# Action for Life Let life be an offering

' Action for

Life has been a

reconfirmation

of the fact that

" the whole

world is my

family "."











Imagine taking 10 months out of study or work to travel through Asia with:

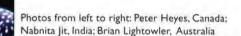
- 34 people, aged between 19-72
- representing 16 countries (Australia, Canada, Fiji, India, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Moldova, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, South Africa, South Korea, Taiwan, UK and USA)
- · Buddhists, Christians, Hindus, Muslims

This was for us the unique experience of joining - Action for Life (AfL)

Drawn by the thought 'Let life be an offering', we gathered together as strangers on 30 September 2001. However, taking part in this 10 months adventure that took us through many parts of India, as well as East and South-East Asia, we became something of a global family.

> The inspiration for this leadership training program was developed by Ren-Jou Liu from Taiwan, along with a team of 'care-givers/ facilitators' from the international network of MRA-Initiatives of Change (see page 14 for description of MRA-IC). The main aim of the program was to develop a 'diverse, international network committed to a process of global change, starting in communities and nations, and effective through moral and spiritual growth'.

> > Still sounds a little crazy? Maybe, but for each of us it challenged the way we think about a 'normal' life ....





(Back row) Hale Igome, PNG; Liu Ren-Jou, Taiwan (Middle) Suresh Khatn, Fiji (Front) Leena Khatri, Fiji

Wadiaa Khoury, Lebanon Sarah Wood, New Zealand

Laura Vertigan, Australia Dang Thi Hai, UK

Sharon Hopkins, Canada Grace Liu, Taiwan

Jean Brown, Australia Mike Brown, Australia It's been the journey of a lifetime - a journey through communities, through the experiences of people, through the agonies and challenges of situations of crisis and trauma, through the hopes of people struggling. But it's also been a journey into ourselves - a journey of discovery, of often painful but mostly hope-giving realisation of deepening faith and wider understanding of our need of each other and the keys to teamwork.

Being part of AfL meant learning to always be ready. Ready to share personal experiences at any time or occasion, to play with children in slum areas, to sing to a Prince or to a Speaker of Parliament. It meant continuous learning and adaptability. All aspects and extremes of life seemed to whirl together as we travelled in luxury one day and on a hot, dusty bus the next. Sometimes we were eating by hand from banana palm leaves on the floor, at other times using three sets of cutlery in a French restaurant. And what a privilege it was to have the

During our travels we developed as individuals and as a team. Feelings of personal inadequacy gave way to convictions - inspiration coming from our 'teachers': business people, religious leaders, orphans, NGO workers, MPs, and many more. We wanted to learn from them as people of faith and commitment, about the social development and ethical struggles they were engaged in.

hearts and rich cultures of Asia open up to us!

Photos from top: Fauziah Zahari, Malaysia; Ritu Angirish, Tania Chatteriee and Prayeen Vasava, India; (left to right) Gwen McLean, Canada; Rob Wood, Australia; Zeb Simpson, USA, and Wanjiru Mungai, Kenya



Cheol Min Park, South Korea Liliana Botnaru, Moldova Ildze Slanke, Latvia

Glenys Wood, New Zealand

Peter Wood, New Zealand Mgeleza Seyama, South Africa Joung-Suk Ryoo, South Korea Julie Tan, Malaysia Loan Phan, Australia

Nigel Heywood, Australia Oleg Ermurati, Moldova Yeon-Yuk Jeong, South Korea

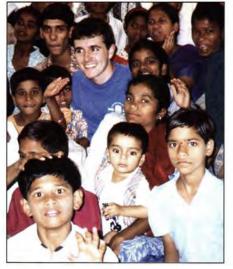
# Experiencing the hopes and challenges of India

