

# Lotus



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## **INTENSIVES, WORKSHOPS AND SEMINARS**

*A listing of workshops and seminars to facilitate your personal growth.*

MARY ANN VAVALETTE

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*An intensive workshop to restore your capacity for intimacy and sexual sharing.*

MARY NURRIESTEARN

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**Lotus**  
**Journal For Personal Transformation**



STATEMENT OF PURPOSE: Society is a reflection of its people. As we are transformed, so is our society. We believe that personal growth and spiritual awakening co-evolve and are intricately related and that such growth is facilitated by *thoughtful reading*. *Lotus* hopes to energize, stimulate, and inform readers on their journeys of self-awakening and inspired living. *Lotus* is dedicated to providing resources for personal and spiritual development. Our purpose is to provide our readers with the most thoughtful writings available, current, and time honored.

We chose the name *Lotus* because it is one of the most sacred symbols from antiquity. The seeds of the lotus contain, even before they germinate, perfectly formed leaves, the miniature shapes of what one day as mature plants they will become. This is a powerful reminder of the vast potential within us to manifest our essence, to be the grand men and women we were meant to be.

# From the Editor...

**Y**ou undoubtedly noticed the nude lovers on the cover of this issue. Nudity is repressed in our culture and sexuality is commercialized so we usually take a second glance at nude pictures. We screened many photographs before selecting this picture. Many models were young and body beautiful. Most poses were suggestive and lusty or attempted to be. The photographs mirrored society's attitudes. It took considerable prompting of a happy, married, middle-aged couple to let us reproduce the joyful picture that you see here. We wanted to represent sexuality as pleasurable, loving, and sacred. Matthew Fox's article on Sexuality and Religion in this issue inspired us to contribute to cultural re-education by showing sexuality as natural and beautiful.

Matthew Fox believes that sexuality is not sinful and needs to be recognized as sacred. In our culture we tend to fear sex because of deeply ingrained Puritan and Victorian attitudes. We need to regard sexuality as part of the 'great works' of the universe, to view it as right and wonderful, and to remove it from the moralism and guilt where so many religious traditions have relegated it.

Alan Lowen, in the article on Body, Heart and Soul, also views sexuality as one of the sacred experiences of our lives. It is a source of procreation, passion, and inspiration. Sexuality needs to be integrated as an aspect of our spiritual nature. Accepting our sexuality means honoring our whole being and the integrity of the body. Our sexual organs are not separate from our belly, heart, and brain. When we do not honor the union of body and soul, sexual power is expressed in relationships with seduction, domination, and guilt. It is no longer a joyful sharing. The passionate power of sex must be connected to our heart for us truly to celebrate our sexuality and to be benefactors of its nature.

Sexual union offers the possibilities of great tenderness and intimacy. Thomas Moore, in his article on Intimacy, defines intimacy as "profoundly interior." Sexuality is part of our rich interior. To genuinely know another sexually we must become loving with our own sexual nature. The effort to know oneself deeply has priceless reward as we rediscover loving touch, sensual ecstasy, and physical union with another.

Passion for living and rejoicing in our hearts are the gifts of sacred sexuality. I invite you to look at the cover photograph again, this time with grateful appreciation for your own true sexual nature.

Welcome to Lotus.



Mary NurrieStearns  
Editor

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# Letters



Following are letters from our readers. We encourage readers to share stories of growth as they inspire others. Your feedback and input are important and welcome.

## M U C H T O L E A R N

"The dark night of the soul," a phrase credited to Joan Borysenko in your Winter 1993 issue, is the title of a poem (*La noche oscura del alma*) by the Spanish mystic St. John of the Cross (1542-1591).

The less-than-five-foot-tall John was the second of two friars to join St. Teresa of Avila in her successful attempt to reform the Carmelite order. "With John here," she wrote, "we now have a monk and a half."

The poetry of John of the Cross had something of a vogue during the 1950s, when the "beat generation" of American poets admired its ardor and passion. Another of John's qualities, shared with his friend Teresa was a sense of humor.

Today's "empowerment" gurus have much to learn from this pair.—*Lou D'Angelo, New York, New York.*

## F A N T A S I E S A R E L I V E L Y

I want to comment on the "If I Had Only" article in the Vol.3 No. 3 issue. I too, find it easier to dream of changing the world or other people rather than changing myself. My fantasies are lively and clear when they are focused on others. When I orient back to myself, my creativity disappears. The ways that I want to change are clear to me, but the ways to improve my innermost acceptance of myself allude me.

