



INTERNATIONAL
YEAR OF LIGHT
2015



Lama Gangchen World Peace Foundation
United Nations Affiliated Non Governmental Organisation in Special Consultation with ECOSOC

Borobudur Mandala: vision of constant joy Light of ever expanding Love & Compassion 1-3-5-100-1000 - Millions...



Special dedications for the United Nations International Year of Light

International Conference: Borobudur 2015

The blessing of Borobudur to all life forms & the inner and outer environment for world peace. Particularly focusing on spiritual medicine for body and mind for a new education bringing ancient cultures to the forefront in a modern scientific way.

5-14 March 2015

In support of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals
In support of UNESCO's Culture Preservation Campaign and in support of World Heritage Sites



Inner Peace is the Most Solid Foundation for World Peace
T.Y.S. Lama Gangchen - World Healer

FAMILY IS OF VITAL IMPORTANCE

Kitlyn Tjin A Djie, family therapist

Kitlyn (1953) is Surinamese. When she was sixteen she migrated to the Netherlands to continue her studies. She married a Dutch man, they have two sons and by now five grandchildren. For many years, she worked in Dutch youth care. To give an answer to the western white individualistic thinking – which is often at odds with the needs of (migrant) children – she developed a model: Protective Wraps, that is based upon the strength of families. Nowadays, she gives lectures, provides courses and trainings, and wrote with Irene Zwaan several books and articles about Protective Wraps.

Meeting Lama Gangchen

In 2006, I met Lama Gangchen for the first time at the congress for Integrated Psychiatry. He spoke about how you can practice inner peace by using your senses in a positive manner, the effect it has on your relationship with others, your future and the world around you. We also performed NgalSo Self-Healing with all thousand or so present therapists. And I remember that I briefly greeted him personally afterwards. Ever since – when I cycle through my hometown Amsterdam and I am close to being pushed in a tram rail by an inattentive speedy student – I realise that I not only have to control the reflexive reaction of my mouth, but also that of my thoughts, because every negative action or thought leads to a negative result.

Interdependence actually is the theme of my life work, yet in the context of families. The base for my ideas and theories about working with families arose during my early years as a social worker in youth care. Families do have a self-solving ability when it comes to dealing with problems. I found it a lost opportunity – not to say child abuse – that the institutions didn't take advantage of the strengths available in the child's family. I made it into my life mission to bring families back to Dutch youth care.

My family

During my mission to give youth with problems their families back, I always researched my own family as an anthropologist and used it as a source in my work as an educator and trainer.

I was born in 1953 in Paramaribo, the capital of Suriname in South-America, a former Dutch colony. I am the fourth of six daughters. My father was Chinese from a patriarchal family: men were the boss. His grandparents from father's side had migrated in 1866 from the region Guangdong in South-China to Suriname. Their son, my grandfather, married a Vietnamese wife, born in French Guyana. She brought the French élan into our family.

My mother was Surinamese from a matriarchic family: a family ruled and led by women. Her father was Portuguese-German and her mother had a creole father, who descended directly from the slaves. Her mother's mother was Portuguese-Jewish.

Hence my mother, being a descendant from a female lineage, married into a male dominated family, and that has not always been easy on her. I clearly remember her complaining and being unhappy about the interferences of my father's relatives with our household. After my father's death, we became in an instant a female dominated family again. Before he past away, he made an attempt to hand the helm to one of my brothers in law, but that didn't work out. In brief: My life was and is strongly influenced by a mixture of cultures, histories and family values that have been transferred from generation to generation.

Culture shock

When I, being an adolescent myself, started my studies for social work and youth care in Holland, I met a huge problem as a Surinamese. I could not understand that social workers and therapists looked at the child without involving its family. I didn't really find the words for it, couldn't put my finger on the matter. But I simply didn't get it. During that education I never heard or learned anything about families. It was about sick, deaf, disabled, blind children and children with behaviour issues, but not about the families those children belonged to. As a social worker, one was taught to examine the child and provide aid as if the problems were existing completely by themselves and free from external influences.

