

# *The Village View*

*July 06, 2022*

Marjenta Gray & Joan Valles, Editors

## Not Knowing

### *Coming Up—*

- **Pathwork**, July 10, 7pm
- **General Circle**, July 11, 7pm

**A**s Hollis elegantly wrote two weeks ago, the Goodenough Community is in a process of change. There seems to be two (at least) parallel realities existing at the same time, each with very different timelines and qualities.

### **The World of Grieving**

I think it's safe to say that in the Goodenough community, less than three months from Colette's passing, we are in varying degrees of grieving. Grief is amorphous, hiding and appearing on its own schedule. It follows its own path, with no regard for planning and worldly decisions. In fact, it can be very difficult to make decisions in that place. As Elizabeth Gilbert wrote after the death of her life partner in the spring of 2018, "Grief is a force of energy that cannot be controlled or predicted ... Grief does not obey your plans, or your wishes. Grief will do whatever it wants to you, whenever it wants to."

### **The Linear Outer World**

The other reality is the outside reality of events, decisions, money, and practical concerns. Operations are continuing at Sahale, with groups being hosted, planned for and even a new client booked. This past weekend, friends gathered at

Sahale to celebrate July 4<sup>th</sup>. Yet, there is a traditional event, the Human Relations Lab, which we have committed to, and now are considering what format would be most appropriate for the needs of community members and those we support.

Eventually we realize that not knowing what to do is just as real and just as useful as knowing what to do. Not knowing stops us from taking false directions. Not knowing what to do, we start to pay real attention. Just as people lost in the wilderness, on a cliff face or in a blizzard pay attention with a kind of acuity that they would not have if they thought they knew where they were. Why? Because for those who are really lost, their life depends on paying real attention. If you think you know where you are, you stop looking.

DAVID WHITE

### **On-Line News of the Goodenough Community System**

***www.goodenough.org***

American Association for the Furtherance of Community Convocation: A  
Church and Ministry / Mandala Resources, Inc.  
Sahale Learning Center / The EcoVillage at Sahale

The worldly clock is ticking, and it seems we are in a state of Not Knowing.

### **Not Knowing is not Wrong!**

This is not uncommon at all for people in a state of grieving and great change. How can things go on exactly as usual when so much has changed?

David Whyte holds that “Not knowing stops us from taking false directions. Not knowing what to do, we start to pay real attention.”

*Gil Fronsdaal, in an [article on Insight Meditation's website](#), wrote:*

“Not-knowing” is emphasized in Zen practice, where it is sometimes called “beginner’s mind.” An expert may know a subject deeply, yet be blinded to new possibilities by his or her preconceived ideas. In contrast, a beginner may see with fresh, unbiased eyes. The practice of beginner’s mind is to cultivate an ability to meet life without preconceived ideas, interpretations, or judgments.

He continues, “One Zen story proclaims, ‘Not knowing is most intimate.’ I understand this to mean that what is most essential is not understood through the filter of our judgments, past knowledge, or memories. When not-knowing helps these to drop away, the result can be a greater immediacy--what some might call being intimate.

The practice of not-knowing needs to be distinguished from confusion and debilitating doubt. Confusion is not a virtue: the confused person is somewhat lost and removed from life. With doubt, the mind is agitated or contracted with hesitation and indecision. These mind states tend to obscure rather than clarify. Furthermore, confusion and doubt are generally involuntary. Not-knowing, as a practice, is a choice meant to bring greater peace.

Not-knowing means not being limited by what we know, holding what we know lightly so that we are ready for it to be different”.

### **Witnessing Each Other**

One of the sweetest things about the grief ritual Kirsten reported on last week, facilitated expertly by Therése Charvet and Tere Carranza, was the “witnessing” each other as we each in our own way expressed our feelings in front of a natural shrine with flowers and a picture of Colette. Therese learned her craft of working with grief from Sobonfu Somé, an African healer who taught West African grief rituals to North Americans. In that tradition, the village grieved together, supporting each person to express their grief fully. The group drummed and sang, while those called to knelt or sat in front of the shrine, crying, keening, or even expressing anger or sitting silently. A friend or caring person might stand behind, holding sacred space and “witnessing” a close friend or relative who was actively grieving. I was so surprised to see Pam respectfully standing back on the edge of the sacred grieving area, with her hands out, welcoming me back to the “village” when I was done pouring my feelings out. I was touched that she was

caring about me in that way. We hugged each other, and I remembered how long we've known each other and how I love her dearly. I had felt more distant from my fellow community friends when I arrived that day, but the separation had melted into something quite beautiful. As we sat in a circle in the walnut grove, sharing, I noticed glowing faces, and smiles where earlier there had been wrinkled brows. There was a palpable bond, a level of ease between us that I've experienced before, but not for some time. It felt like returning to a very special garden of connection.