29th of September 2001, AfL starts. 28 participants arrive at Asia Plateau, the Asian centre for MRA-IC, for three weeks initial training. We get to know each other and build our team with the help of facilitator/ trainer Erik Andren from Britain. Then - ready or not - breaking into two groups we proceeded down the hill to meet India and discover one of the most vibrant cultures of the world, and perhaps one or two things about ourselves. Think of a baby turtle crawling along the sand just about to enter the ocean for the first time - then you have a picture of the AfL trying to find its feet as we entered into bustling cities, struggling villages, places of worship, schools, universities and homes that welcomed us as if we were royalty. We met with the 'change-makers' involved with such areas as education, religion, politics, human rights, care for the under-privileged, the environment, agricultural development, poverty reduction and tackling corruption

## Asia Plateau, Panchgani, in the Western Ghats of Maharashtra: 29 Sept. - 24 Oct., 2001



Pune: 25 October - 17 Nov. 28 Nov - 18 Dec.



Gujarat 26 Nov. - 7 Dec.



Mumbai: 24 Oct. - 17 Nov. 1 - 18 Dec.



Returning to Asia Plateau, Panchgani: 30 - 20 Jan. 2002 for the 'Global Hoho' meeting of MRA-Initiatives of Change



Jamshedpur: 28 Jan. - 4 Feb.





Kolkata: 5-13 Feb.



Bangalore, Coimbatore: 29 Jan. - 28 Feb.



Salem: 12 - 19 Feb.



# Discovering the riches and dynamism of Asia

After five months in India, the team re-grouped in Malaysia during March 2002 for a short break, evaluation and storyswapping. Then we divided once more into two teams: one going to South-East Asia, the other to East Asia.

In the following months, we were moved by the dedication of many people we met who struggle to rebuild their communities, or to confront and change something in their nation. In some places our teams were involved in service with NGOs (non-governmental organisations), alongside people who work for human development in orphanages, drug rehabilitation centers, specialised schools and other institutions.

We strengthened our skills through designing and facilitating workshops, and through initiating new groups eager to bring change in their own community. We were also enriched by sharing spiritual experiences with people of other faiths and cultures.

Our 10 month Asian experience climaxed at the Asia Pacific Youth Conference in Malaysia in July, with 100 young people, many of whom we had met on our travels. Our task was not only to plan and facilitate the conference but to encourage the growth of this network of potential young 'change-makers' across Asia.

Malaysia: 6 - 12 March; 4 May - 2 August



Thailand: 14 - 19 March



Cambodia: 20 March - 30 April



Vietnam (part of the group): 11 - 30 April



Singapore: 3 - 6 June



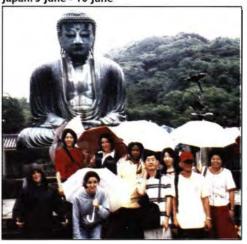
Korea: 10 May - 2 June



China: 17 - 27 June



Japan: 3 June - 16 June



Taiwan: 14 March - 9 May; 3 - 14 July





ndonesia: 24 - 29 June



# Meeting change-makers and bridge-builders

The places and people we met were fascinating. But most powerful for us was meeting face-to-face with individuals and groups who care for the marginalised and underprivileged, and who struggle to change what is wrong in their society. To describe their work and motivation as we saw it with our eyes would take a whole book. Here is just a glimpse of a few of these remarkable people...



#### Blind women with vision

For someone who cannot see the world around her, Madhu Singhal is a lady with a whole lot of vision. Rather than content herself with a secretarial job and her MA in music, Madhu took on assisting other

> physically disabled women in South India to make something of their lives. 'Mitra lyothi', meaning 'light of friendship', thus began -and for the past 10 years has been developing a talking-book library and life-skills courses in Bangalore. As they sang, danced and proudly displayed their handiwork, blind girls attending this course showed us a spirit that cannot be bound by disability.

### CAMBODIA

## Human rights for all

Crossing the Thai border into Cambodia we were welcomed into the 'Peaceful Children's Home' orphanage. Next morning at 5.30 am they started their exercises and prayers. We sang and played with them, and helped them clean up their compound. Then one night we sat under the stars listening to Son Soubert (below), founder of the Home, and a member of the Constitutional Council of Cambodia. Soubert related how his life was affected by MRA as a student in India; how he and his father were drawn into organising relief for 200,000 refugees fleeing from the Pol Pot genocide; and of his relentless struggle for peace and development.