Most self help literature promotes improving self and doesn't address the most fundamental change many of us need, which is self acceptance. I hope *LOTUS* does not fall into that trap.—*Carrie Starr, Cincinnati, Ohio.*

## S E X E D U C A T I O N

I just received the Spring 1994 Issue, and the advertisement "Sex Education For Me?" is in such

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2/3 page ad  
*Living Lake Books*

*from page 81 vol 3 # 3*

**Letters**

*Continued from page 6*

poor taste. Shame on you. We are flooded with this type of material in books, newspapers, on the news, etc., and you have a higher quality magazine. This spring issue talks of intimacy, relationships and personal growth, these issues have nothing to do with sex. Again shame on you to stoop to this type of advertising. I'm very disappointed in this type of advertising in your magazine. The same goes for the ad on page 17 about the book "More Than Just Sex". Please stay with topics that deal with "Personal Transformation."—*Margot Jean Wright, Anaheim, California.*

**D E V E L O P E D  
T O P I C S**

Thanks for your commitment to articles of length and depth. A friend gave me her *LOTUS* magazine and I was gratified to find articles that developed topics with meaning and significant information. I gave the article on workaholic organizations to my minister. The article on dreams and visions helped my friend who is responsible for her own financial support. I am so happy to find a magazine that relates recovery issues to "all of our affairs." Congratulations on a job well done. Thank you for sharing these inspiring articles. Continued success in your publication.—*Joanne Zenisek, Rockford, Illinois.*

**T R E M E N D O U S  
P O W E R**

I congratulate you all on a very fine magazine, and especially your choice of articles. *Positive Self Talk*, the voice of success to our children can make such a difference in the

*TURN TO PAGE 10*

# New World Library

## 1/2p V

Feldenkrais Guild Ad

### Letters

*Continued from page 8*

future of us all. The spoken word does indeed have tremendous power, and we need to exert that same power over the spoken word.—*Susan Gates, Chico, California.*

#### I H A D H O P E D

With magazines filled with articles on sex and sensationalism, I had hoped that just once, one could stay away from Sex. Sex Books and Sex Video's just do not belong in *LOTUS*. Does every relationship have to dwell on being intimate? What does sex have to do with personal transformation anyway? You have such wonderful articles on Love and Relationships, why do you have to mix Sex with it!—*Anabell Mousse, New York, New York.*

#### B U R N T O U T

A friend gave me a copy of *LOTUS* last month and I have read it from cover to cover. It has changed my outlook on life. In the last several years my wife and I have worked long hours. Our relationship has suffered as have all of our relationships. We do not live extravagantly nor do we spend much of money. My wife fears that we will not have enough money when we get too old to work. I have been working harder and harder so we can take time away from our busy schedules, but when we do get away we are so burnt out from our life style that we cannot enjoy the time off. How about some articles that focus of the madding life style that we live? Thank you for producing this find publication.—*Jeff Rains, Denver, Colorado.* •



# TAKING RISKS

A N D R E A   S U S A N   G L A S S

I suppose I always had a vague feeling that I would be a late bloomer—a Grandma Moses—because I never knew what I wanted to be when I grew up. Instead of taking clues from the creative ventures that dotted my youth—writing poetry and music, singing, arts and crafts—I bought into the myth of appropriate roles for women of my generation. I would get my teaching credential (because “you can always go back to teaching,” my mother advised), get married, and raise 2.3 children in a nice house in the suburbs!

In my senior year of college, when I was a student teacher and had my first contact with kids, I discovered I had no rapport with children. I did get married, though never had any children, and I settled into a ho-hum life living in the suburbs, working in an office. I never loved the work, but was a natural organizer, needed the income, and didn’t think I had any “real” talents.

When my husband decided to go into the retail business, I joined him. After our divorce, I remained in retailing for several more years as I got to use my organizational skills as well as some creativity.

Several years into my second marriage, the next significant career change occurred for me. At the same time my husband and I realized our marriage was on the rocks, I quit my last retail position, exasperated by the dictates and limitations of higher-ups. My creative voice would be stifled no longer. My husband left because he had no intention of supporting me while I tried to find myself. He didn’t even know I was lost!