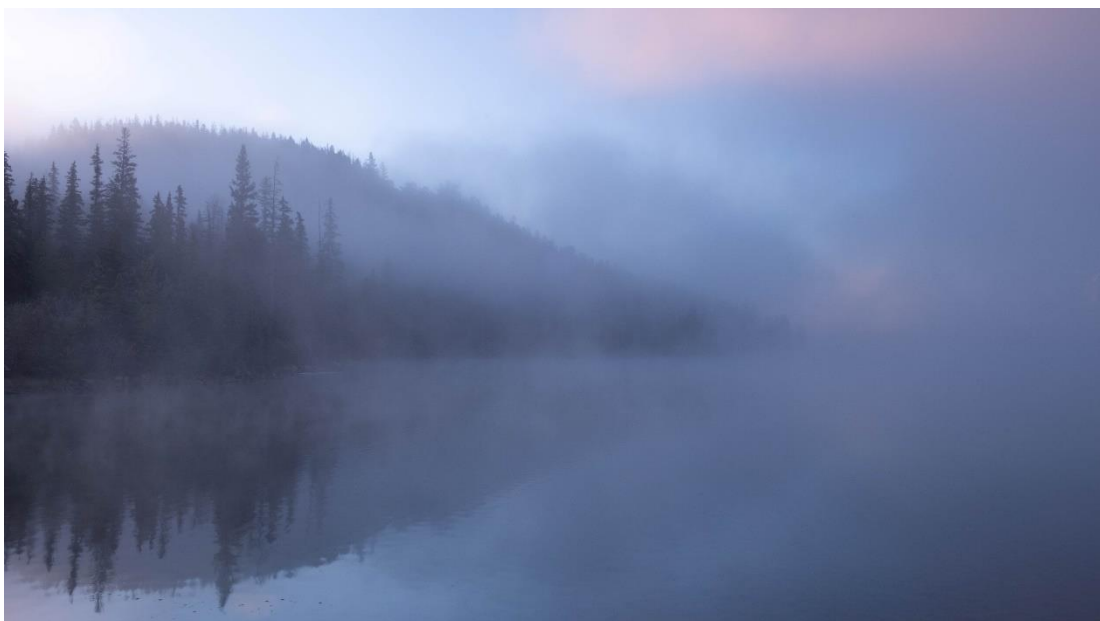
## My Hope

However long it takes us to emerge from the fog of Not Knowing, and whatever we decide about this summer's Lab, I hope we can "pay real attention," listening to what we each need, feeling each other's tender hearts. I hope we can be intimate in sharing what is true for us, moving beyond our "preconceived ideas, interpretations, or judgments", to something even better. I hope we can draw on our many years of shared learning and training, to a place of witnessing each other with respect and caring, and bond as we did after the grief ritual.

## What Do You Need from the Goodenough Community?

We may seem preoccupied right now, but we haven't forgotten about all of you who care about the Goodenough Community and have joined our events. Please let us know what you need from us, and how you would like to help. You are important to us!

~ Marjenta Gray



## Freedom and Not Knowing

Joan Valles

We watched the Capitol Fourth of July broadcast Monday night at our house. It was, as they say in Italian, *uno spettacolo*, a spectacle of American star singers and performers, choruses, symphony, and brass bands. It started with the "Star Spangled Banner" and concluded with the "1812 Overture" and an impressive display of pyrotechnics, fireworks that is. It looked to be a warm night on the West Lawn with families (mostly white folks in a city of a black majority) dancing, singing, and having fun. Many of the outstanding musicians were people of color. (Cynthia Erivo, my particular favorite, sang "Somewhere" from West Side Story, the musical being honored at the celebration.) Barbara, Jim, and I were impressed and moved by their songs, especially our old favorite anthems, such as "America the Beautiful," "God Bless America," and "My Country Tis of Thee," songs we loved and sang as children and which remain in our hearts along with familiar hymns from church. These patriotic songs that I remember disdaining as sentimental, even jingoistic, as I grew older, now touch me. As we listened tears of sadness came to our eyes. We love our country and we are so far from what it has stood for, what we stand for, Barbara observed. Our freedoms are being eroded, rights that people worked and sacrificed for for decades. We are not knowing how this is going to play out. The Capitol Fourth was a colorful and highly professional spectacle, and we applauded it. What was missing, it seemed to me, was the uplift of joy, the light in the eyes expressive of joy in performing, seemed clouded a bit by worry.



