

Zone 3 gathering in Spain — April 2009

## **Looking back...Looking Forward**

### **Eight Years in a Day**

Did I imagine that a month after enjoying the sun at the Zone 3 gathering in Spain I'd be fully immersed in helping to facilitate the Susila Dharma International Association's (SDIA) *looking back...looking forward* workshop held at Loudwater Farm?

Well, these things happen in Subud and perhaps I should have expected it. After all I did let slip that as a major part of my consultancy business/enterprise it's "what I do".

But taking a view across the past four years' achievements and identifying priorities for the next four years all in one day? And with 38 Subud brothers and sisters from all over the world? No pressure then!

But need I have worried? Of course not. With great support from the SDIA team, willing volunteers and brothers and sisters prepared to be real participants in pursuing Subud's humanitarian wing, all we had to do was provide a framework for results to happen. And that's what we did.

So with three parts to the day — introductions; a SWOT analysis (identifying the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threat of how SDIA is working); and finally drawing out top priorities for the 2010-2014 period - we set to work. And how amazing it proved to be!

#### **Introductions**

Asking a whole roomful to introduce themselves and half to "look back" and identify one key impression, and the other to "look forward" could have been tedious and repetitive. But giving everyone just one minute to speak and everyone almost sticking to it works wonders. And what valuable nuggets were mined! From greatly improved communications (but still more to be done) to not good enough assessment and evaluation; from the significance of SD in expressing Subud in the world to the need to raise its profile in our own local groups, and also strengthen links with the World Subud Association; from improving skills of SD Boards to protecting project leaders from burn-out; and being aware of how much SDIA has, does and can achieve with few resources. And that was just the start!

#### **SWOT analysis**

The centrepiece of the day, and of the whole planning process. But need we have worried? With some strong direction we structured a full and challenging two-hour session to identify the main SWOTS. We allocated everyone to working groups along three SDIA "Goal areas" so that we had a good balance of perspective and experience. We set out the task clearly, with questions to prompt the groups. We told them how much time they had on each part and how to record and report their conclusions to everyone else, and that was it! All we did was to give them a framework, and our brothers and sisters worked the magic.

#### **Top priorities**

Finally, after input from everyone and much to ponder — as well as a good lunch — we asked each group to consider what they and the other groups had presented so far. And to identify what they would see as the main priority for taking their Goal forward. By now everyone knew what was expected of them and they spent the afternoon in intense discussions. With, of course, amazing results.

Yes, as part of my role I marshalled them, kept them on track, made sure they stuck to time, asked them to be clear about what their conclusions were. But no, I didn't DO anything — everyone who participated did it themselves and achieved real results, perhaps with a little help from the latihan!

All that's now left to do is to make it happen; in the end that's what counts. Simple.

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