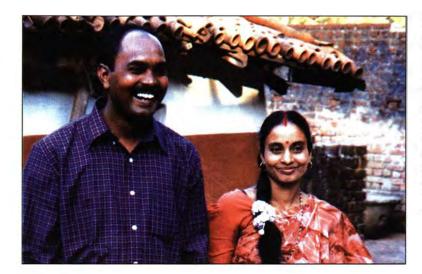
A week later Kassie Neou (right) told us his gripping story of surviving six months in a brutal Khmer Rouge torture camp, and how he later helped one of his torturers as

an act of forgiveness. Now as director of the Cambodian Institute of Human Rights, he gives training to thousands of teachers, policemen and government officials.

Dy Ratha (far right), a remarkable woman of courage and compassion, took us to her clinic where her staff give counselling support to women in the sex trade.







#### **EAST INDIA**

#### In the tribal belt

In Jamshedpur, an industrial city in eastern India, people applying the principles of MRA over 30 years have impacted 100s of lives, industries and villages. In the tribal belt around the city Buddeshwar Mahato showed us around his village, which had been a centre of illicit liquor trade. When he gave up alcohol himself, he introduced an alternative economy which has replaced the liquor business. Proudly he showed us the piggery, experimental agriculture and village industries. 'I did not believe I could live a different life,' he told us. 'I want to take this to other youth in the villages.'

## **IAPAN-KOREA**

### On their knees

The 25th annual conference organised MRA Japan in Odawara opened under the theme '21st Century for Dialogue and Reconciliation'. But none of us were prepared for the moving act of reconciliation which happened during the dialogue on Japanese-Korean relations. Venerable Mother Park Chung-Soo of Korean Won Buddhism was surprised when a dozen Japanese came forward on their knees and asked for forgiveness for what the Japanese did to Koreans in the past. Mother Park could not stop her tears, but helped each of them to stand up, and said, 'I have been dealing with the reconciliation of two countries on the personal level passively, but from today I commit myself to deal with it more actively on the national and international level.' Late into the night young Koreans and Japanese, and students from other countries, talked over this incident.





### NAGALAND

## Micro-credit and moral choices

Far up on India's north-east border with Burma, we were welcomed into villages of Nagaland, Rows of Naga elders, wrapped in colourful shawls and traditional dress, broke into melodic chanting as we arrived. For hours we were honoured with feasts, singing and dancing, and with their stories of struggle through years of armed conflict. Meeting M Vero, the president of the Naga

Hoho (traditional council), we heard of the reconciliation process they have started through towns and villages to see the family of Nagas become one...To end the factional conflict, and destruction which has developed side by side with moral confusion'. One of our hosts, Neichute Duolo (right), has taken a courageous stand against extortionists, and to help young people fight the lure of 'easy money'. The organisation he founded, 'Entrepreneurs



Associates', has more than 600 members and aims to establish 1,000 'first-generation entrepreneurs'. Meeting with some of the young business-people, we learned of their micro credit bank and of the moral choices each of them has made to practise honesty and community-mindedness in their business ventures.

# What we learned as we met people and served...



## EFFORT FOR RECONCILIATION Cheol-Min Park

A moment of apology at the Odawara Conference was the most memorable experience for me during AfL. When some senior lapanese knelt down in sorrow before Mother Park (a leader of Korean Won Buddhism), I found it hard to let go of the bitterness and sadness deep in my heart. I couldn't look at the people around me because most were crying for the past wrongs of both countries. After this special experience of facing our true feelings, another Korean and I took a step forward to share deeply with some Japanese young people. We exchanged personal feelings and views of our past for about three hours. And we agreed to make an effort to bring reconciliation, and to work together for the future. Many people eagerly committed themselves to support and encourage these big opportunities wholeheartedly. And I have started asking myself, 'Am I ready to forgive?'



