

Gentle Wind: "Honest, Decent People"

Dear Editor:

Please consider this an official response to your article, "Gentle Wind Project Wafts into Ellsworth."

The Gentle Wind Project is a non-profit education research group that studies alternative mental health technologies. Founded in 1983, this project has offered the use of this technology free of charge to anyone in the world seeking help. As a complementary health technology, The Gentle Wind instruments are used in hospitals, clinics, schools, orphanages, nursing homes, hospice centers, prisons and community centers throughout the world. The instruments are used by well-respected health care professionals many of whom have given endorsements. Please go to www.gentlewindproject.org

The article contains misinformation including the idea that I stated that the healing technology helps with chronic pain. What I told your reporter was that our instruments were in clinical trials to determine their effects on long-term, chronic pain.

Your report also discussed the legal battle between Gentle Wind and James Bergin and Judy Garvey. It failed to provide readers with the following critical information.

Judy Garvey was a volunteer for the Gentle Wind Project and in 1999 was asked to leave her volunteer position. After this time, she authored a negative report about The Gentle Wind Project that

was published on several Internet Web sites. Three individuals and their three businesses have settled their parts of the lawsuit. Two have placed public apologies to Gentle Wind on their Web sites.

As for The Gentle Wind Project income, we are happy to say that we have been able to raise funds over the past five years that have allowed us to expand the project into Third World countries where people are in desperate need of the mental and emotional support provided by our technology. See www.gentlewindiran.com.

Your reporter implies that it is immoral for non-profit organizations to raise funds. How does he think non-profits are supposed to survive? As for staff salaries, our staff works an average of 84 hours a week without vacations and other expected benefits. After 21 years of loyal service, the highest paid, professionally credentialed staff member still earns less than \$16 per hour. Our tax returns are public record and they are in good order.

As for The Gentle Wind Project, there is nothing controversial about us. We are honest, decent people who offer free mental and emotional help to anyone who asks. It seems that it is difficult for some people to imagine that an organization could actually offer free help and come from goodwill without being suspect.

Mary Miller, MSW, Co-Director
The Gentle Wind Project
Kittery

Investigate Gentle Wind's Claims

Dear Editor:

Your balanced report (12-16-04) on the Gentle Wind Project's (GWP) recent self-promotion in Ellsworth and Blue Hill was much appreciated. We think that people in this area - who regularly exhibit large doses of common sense - are not easily convinced by full-page ads, radio announcements, balloons, and candy. We wish that we had more of this good sense when we became enchanted, two decades ago, by GWP "healing" claims in connection with our own goals of helping people.

There have been many promotional statements made by GWP leaders and followers concerning their "healing products." To evaluate these claims, and the disparaging remarks that might be made by GWP about their critics, we offer two cautionary suggestions: 1) Follow one of GWP's claims or testimonials completely to its source. Who is quoted? Why? Are they followers of the group? etc.; 2) Determine whether GWP uses any "straw man arguments" to rebut the statements and credentials of experts or former GWP members.

Such arguments can sometimes be used to redefine an issue so as to render it more easily dismissible through distraction, while still not refuting the original issue.

Because the GWP leaders are suing us for telling our personal stories about experiences with their

group over a 17-year period, we can't go into further detail here. For anyone who may possibly be interested in learning more about GWP, or our history with it, we suggest that you do some research on the Internet where you will find a wealth of information on a variety of websites, including Gentle Wind Project's.

Thanks to everyone for your patience and understanding during our past connection with this group.

Jim Bergin and Judy Garvey
Blue Hill