

# Tales From Thailand, 2020 #4

Hello again, dear family of readers.



Top left is the Chinese dragon, on New Year's Day. We are now in the year of the Metallic Rat. Top right is my favorite "dragon," and also my closest neighbor here at S.D.S. The photo above is actually the baby.

Mama appeared last month and posed for five minutes, but I didn't have my camera with me...what a tease! Mama has grown to (at least) eight feet long now. For you left-brain readers, those brick tiles in the photo are approximately 14".



This winter in Thailand, my schedule has been filled to the brim with field trips, accompanying Khun-mae and Nawng Joy all over the country. On our trip to Chiangmai, a famously groovy part of northern Thailand, we stayed at an elegant Hindu/Krishna organic farm and retreat center run by a lovely

Thai woman and her Russian husband, who is an antique dealer in Japan. It seems the world is getting smaller every day. This center hosts Krishna devotees from all over the world, and their Bhagvan/master at the temple here is an American.

One of Khunmae's stops was a seminar for 150 parents and their developmentally challenged children. I played my flute and sang my "Happy Birthday to You" song, as usual. Later, Khunmae asked me to come up and speak to the audience about the special gifts of autism. I am always the last person to know the topic of my talk, because Nawng-Joy translates it to me immediately before I begin. I love to do that, actually!

So I spoke about Greta Thunberg's "super powers" as she calls it. And then described the ways that we are all learning to see and hear and feel and smell and taste in non-linear and unique ways. We are stepping outside time, schedules and social norms, to appreciate what is here. Autistic and Downs' people offer us a new portal into reality,



outside of our expectations and our daily social norms. Our world is expanded, albeit challenging sometimes.

I said a wistful goodbye to the retreat farm, where Siberian cranes were migrating through the rice addies, when we left

Chiangmai.

A few days later found us in the south of Thailand: Phuket. We stayed at another elegant spot on the beach, away from the mad crush of tourists. Despite Maichee Sansanee's busy schedule, we all found time to enjoy the beach at dawn and dusk

I did yoga every day with my buddy Aey... and I took a lot of long walks on the beach, while everyone else did photographic work with Khunmae.

Among our many stops in Phuket was a local middle school. Khunmae initiated one of her favorite topics, amidst lots of giggling and chattering with the two hundred kids:



How can we know the difference between sex and love?

She's concerned about the disparities between the worldwide mass media's portrayal of sexuality and the children's conservative morality that they are taught at home....

Khunmae's background as a top fashion model before becoming a famous nun gives her credentials and savvy that could not be found anywhere else.

Sending greetings from the Ocean Mother. I wonder every day,

*How can I be so blessed?*



If anyone is concerned about me and Coronavirus, here in Asia:

We (and just about everyone else) do wear masks at the airports and on the planes....

But it doesn't seem like an actual crisis...compared to the 10,000 people who die in America every year from the flu.

What we all need is an immune system!

Surely, diabetes is the true pandemic of our times. The airport "should" be confiscating donuts, fried pork and potato chips, to save us all (55555)\*

(The number 5 is pronounced "ha")