## PURIFYING IDENTITY Wadiaa Khoury

I feel particularly grateful for what I learnt in the regions of East Asia. Coming from the Middle East, it is quite difficult to think objectively about peace and justice... but my visits to Korea, Japan, Taiwan and mainland China gave me the most precious experience of looking at matters from all different angles.

I adopted this attitude after going through many difficulties including facing my deepest fears and purifying my identity over and over again. What affected me the most was that many people would assume that because I'm from Lebanon I'm a Muslim, and throw at me all their spite and criticism. It took me a long time to move from condemning 'people's ignorance' about the existence of 20 million Christians in the Middle East to the realization of how big my responsibility is in bringing more understanding between the Arab world and the West. I'm so grateful that I've had the chance to 'walk a mile' in a Muslim's shoes and am ready to form friendships with my Muslim compatriots on a new fruitful basis: for the sake of Lebanon as a message of hope.

## THE MOST AMAZING EXPERIENCE

## Oleg Ermurati

I think India has revealed the worst in me, and I am grateful for that. Without this time living in community I would probably never think of those sides of me. So many times I was finding it very hard to be myself and many times I was listening with a huge amount of prejudice. I am glad I slowly overcame it. Sometimes I felt very vulnerable. The times of quiet were more than just helpful; they led to something deeper-searching for a faith. Coming from a non-religious background, this was a new discovery for me.

Now that I look back I realize that I feel much more confident about things I want to do in my life, to serve for something more, rather than just simply having a career. With all the difficulties and joys, being a part of this group was the most amazing experience I have ever had.



### PROFIT-MAKING WITH SERVICE Liliana Botnaru

I was touched by many experiences in India and met some important change-makers in Indian society. However, what impressed me the most were the industries we visited. They proved that the means are as important as the goals, and that profit-making should be tempered with community service. It was a crucial addition to my economics studies as I was sceptical that this concept could exist in today's world.



## CONNECTING VIETNAMESE Loan Phan

Going to Vietnam was like going home. After being away for over 16 years, Vietnam has changed and I have grown older. Even though Vietnam remains communist, it is now so vibrant, full of life and humming with new development.

In particular, I could feel a thirst for knowledge among the young people of Vietnam. Through their initiatives and activities, such as English speaking clubs, there was a deep yearning to connect with each other and to the rest of the world. This led me to form great friendships based on trust and sharing, which was challenging, given the social climate. We started a project to connect Vietnamese young people all over the world, to create a context for the transfer of knowledge, skills, life experiences, and friendship that will contribute to a bright future for Vietnam.

## BREAK FREE OF PREJUDICES Dang Thi Hai

Travelling with young people has shown me that inter-generational communication and cooperation can be a

stimulation and a joy, when our service is directed to God and to others. In the Vietnamese culture young people are expected to show utmost respect to their elders, and perhaps that's why I found myself getting particularly irritated with a younger Vietnamese participant. Then the words of a song 'Go, Go with an Answer' came to me: 'Throw away your burdens, you won't need them any more.' I have decided to throw away the burden that my culture had laid upon my thinking and relationships. This has helped me to break free from my prejudices and isolation as well as deepen my faith in God.

## NATION-IMPACTING POTENTIAL Brian Lightowler

Two things stand out during my experience with AfL. Through bringing our message to all levels of society. I saw the life-changing, even nation-impacting potential of small, vigorous international teams moving across a continent. Secondly, I experienced the challenge of this way of operating. I saw that we are the message -- how we live, think and speak. There is no other message. There is no musical play or drama or renowned public speaker to carry the message. The message of MRA-IC, that people can change in a fundamental way and that can be a catalyst for a wider change affecting society, the nation and the world, stands or falls by how we demonstrate it. That is a healthy challenge whether you are 20 or 70!