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*Andrea Susan Glass, Cardiff, California.*

# Frontiers Press Ad

## *Success Story*

*Continued from page 12*

One thing was clear. I would never work for anyone again. I was an artist and an entrepreneur at heart, but alas not a big risk taker. (Although marrying twice was a big risk!) It didn't take long for my now freed creativity to rear its head—as a “professional organizer.”

I organized everything from garages to closets, enjoying the creativity, variety, and challenge in each new project. One time an organizing client needed some bookkeeping done. I said I would do it and then took a cram course over one weekend with my mother, the bookkeeper. Now that I did bookkeeping, that part of my business began to build as my organizing business declined. It seemed more people had chaos around their finances than their papers. I looked at both, as helping people organize their lives since metaphysically I believed “as within, so without” and vice versa. However, my life was not in such great order, being twice divorced, working back in the office structure, and not knowing what I wanted to be when I grew up.

My bookkeeping clients became regulars, which was steady income, but I had again given up my creative voice. About three years ago, I took a part-time job doing office work for my friend's roommate. At first it wasn't too bad, since I worked alone out of his home, made personal phone calls, and used the computer and laser printer for some writing I was doing. I had fallen into the security trap as I settled into yet another office job. In order to protect what little was left of my creative voice, I took writing classes. (All through the years I had been a perennial student, taking classes in personal growth, self-esteem, setting goals, business, writing, and other subjects of fleeting interest.) As my youthful flair for writing rekindled, wonder of wonder, I started selling articles locally.

When we moved to a real office and grew to 15 employees, my boss became intolerable and I barely toler-

May 15 - 26 Thin us on the exquisite beaches



ated it. I hung on for security, though every morning's drive was sheer agony. Several people including my boss told me I'd never make it as a writer, and I believed them. (Fortunately my parents backed me 100%, even helping me out financially, and I usually had a Master Mind partner and a writing group for support.)

But the faucet was turned on and the words and ideas poured out of me in a constant stream. I knew this was what I wanted, what I truly loved. Earlier this year, in a bold move that I imagine came from a combination of anger and frustration, I quit my job. Somehow my boss talked me into reducing my hours instead of quitting, reminding me that it's tough out there as a writer.

However, when I made my decision to quit, something shifted. I had been visualizing, affirming, imagining, and believing that in spite of the odds, I would succeed as a writer, that this was what God had intended for me. I hadn't heard God's voice all that much, because I was too busy "doing" to be still and listen. But I believed that when I discovered what I loved and set my intention to succeed, the universe would open doors. Within a week I signed my first contract with a literary agent. After years of halfheartedly submitting manuscripts to agents and publishers and collecting a stack of rejections, I got a "YES!"

A few months later, I quit my job again. This time I meant it—I would never again do work I dislike for someone I don't respect. I didn't know how the money would come but I knew it would. I knew what I wanted. This time my boss let me go. He knew I meant it. Whatever it was that happened when I made any declaration happened again. Within a few days I got two editing jobs—I now had a way to earn money doing what I loved—as I

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## Steven Nash Publishing

## McClelland Music

## Success Story



# FREE TO BE PRESENT

DELORA CIACCIO WARD

I watched the edges of the pages curl as the fire engulfed the journal I had kept for the past five years. My husband had just driven away, leaving behind empty hangers and out-of-season clothes. What had begun as the love of a lifetime fourteen years earlier seemed to be crumbling. I had asked my husband for a separation with hopes of freeing the tortured soul within me. I blamed him for stifling my personal growth, my creativity that never seemed to find its voice. I felt sad, trapped, empty, lonely. He had not brought me the happiness and fulfillment for which I had so desperately longed. I reread some of my journal entries. I was struck by the thinly veiled descension into darkness, disappointment, despair. I wanted no one to read my journal, so burning it would put the journal and the past behind me. Or so I thought. But as I watched it burn, it was like watching my home burn to the ground. Everything I was, everything I felt and my only connection to my inner self were in that journal. I sat in silence, mourning its loss for a long time.

The days passed with my husband and me living apart. Instead of feeling free and exhilarated as I had imagined, I felt scared, more alone, and confused. A few months earlier I had cut out a newspaper ad for a counselor and kept it on my desk, as if for the inevitable emergency. It seemed the time was right to make the call.

