

Peter Tongue: Exploring the Mystery

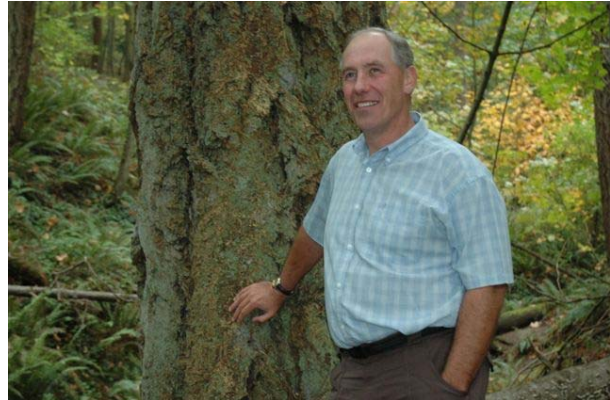
Story by Greg Marchand for FOCUS MAGAZINE October 2007©

Peter Tongue and I start our run at the Henderson Park chip trail, cross over to the grounds of the University of Victoria, meander through the rhododendron garden, then head across campus to Mystic Vale. Despite our laboured breathing brought on by the hilly path, Peter feels at peace here. For him, the name of the vale has meaning: it's truly mystical. A native elder once told him that his ancestors held it to be a sacred site. Halfway up the trail, we stop and listen to the silence as Peter closes his eyes and breathes deeply.

"I love it here," he says.

Sacred sites are important to Peter. He's traveled the world visiting them. From Rosslyn Chapel in Scotland, to Moraine Lake in the Canadian Rockies, to Sedona in the southern United States, he's found spiritual connections that may not be quantifiable, but to him are real and strong and part of his personal quest.

Peter has been traveling this path for 25 years. "The spiritual awakening process requires you to do a lot of soul searching and inner work," he says. "It's not straight forward. It's a mystery. And it's supposed to be a mystery."



Until two years ago, Peter was the Director of the Senior Campus at St. Michaels University School. I first met Peter at the school when he arrived from Britain in 1985 to teach chemistry, coach rugby, and head the school's boarding community. He shocked many of his friends and colleagues when, just over two years ago, he left that well-paid, highly-respected job to follow a less traditional calling. Although many see his move as a financial and professional gamble, Peter sees it differently. "We must follow spirit with common sense, not fear," he says, "and realize that we will always be protected when living life according to spirit."

Born in Birmingham, England to, in his own words, "a jock, practical father and an intellectually frustrated, esoteric mother," Peter credits his mother's interest in astrology and other psychic gifts with fostering his metaphysical interests.

"Today's materialistic world is providing less and less satisfaction for people," Peter believes. "They're saying, 'I've got everything I need in my life and yet I still don't feel fulfilled.' So people are turning to this higher consciousness concept to try to understand what it is they are missing, or why they don't feel satisfied in their life. That is often when people start to search."

One of the best tools for opening inner consciousness, according to Peter, is meditation. Every Monday evening, he leads a guided meditation at the Church of Truth in James Bay. "Our world today is full of activity and distraction," he says. "Very few of us find the time to spend our time out in nature or spend our time sitting in meditation. We go through this life distracted from what we are supposed to be doing, which is to discover more about ourselves. Meditation provides us with the opportunity to spend a few moments within ourselves with our inner world...and in that quiet space, other aspects of our inner life will begin to reveal themselves to us."

One of Peter's more recent adventures has been the recording of two meditation CDs. One leads the listener through a mind-expanding daily meditation and a relaxation meditation that can be used as an aid to sleep. The other focuses on developing self confidence and positive awareness for athletes or anyone striving to achieve. This autumn, he'll continue a regular, online broadcast on Quicken Radio that he started presenting last spring. Over

the internet, he leads meditations similar to the ones on his CDs and conducts phone-in shows dealing with spiritual matters.

Beyond his fledgling broadcasting career, Peter's long-term dream is to start his own school. His vision is to create an educational home for students who don't always fit in to the public or even independent school systems as they exist today. He's lectured on and held workshops about what some have termed Indigo Children. To Peter, these are young people who see the world from a perspective that many don't understand and who often relate to a higher calling. They don't seem to always manage in mainstream schools or society in general. Peter believes that allowing these children to explore their differences, tap into their spirituality, and take on leadership roles will have benefits for not just the children, but the world as a whole.

Listening to Peter talk passionately about spiritual matters, his Birmingham accent still apparent, it's easy to see how this chemistry-teaching rugby coach could begin to develop a career leading meditation groups and guiding youth who don't fit educational norms. In his mid-50s and having taken the step away from a secure job toward what he feels is his true calling, Peter is comfortable and confident with the path he has chosen. "I had to take the leap of faith first before I had the explanation revealed to me," he says. "This is very much a path of trust and faith: trust in creator, trust in Spirit, trust in the realms beyond this one."



Peter Tongue in Mystic Vale, 2007