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## PUT MY FAITH IN GOD Fauziah Zahari

At the very beginning of my time in India we shared how we felt about September I Ith. Being the only Muslim, I was nervous. But later their understanding and care overcame my nervousness. With this international group I grew in spirit and mentally. I appreciated the fellowship I received from each one of them, and put my faith in God.

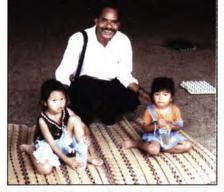
I was also touched by the warm, friendly care and hospitality of all the Indian people I met, especially my host family in Baroda who really took care of me during the fasting month of Ramadan. Even though we come from different religious backgrounds they respected me as a Muslim. Through this personal experience I believe Hindus and Muslims can live together.



## NO HURT FEELINGS Sharon Hopkins

It took a couple of months to really feel a part of this group, in which time I had to look inside myself and be honest in areas of my life that I felt ashamed of. I had to put things right where I could and ask forgiveness from God when I couldn't. This gave me the confidence I needed to be part of the team we were building and to ask God for guidance whereas before I felt undeserving. We've had a lot of misunderstandings and a lot of hurt feelings but this has really helped me grow as a person. It taught me how to be honest and open about my emotions and not harbour hurt feelings but to express them as soon as possible in a manner that doesn't make the other person feel attacked. This has been a huge lesson for me, and one I hope to use for the rest of my life.

# A wealth of experience and insights gained



## BREAK FREE AND THINK WISELY Hale Igome

Cambodia is a country that needs caring hands and caring hearts. But often my low level of education limits my freedom and communication with people from all walks of life. It was hard to break free from fear and a low self-confidence.

One morning while praying, God challenged me to change, break free and think wisely. In the orphanage where we were staying, I decided to build a drum oven for Cambodia's poor children, and I taught them how to bake bread, buns, cakes and biscuits. A few days later I also decided to help the carpenter at the orphanage to finish building the workshop shed that was incomplete.

I realized that ordinary people can do extra-ordinary things for others. Prayer moves God's hands.



## HEART STRETCHED SO WIDE Nigel Heywood

Packing bags, meeting new people, trying to understand local currency, being moved to tears and laughter missing home, hearing stories of torture, hope and old philosophies made new, feeling guilty for not paying a legless beggar... My head, heart and eyes have never been stretched so wide... AfL, a strange group of people who soon became friends and then family.

## CONFRONTING CHALLENGES Julie Tan

I was very touched by a four-day visit to a drug rehabilitation and AIDS hospice in Malaysia. Despite the number of times these drug addicts may have 'fallen', they are back because they want to kick the habit. I also admire their courage in admitting their helplessness. I felt I could identify with their vulnerability, and want to find the same courage to confront my personal challenges. By sharing my own difficult situation and connecting with drug users, I saw that they were not 'useless' citizens, but have suffered a lot.



## TO GROW AS A HUMAN BEING Peter Heyes

The members of AfL, and the people with whom we interacted, were like a miniature version of the world we live in. As I learnt more about my friends in AfL, and the places and people we visited, I realised this was how the rest of the world should be living. I decided I could not make the world a better place in which to live unless I was prepared to make the effort to learn about people and to respect our differences.



## REALITIES I HADN'T KNOWN Ritu Angirish



AfL came to me as a tool that restored my faith in people at the time I most needed it. It. answered all my questions. It gave me mmense hope.

It gave me a feeling of companionship, of having like-minded people... We started off as a group of strangers, but the time spent in India made us more than a group; it made us a family with very honest and caring relations for life. I came to know my country from an entirely different perspective. I explored new realities, facts, ventured into areas that I hadn't known. During this time I was also given a chance to look into myself, finding courage to take the first step to put things right.



