



Working for Health

The Findhorn Community

Religious chanting

Cornelia Featherstone

The Findhorn Community is an intentional, spiritual, international community that as people come together intentionally they choose to be here. Every morning people get together in the Nature Sanctuary and chant those very beautiful songs which uplift the spirit and the heart, and bring them a lovely start to the day. There's a spiritual focus to life here which is not a defined creed, but an understanding that the expression of the divine, or of God, or of a purpose greater than what we can see is within everything in life.

Religious chanting

Cornelia Featherstone

My spiritual practice is actually to express that true self to the best I can, stripping away the limitations which have been put upon myself through life through traumatising experiences, through illness, for instance, and to really find that expression. So health and spirituality are very closely linked. When I came here twelve years ago I was qualified and registered as a GP in Germany, but I needed to take a break and I came to this community and had the privilege of becoming the community doctor, which allowed me to work with the whole of life, not only with medical care or disease care, but with health care. It's actually much more important to focus on the work that happens before the symptoms arise, the work that is integrated in the daily life; for instance, here you know that the food is as much as possible grown locally, that it's organic, that it's fresh, that people have a spiritual discipline which gives them a physical relaxation in the meditation practices, etcetera, so that their body is well nurtured and looked after, that the environment is beautiful, well looked after, and integrated in inner life.

Christopher Raymont

Our work has a lot of connections with the health of our community. The most important one probably is that we are actually providing organic vegetables, and that we therefore know that these are free of residues and grown in a healthy soil in a healthy way. My personal philosophy of health is very much that it exists, not just as in me, but it exists in the community-owned part of, and it's actually very difficult to be healthy as an individual if there aren't healthy systems and support networks around. Three times in the week are work, in the mornings is basically harvesting, not so much in the winter, but in the summer, and we collect the vegetables together and then take them down to the kitchens.

Elizabeth Hill

Well the kitchen both physically and figuratively is the belly of the community and it's a place where people come together, and the food becomes very important because of its ability to nurture the body on many different levels.

Cornelia Featherstone

Health for me has a lot to do with the whole life of a patient, of a person actually, and being a patient is only a short, temporary role a person plays where they then see a medical doctor. It is about the individual fulfilling their own potential and finding a way to lead a life that suits them, that satisfies their own inner urge to express what they are in the world. The houses that we live in, and the environments we create, are very much an expression of our care for the environment or nature, but also they are an expression of the creative spirit, and one of the lovely expressions of that are our whisky barrel houses, which came out of the inspiration

of one man who saw those lovely whisky vats which would be put to firewood because the whisky industry started using steel vats, and he bought I think twenty of those barrels for very little money, and said these will be houses, and actually to quote him he said, "They will be spirit receivers on a higher level".

David Hoyle

I think what we're trying to do here is to develop a holistic economy to go with our views on holistic education, and lifestyle, and transport, and all the rest. So it's trying to see what would be definitions of a holistic economy, which would probably involve the same aspects as we look for in ourselves, in other words you're co-operation and inclusiveness, and balance, and also vision and movement. For us it's not radical, it's actually a more natural way of, economically speaking, traditionally economies were local, so you could say we're just, we're returning, we're going back to, you know, a traditional model but using technology and using our intelligence to make it work in a new way.

Cornelia Featherstone

I see that community as a laboratory for experiments in society. Some of our experiments work, some of them don't, but if we can't apply what we're doing here to the outside world it's irrelevant.

Christopher Raymont

We are quite a long way away from the sort of mainstream, many people do change their, the way they want to live their lives having experienced this place. I think on an original basis it does offer a significant challenge to people's perceptions if they're willing to come and be part of it.