nothing has ever been real without my beholding it all. Becoming has needed me. My looking ripens things. As they come toward me to meet and be met ~ Ranier Rilke*



Developing the discipline of pure observation and the grounding experience of "What do I see?" Awakening feelings: "How does it feel as the form progresses?" Hauschka Artistic Therapy

## A message from Tavius Sim, our Goatherder, Fire Chief, Maintenance and Gardener

I joined Inner Fire in the fall of 2024, initially as a volunteer. Beatrice had shared with me the history of Inner Fire as well as her visions, hopes and dreams. I also envision and so, I was on board. I spoke of my skillset which was that of gardening, goat-herding, cheesemaking and cooking. She said she was looking for all those things from someone willing and dedicated, but the priority was to prepare to adopt a small herd of Nigerian Dwarf goats who were looking for a home.

My partner Juneau, a 6-year-old great Pyrenees and I joined soon after. Juneau immediately took to owning and patrolling the grounds and skies with a freedom to which she had not been accustomed. I told Juneau the goats were coming and that she must be prepared and protect them too! Indeed, she has taken her responsibility seriously.



Beatrice spoke passionately about choice and helping individuals who longed, without the influence of psychotropic medications, to regain control of their lives. This approach to life aligned with my belief system. So, in addition to the array of therapies, the Seekers warmly welcome the animal therapy component, which brings great value by enriching their lives. The goats help to cultivate responsibility, compassion and love. These soul qualities are essential ingredients for deep healing.

I adopted my very first goats from a farm in Vermont back in 2015 and brought them to New York. In reflecting, Vermont seems to be where goats want to be.

### Employment Opportunities

As our Seeker numbers increase, our staffing needs grow. We invite you to consider being part of our healing community! For current opportunities and more information, contact us at [info@innerfire.us](mailto:info@innerfire.us)

## A Message from Tavius Sim cont'd...

So, it is funny that the universe connected Beatrice and me through Camphill Village Copake in New York and that the stars aligned for the perfect situation to manifest where the Inner Fire campus was primed and ready for the arrival of these goats. Beatrice had been working for years on the manual clearing of a goat pasture. The Inner Fire property has a beautiful and wild topography. The goats just sank into our hearts and the fabric of the land.

One of the real highlights of our day is the community morning walk. All the goats (thank goodness they are herd animals and we have all become their herd!) join the Seekers and Guides on our daily 8am walk. Twice a week, they warm themselves around the camp fire built in snow or rain, actually in all weather.

A year ago, we witnessed and were charmed by the arrival of ten healthy, charming kids and just recently three more. What joy and laughter they bring!

Our entire herd is adorable, sweet, and tame. Beatrice's dream has manifested and although the herd is a little larger than she expected, things are going very well. We do have two larger Nubian goats who we plan to milk someday, so cheese is in the future. I cannot think of a more ideal situation than what has shaken out since the fall of 2024. I am very proud to be a part of the Inner Fire team and strive to befriend and help all Seekers regain their lives.

I hope, whether the Seekers are animal lovers or upon arrival are barely familiar with the animal kingdom in general, that by the time they leave the richness of Inner Fire, their hearts will have a large, everlasting imprint stemming from the experiences and joys they have encountered while living with and caring for the goats. Surely, no one will forget Juneau who keeps us all "safe" and is always ready for a rough and tumble, Stella our cat, who selects and plants herself on the lap of those who need a snuggle and typically appears in the morning when we are singing and meanders between our legs as well as our growing flock of hens (free range) who are drawn to our activities and bring a smile to the Seekers who discover their gifts of eggs, sometimes in the nesting boxes and sometimes in the hay! God bless.



Spoon carving



Thank you ladies!



Tavius with newborn triplets

Inner Fire's Capital Campaign is expanding as we aim to begin the final campus construction in 2027 and provide a greater financial foundation for Inner Fire's future through the creation of an Endowment Fund. This effort will allow Inner Fire to serve more seekers and expand our support for their healing, while sowing seeds of change in the broader world of human health. If you would like to know more or explore how you can help Inner Fire in this endeavor, please contact Tom Kavet at 802-433-1111 or Doug Cox at 617-230-2497



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Online at: [innerfire.us](http://innerfire.us)

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RECLAIMING THE FIRE WITHIN