



A Jewellery Fundraising Project for Susila Dharma.

I was opened in Subud in 1970 and have been doing latihan ever since! The experiences of latihan during Bapak's visits were enriching, especially a test he asked us to receive; "Show your talent with your hands". It was clear that God had given me the gift of being artistically creative with my hands. I was happy with this because I had already started a course at art school, which then led to me completing a degree course in textile design. I found that along with fine art, hand painted silk combined with traditional batik was the medium I liked best.

I was self employed until I got married to Magnus, a Subud Norwegian, and I moved from England to Norway. For about 8 years my life was very busy with 3 young children, but when I read about Colegio Amor I wanted to support a child there. The problem was that there was no extra money. I was a homebased mother, we had one income and an old house which needed totally renovating. I realized that I had to raise some money myself. Well, I had my hands! Bapak's talks about the importance of enterprises for making money for charitable purposes made an impression on me. Susila Dharma became an important aspect of my Subud life.

It started one day in 1989, when I saw some beautiful hand made glass drops, which I realized would make some elegant earrings. I contacted the glass factory in Sweden where they were made, and it turned out that they had other beautiful shapes; leaves, birds, flowers and spirals in many colours. I made some pairs of earrings and a year later I had sold enough to pay for a godchild and to invest in some new beads bought from Beadworks, a firm that has exciting hand crafted beads from all over the world. The next year I sold enough to support 2 children and then later, 3 children. Over ten years I supported 6 children at Colegio Amor. One of the children, Diego, got opened. This activity led me to take on being Chair of Susila Dharma Norway for 4 years, from 1994-1998. Since then I have also supported the Nkembo and Lembu Imbu schools in the Congo, and some initiatives at the Zone meeting in Norway in 2004.

In 1998, I was on point of winding up the project as I had got a bit uninspired making earrings. In order to use up all the beads I had left, I got the idea of making a few sets of necklaces with matching earrings. Surprisingly, this actually turned out to be very successful, and what I thought was an ending became a new beginning! This was proof of how one can experience unexpected things in the latihan! I decided to carry on the project and said to God: "If you want me to do this for Susila Dharma, then the angels must open doors for me when it comes to selling!"

Over the years I have got the help I asked for! I have had jewellery exhibitions at our local Arts Association and have a regular outlet selling Art Jewellery in an art gallery. I also have a Christmas exhibition which is in its third year. I have designed special medieval - style jewellery, which I sell at an annual medieval festival. I've also been to several schools and sold to the teachers there. Several times during the

early years when I felt like giving up, someone always came along to help. I would like to thank my mother, Helen Leask, and all Subud sisters who have helped to sell the jewellery all these years. The response to the project is very positive. People who buy the jewellery receive something for their donations and it makes them satisfied and happy to know that they are helping children. About 56, 000 Norwegian Kroner has been raised so far.

Eventually over the years the project has become more professional, and 7 years ago I gave it the name 'Alvedans'. I created a logo, using the image of an elf I had designed a couple of years before. I made a letterhead, visiting cards, advertising leaflets, etc. I also got some perspex earring boxes made, with the 'Alvedans' logo printed in gold on the front. In Norwegian, 'alv' means 'elf' and 'dans' means 'dance', - thus, dancing elves. Elves dancing in the moonlight is a strong mythological image here in Norway, (a phenomenum I have yet to experience!) The Elf logo actually includes a deeper symbolism ; - Christ, in the christian cross, Love represented in the heart-shaped face, the Spirit represented by the flaming wings. It's a symbol of the creative spirit in us, and in nature.

A couple of years ago I started reading about Norwegian mythology, and discovered that elves have a strong presence there. Traditionally, elves are good beings who help and protect humans and the balance of nature. They are connected to fertility, the soil, growth, death and rebirth and the creative force. The elves in Norwegian mythology are the also the faithful helpers of the fertility god Frøy (Frey) and the fertility goddess Frøya (Freya)! I suddenly became aware of a deeper elf symbolism in the project. Susila Dharma is helping others in need, and each time I sell some jewellery, it's like another elf is out there helping! I was not aware of this when I first started using the Alvedans elf logo, and the unfolding layers are shown to me like small revelations. The most recent revelation in this saga is the connection with my last name, Frøysadal. This is my husband's ancestral Norwegian name that I took when I got married to him. The name stems from the god Frøy, Frøysa is the place where they worshiped Frøy, and dal means valley/dale in Norwegian. Thus the name Frøysadal translates as; - ' The valley where they worshiped the god Frøy'. Frøysadal is actually a real location, it's a pre-christian settlement in the beautiful fiordlands and mountains on the west coast of Norway. Magnus' grandfather came from there. I've been there several times and it's an amazingly beautiful place just like Rivendel in Tolkien's 'Lord of the Rings'. It's also interesting how elves have suddenly become popular recently, due to Tolkiens trilogy.

Bapak said that those who have an expertise should be willing to share with others, so if anyone is interested in making jewellery, I am willing to give advice and share my supply contacts with them at the World Congress. I have also had the revelation that the 'Alvedans' project is not just a Susila Dharma activity, but it also involves artistic expression (SICA), and the enterprise elements of Subud all working together. It's a very satisfying way of fundraising which I can recommend to other creative people. It's also a good enterprise for places that have access to tourist areas. If you are interested please take contact with me :-

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