Later on, I worked in a children's home where 40% of the children had a non-western background. Grandfathers, grandmothers, aunts and cousins often came by outside visiting hours, bringing baskets filled with foods. But all we did was sending the family away, while they were of vital importance for those children.

I found it heart-breaking that children were taken away from their parents and being given to the care of foster parents, while the rest of the child's family was not being explored for possible solutions. Children in need were torn apart from their families with their own values, culture and history, as if it all didn't matter. In western youth care, unconsciously there is a conviction that others can take better care than the family itself.

Family organisation

In families like mine there is a clear division of tasks between the ones that represent authority and those who fulfil other tasks. My eldest sister and I are authority figures. To my sister it was delegated because of her position in the row of children. And I have earned it because of my skills in problem solving.

In western families, things are very different, so I discovered. Western family education is I-oriented and directed at individual independence, autonomy, self-determination, self-fulfilment, privacy and self-development. The ultimate objective of the upbringing is for the child itself to become *happy*. While in non-western we-oriented families relational interdependence, respect for hierarchy and continuity of the extended family come first. Everybody contributes to this with a specific task or role. There are authority figures, supporters, caretakers, and advisors. In case of a problem, the whole system enters into force. The aim of upbringing is for the child to become *subservient* for the sake of family continuity.

Obviously the world is not black and white and in most families characteristics of both models can be identified. However, all families possess an ability to 'purify' when mistakes have been made. This power enables you to acknowledge your own mistakes, to remain compassionate and respectful to others, to allow differences between people and to recognise that your truth is not the only truth. Indeed, the family is the first place to practice tolerance and patience, as blood ties are stronger and better maintained than anything else.

Add perspectives

Regarding youth care, it is not only essential to bear in mind the child's family. In the first place it is important for a therapist or social worker himself (or her) to have knowledge about his own familial, historical and cultural background. Namely, your own background plays an important role in how you act and react in contact with the other.

How is your family organised? What cultures, religions and histories are still influencing the present? What are the opinions, convictions, 'sacred cows' that you inherited from home? The experience of what it means to reconnect with your own family is a precondition for social workers to be motivated and to know how to connect with their clients.

To know your own 'sacred cows' that you meet in contact with the other person is essential. If you are aware when you start judging, when you feel horrified about the other's opinions or habits, when you think you know better, then you are able to put your own ideas aside and to make space for the other person. In this way, the communication can stay open.

Next, it is important to gain knowledge about the other person. What is the migration history? How is the family organised? Which events in the past still play a role? Also, trauma can be transferred from generation to generation.

You can imagine without judging how it must be like to have another religion, another family or another history than your own.

To have knowledge of your own family history and culture is of great importance for anyone. It creates mutual understanding and opens new perspectives that lead to more empathy and compassion. It helps you to quit judging others.

The Family Soul

Meanwhile, I wrote three books with Irene Zwaan about *Protective Wraps* and the fourth is on its way. Our last book *The Family Soul* was meant for the Dutch to get reacquainted with the strength of their extended families. What events in the past influence the present? What opinions do your family have and where do they derive from? What is touched inside you when you start judging others? What is the strength of your family? How can you use the solving strategies of your family when things get difficult? Lama Gangchen wrote the foreword in which he highlights family as being the first and most essential context to practice a positive use of the five senses.

Quote:

'(...)Our family is the first and most sheltered social context where we can exercise our qualities and check their beneficial outcomes.

Looking back to the past, we also find that in all cultures and traditions the same values are promoted over the centuries, such as respect, tolerance, love and compassion. It is these basic values that must be part of our family education to build the basis for a healthy society. Thus, those are the qualities that have to be cultivated at the very root, as a "Non- Formal Education" starting in the smallest social unit, which is the family.(...)'

This foreword inspired us to give Lama Gangchen's ideas a permanent place in the model of Protective Wraps. Surely respect, tolerance, love and compassion are the base for inner peace, family peace and world peace.