IUST BEING THERE Mike Brown

Working with people in different cities and countries who are sweating their hearts out for some sort of healing or transformation gives us hope. At the same time, our just being there and listening strangely fires their vision. And we begin to feel like a network; friends truly trying to work on 'Initiatives for Change',

## NOT SUCH A DARK PLACE Laura Vertigan For the past few years I had been feeling alone and depressed, and didn't see much point to just

existence. AfL



hope for the future, which is the most precious gift imaginable. The world isn't such a dark place; I am not such a bad person. Simple, but it will be a long time before I can fully believe it. This time has undoubtedly toughened me up, given me a different perspective on life, left me with many valuable new friends, and strengthened what faith I had. I came to solve the world's problems, I am learning to solve my own.

## AT HOME WITH ORPHANS Mgeleza Sevema

Being an orphan my stay at an orphanage in Korea was an amazing experience. It reminded me of how I was ridiculed and labelled as an abnormal kid because ! didn't have parents. I felt a nightmare was coming back to haunt me, and uneasiness crept in. I completely shut down. My heart, spirit and mind disconnected from the environment. But to see the children smile, to see them being cared for, helped me to look at where I have been and where I am now. It made me realise and feel that I had a mother and a father all my life. And the blanket that's been covering my eyes for many years was removed.



## **BONDING ACROSS ETHNICITIES** Nabnita lit

I have realised that for a better half of my life I've been vying for acknowledgement, attention and appreciation... But for the first time I feel valuable and truly valued as a friend. Small gestures of friendship have touched my life and reinforced my faith in bonding across ethnicities, prejudices and differences.

## 'I came to solve the world's problems. I am learning to solve my own.'



## **BUNGY JUMP** IN SPIRITUAL REALM Glenys Wood AfL has lifted

LIVING

**TOGETHER** 

Yeon-Yuk

Before the

MESSAGE

Jeong

program I expected I would learn how

to introduce MRA /IC more effectively

to people who had never heard about,

Certainly it helped me to do so. But

I didn't expect to learn how to be

more patient. Sometimes it was so

hard just to eat, travel and work

together with other team members

that we had to stop to talk over our

feelings and difficulties. Through living

together we ourselves have become

the message of AfL and MRA /IC.

me out of the realm of what I feel is possible and what I can

handle. At 60, I am discovering the adventurous life never ends if I am prepared to leap into the unknown, trusting God. He is holding the rope at the other end! Breaking through the comfort zone has seen fear left behind. I am learning to bungy jump in the spiritual realm, learning from the younger members of the team. I would recommend this experience as the best investment of time, energy and money it is possible to make.



# So where did the money come from?

participants and 8 care-givers at any one time, has cost a total of \$US115,000, or \$US4,423 per person. That such a varied and extensive program could be mounted so economically, is due in equal measure to the depth of care and hospitality of MRA-IC (see below) friends and supporters in the countries visited, to the generous funding of MRA-IC bodies, to the selfless support of caregivers, and to the enthusiasm and dedication of the participants themselves.

from their homes to India and on to Malaysia, and to contribute \$2,500 towards their accommodation and travel during the program. Caregivers, numbering [6 in total, gave their time as they could and often contributed to their own expenses. MRA-IC bodies granted \$50,000 plus administrative expertise; the Karl Popper Foundation gave \$12,500; the Ven. Mother Park Chung-Soo of Korean Won Buddhism donated \$10,000; loyal friends in several countries another \$12,500.

Costs in every country visited fell below budget thanks to careful control of expenditure, and to the open hearts and homes of host communities.

From start to finish. AfL has been a great adventure into the unknown, and this applies as much to the finances as to anything else. Although only slightly

This 10 month program, covering 18 more than two thirds of the initial budget requirement was raised, every bill has been paid, and every unexpected need met during the 10 month period.

The training of participants has included taking responsibility for all the practical aspects of group travel, including itineraries and account keeping. This, teamed with a facility with computers. has allowed those far from the action, to maintain an oversight of the funding situation. Allowing for the difficulties of email and telephone contact from some of the places visited, Participants were asked to pay their fares not to mention the complexities of handling hugely varied currencies, this has proved enormously successful. Our deep and continuing gratitude is due to all those who gave so generously and often sacrificially to sustain this program. - By Peter Wood -



Photos (top): Riding to the next program on the back of motor-cycle taxis in Phnom Penh

(middle): a village feast laid out for us - crabs, pork, jungle vegetables, rice, all with chilli - at a village in Nagaland

(bottom): On the train to Thailand

(Below): Some of the newspaper articles covering 'Action for Life' as we travelled.