This week as I was looking for material for this week's Village View, I spent some time trolling through the eView (this newsletter's old name) archives. The old newsletters, written by John and Colette Hoff, and faithfully edited and produced by Colette each week, are a rich resource of teaching and information about us and our community. Here is a brief article on freedom by John from May 2015. Our founders may have passed; their wisdom lives on. Comforting to know as we navigate through this period of transition.



## Freedom For and Freedom From

John Hoff

*Freedom makes a huge requirement of every human being. With freedom comes responsibility. For the person who is unwilling to grow up, the person who does not want to carry his/her own weight, this is a frightening prospect. ~ Eleanor Roosevelt*

Colette and I have been discussing how we have tried to write about freedom over the past few years and in doing so we have found it necessary to differentiate freedom for something from

freedom from something: There is a freedom that is freedom from distractions, old ideas, caring about what other people think, and inner conflict.

Freedom for has to do with goals and objectives, dreams and plans. Freedom is actually being who you want to be in your own future. For most of us being freer has to do with having more time, freed up; to do what is called for in the moment.

Eleanor was right! Freedom requires human development and discipline. It takes inner and outer work to be free. To spend much time around communitarians is to be exposed to people actively talking about freedom. The intentional communities movement has become increasingly strong since the Second World War. As soldiers returned from other countries, cultures, and conversations, they found that there was a lot of interest in what helped us feel freer as individuals. There was much agreement that freedom was easier to attain and celebrate in a country that had known the loss of its freedom.

In the United States we talk a lot about freedom yet we act as though our freedom is fragile and that we could easily let go of it. **Let yourself know how free you feel and notice how quickly you give your freedom away to others.**



*Ricardo Gomez-Angel (Unsplash)*

Forgive yourself for not knowing what you didn't know before you learned it.”

— *Maya Angelou*



## READERS: *Humor Us, Please*



Next week in the Village View we're exploring the healing power of laughter. Or, more simply: the Village View JOKE edition, edited by the Queen of Puns herself, [Elizabeth Jarrett Jefferson](#). To make this fun, we need the participation of you, our readers, any of you who have a joke(s), cartoon, funny picture, funny poem or song to share. The more the better. (PG13.)

Please join us in the fun and send your contributions to Elizabeth at [elizabeth.ann.jarrett@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.ann.jarrett@gmail.com). By next Tuesday night or Wednesday morning, please.



*"That's strange. I remember it differently, in a way that aligns with my world view and casts me in a positive light."*



# Community Sociocracy Circles

*In previous issues of the Village View, there were descriptions of several of the four Sociocracy circles that report to the General Circle, comprising the organizational structure of the Goodenough Community. Here, Kirsten Rohde talks about the work of the Sahale Circle.*

## The Sahale Circle

*Kirsten Rohde*

The Sahale Circle is one of the four Sociocracy circles for the Goodenough Community. Its four basic areas of focus are:

- **Constructed systems:** Maintenance, construction, safety
- **Human element:** residents, training and education, group maintenance, lifestyle
- **Natural systems:** stewardship, gardens, forest, land, river
- **Operations:** coordinates the daily needs and business at Sahale including retreat hosting

Each of these four areas is a “granddaughter circle” that reports in at each Sahale Circle meeting (twice a month.) Sahale encompasses many areas: residents, community visitors, volunteer helpers, hosting retreats, land stewardship, and construction and maintenance. The Goodenough Community receives income from retreats which, next to individual donations is the main source of income for our community currently.

As a project of the Goodenough Community, all that happens at Sahale requires the support not just of Sahale residents but of everyone in our community. A number of community members and friends regularly come out to Sahale to offer support for retreats and ongoing projects. We welcome anyone who would like to help out while enjoying the beauty and rejuvenation of being in the country. During the summer our community will be hosting many groups and guests at Sahale. Coordinating your offer to visit and help out can be done by contacting Elizabeth Jarrett at [elizabeth.ann.jarrett@gmail.com](mailto:elizabeth.ann.jarrett@gmail.com).

With the passing of Colette Hoff, Elizabeth has taken on the task of hosting retreats – big shoes to fill and Elizabeth has stepped in with grace and energy. All residents and non-resident members have stepped up to ensure that Sahale continues to be the vibrant and welcoming “heaven on earth” envisioned by us. Colette set the standard and our community is continuing the dream.



*Tanner chopping firewood  
2019 Memorial Day Weekend*



## Mindful Mike's Blog: Fourth of July

*Mike de Anguera*

July 4, 1776, was when 13 North American colonies declared their independence from Great Britain. We felt it was time to take our destiny into our hands. We didn't want to play a secondary role in the British Empire anymore. A new country was born. The first secular republic.

Our Founding Fathers didn't believe we should have an established church like the Church of England. Our Constitution guarantees freedom of religion.

If I had lived in Britain then part of my taxes would go to support the Church of England. In fact, if I was not part of the Church of England I would be in trouble with the law. Back in the 1700s dissent was not possible. That explains why Quakers, Methodists, and others came over here to the States. Here they could find the freedom they were denied back home.

We celebrate our independence every Fourth of July with fireworks and parades like the one in Tahuya. Here a band plays all kinds of marching tunes. Our tiny town of Tahuya explodes into life with over 2000 people present and a parade to rival any in Seattle.

Here I found an identification with the locals I never would have felt in Seattle.

Lots of old cars passed. Everything from a Mustang club to a Model T truck. A giant Buick from the early 1950s. There were even 4 hearses. One of them featured a skeleton on the hood! They paraded mid sirens and the throwing of candy to the kids. Maybe I live in Mayberry after all. Andy Griffith land.

As long as I had my hamburger, potato chips, and Coke I was a happy guy. Didn't do much for my longevity, but they tasted good.

I got to shake hands with Dan Griffey, Republican candidate for Washington State House of Representatives. Being able to connect with all kinds of people for me is what heaven is about. We don't always have to be divided from each other.

Politics can be a distraction from the mystery of our existence together. What could we do if we were aware of our Oneness? Our character roles create conflict as they were meant to.

Which of us knows the Right Way for everybody to live? That would deny us the ability to be our unique selves. It would deny the Divinity animating every one of our beings. If I am not Divine, then what am I? I am loved just as I am. There is nothing I have to do to be worthy of Love. That is called grace. That is why I can be your friend and you can be mine.

What's a proper response to the unfinished business of my life? Laughter. That is a good response to negative feedback. Yes, I am absurd just like everyone else. Now I understand the







purpose of humor. The Dalai Lama is known for his sense of humor, his good-natured laughing. Any genuine spiritual teacher should recognize the limitation of their roles. That's how I can look to them for a greater truth. Of course, like any good Zen master I should get a shot of water to enlighten me. That's what this truck is doing. Getting all of us good and wet.



## Programs and Events of the Goodenough Community

*Community is about adapting to change, and that has been the case with the pandemic as we have adapted many of our ways to connect, most of which are held on Zoom. This has enabled people from outside our area to participate in community events. Throughout the year we offer programs that help you participate in your own development, learn about relating well with others, and help you discover your potential for having a good time in life and with others. Information about programs and upcoming events can be found on our website: [www.goodenough.org](http://www.goodenough.org)*



### **Human Relations Laboratory, August 7 – 13, 2022**

This intense and joyous week-long event is a communal experience of personal growth and relational development within a rich culture with art, music, dance, song, drama, and more. In 2022 we will celebrate 53 years! Contact: [Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson](#) or [Kirsten Rohde](#)



### **The Goodenough Community's governing body, the General Circle,**

currently meets weekly on Monday evenings, 7 PM on Zoom. **Summer Dates:** Weekly in July. For additional information, contact [Elizabeth Jarrett-Jefferson](#)



**The Women's Program** is a long-established and ever-growing way for women to enjoy each other's company, learn about themselves as women, and even perhaps to experience the Divine Feminine. For more information, contact [Hollis Ryan](#).



**The Third Age** - Those age 60 and older have been gathering monthly, Friday evenings, 7 PM by Zoom.

Contact [Kirsten Rohde](#) for more information.



**The Men's Program** - Our Men's Circle is an expression of brotherhood and practice, with wisdom gathered from our own lives, other men's work, advocates, and the founders of this circle. Future events, including the take-down of the big white tent, to be announced.

Contact: [Norm Peck](#)



**Pathwork, A Program of Convocation: A Church and Ministry.** Pathwork offers a spiritual home in which to rest and to share your heart and mind as you move through these unpredictable times. Participants come together and find support and encouragement, gaining wisdom from the world's faith and wisdom traditions. All are welcome to join.

Meetings are held via Zoom on alternate Sundays: 7 to 9 PM

Contact: [Brucker Brucker](#) for Zoom information.



**Work and Play Parties Throughout the Year.** Traditionally, the Goodenough Community sponsors work parties over Memorial Day and Labor Day weekends as well as other times to express gratitude for the presence of our beloved retreat center, Sahale, and to experience the satisfaction of playing and working together.



*Sahale Trail Blazers, work party many years ago*