\* 'MRA-Initiatives of Change' is an international network of all races and religions engaged in empowering social transformation through change taking place in the lives unselfishness and love, and by the leading of the inner voice of truth, or God, initiatives



people Who believe in one philosophy, one visia world, writes Richa Bansal

A CTION GROUP





Jamshedpur Live

Promoting the cause of

त्वाला, निरमा, नतम का पटायोप के, सूद को खल्प का देने के मिला दूसरा कोई विकास्प रही दिखा रहा है, ऐसे में जो यह दिखाए उसकी हैंसिजां फरिट्या से कम नहीं आंको जानी चारिए। ऐसे ही फरिट्यां का एक् अभिकार दस दन दिने जमफेदपुर के दीर पर है और अपने कारियान के संदेशों को जन - जन हक पहला यह है। प्रधान नाई विकास नाम है खुंबा का है। इसका नाम है बैतिक पुरस्तवार स दल में दुनिया के कई देतों के लोग शामिल





Promoting the cause of

communal harmony

## The real action for life has only just begun...

We started out with the thought of 'Let life be an offering'.

At the end of these 10 months - after all the diverse richness of experiences and people we have encountered - we can say again that we want our lives to be 'an offering'. An offering of service, of working for healing and justice, for inspiring others to become change makers. We've seen so many people doing it, in so many ways and for many reasons. This is how we would like to pattern our lives.

In our final evaluation, we expressed our commitments and discoveries, including:

- 'AfL has been a reconfirmation of the fact that "the whole world is my family"."
- 'I have decided to have a daily time of quiet to listen to the inner voice, to trust in the directions I'm given and act on them step by step.
- · 'I want to discard old patterns of behaviour from the past which are not growth-giving.'
- · 'I have found a faith beyond any particular religion, which unites and strengthens all

..., and we wrote what we want to take on in our own areas:

- 'In Eastern Europe, I'd like to help people listen to each other and accept their differences... And bring the message of liberation from fear and hate.'
- I want to find a way to help my generation in Australia in the struggle against drugs, depression and suicide."
- · 'Working as an HIVI Aids counsellor and educator is no longer a service to my community in South Africa but a Passion with a capital P'
- · 'As a Korean I often asked myself, "Am I ready to accept unconditional apology from the Japanese?" When we were in Japan at the Odawara conference I realised
- · 'As someone from the Middle-East, I have moved from the position of angry passion to one of compassion."

Plans are being considered for another Action for Life program - details will be available from the addresses below.

The action will continue whether another program happens or not. We need to follow up on the initiatives which are being taken in the different places we visited and to build on the friendships we made. We carry in our hearts news of initiatives in India, requests for further visits to Cambodia as well as other Asian countries we visited, and the huge challenge of the future of China which we just touched during the visit to Shanghai and Nanjing,

The world indeed needs all our commitment, efforts and initiatives. What's needed is to abandon the passive complaining about the world's situation, and become an active part of the answer!

This first AfL has taught us a lot about many people, cultures and countries. But the most exciting journey was the one each one of us made within, discovering the best of one's potential and passions, and learning to be a leader. That journey continues.

Do you want to make a difference?

Why don't you join us and become the difference you want to see?

You can join our regular email group list by sending a message to <aflicmra@yahoo.com.sg> or visit www. geocities.com/actionforlife2002 Or contact any of us on the list opposite. For written material contact: The Action Secretariat, 4F-6, No. 1, Lane 38, Ming-Chun First Street, Kueri-Ren Village, Tainan County, Taiwan, R.O.C. Tel: 886-6-239 3447 Fax: 886-6-239 3795

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