The therapist welcomed me into her office. Her warmth



*Delora Ciaccio Ward, Sneads Ferry, North Carolina.*

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and gentle manner were immediately comforting. She asked enough questions quickly to uncover what I had feared most. The demons were back. I had been treated for depression before I was married. I had thought it was behind me and confirmed it with my happy new marriage, the birth of my daughter, and all the years of contentment that had followed. I had known on some level that it was happening again. I struggled and fought against entering treatment again because I considered it a personal failure. I should be able to snap myself out of it...stop feeling sorry for myself. I had tried many things and drifted in and out of various interests to fill the void I felt inside: self-directed vitamin therapy, vegetarian diet, self-help books, feminism, radical politics. All worthwhile pursuits perhaps but none a panacea. I then found myself turning to self-medication with drugs and alcohol. My substance abuse in time intensified my problems even while numbing me to the pain of being myself. I was confused and so very tired of running.

With the help of my therapist I began to sort out my thoughts, my priorities, and my needs. I asked my husband to come home. With his support, I broke my chemical dependencies. We had long talks about our personal needs and our hopes for our marriage. I began treatment with Prozac. Prozac works by restoring the patient's brain chemistry to normal levels. Clinical depression in many cases is believed to be caused by biochemical imbalances in the brain; specifically, in my case, abnormalities in serotonin levels. Stress and trauma may play a causal role in the altered brain function, tying together experiential and biochemical culprits. It also speaks directly to the body-mind-spirit connection.

## Charles Sweeney Ad

## Alchemists Ad

## Reiki Plus Ad

## Learning Strategies ad

### *Success Story*

*Continued from page 17*

I saw my therapist weekly. We had no insurance coverage and it meant sacrificing for the whole family. I began to visit the little country church in town. I met people there who asked me to join their volunteer work in the church and the community. I had always been very shy and I found great satisfaction in having friends of my own. I began art classes and I toyed with writing about my experiences. I submitted a short essay to the readers' section of a small literary magazine...it was chosen for publication!

Subtly and slowly I began to sense a change. I began to notice how lovely my little girl was, how soft my cat felt when he rubbed against my legs, how warm the sunshine was that shone in the window. I finally began to understand the concept of living in the moment, mindful living. I took pleasure in the creative expression of cooking a meal, planting a garden, writing to a friend, painting my daughter's room. I could struggle with the sadness of my past and the darkness of my childhood without sliding back down into the pit of depression. I realized that my happiness was my responsibility, not my husband's nor anyone's. The power to change and direct my life toward fulfillment of my needs and dreams is within me. When we look outside ourselves for our identity and our self-esteem, we are missing the point and invariably disappointed.

I savor the peace of mind, the glad-to-be-alive feeling with which I awake each morning. My success is that in daring to confront my demons and put them to rest, I am now free to be totally present in each moment of my life. •



# UNDERSTANDING MY FATHER

K A R E N   H I L B O U R N

**I**t wasn't until I found out that he'd been in prison that I forgave him and began loving him. I grew up hating my father. It seemed that every time he spoke to me he yelled about something. He enjoyed belittling me in various ways and convincing me of my worthlessness and stupidity. I wanted him to approve of me and I tried everything I knew to get him to like me. I concluded that I was the black sheep of the family and that was why my father detested me. "Why was it," I'd think, "that I was so bad? What about me couldn't he stand?" I wished so much that he would like me.

I hurt. I hurt inside my chest and stomach where love parts dwell. I felt like crying out, and I did. I begged God. I pleaded with my father in silence. I sought refuge and aloneness too often for a growing child. I became introverted and saw the world through fearful and beaten eyes. Since no one came to my rescue, I thought the whole world saw me as this man did. I was convinced that even God was judgmental and tongue lashing and that I was at the top of the list for poking fun and ridiculing.

I can count on both hands the number of nights I did not cry myself to sleep during the last two years of high school. All I wanted was a way out, to go away and start over. I wanted to go where people didn't know me and wouldn't know how worthless I was. I'd considered several alternatives to getting away: running away, suicide, drug overdose. I kept these ideas at my fingertips in case I decided to use one of them. But I knew that if I could just hang in there a while longer I would indeed get away.



*Karen and Wayne Hilbourn, Loris, South Carolina.*

## Crossing Press

## MOON BEAR AD

College was my destination. It was expected of me. My three older siblings had gone that route and I assumed there were no other options for me. I spent the evenings of my last two high school years in my bedroom, many times skipping the evening meal in order to avoid being in the presence of my father. I dreamt of the days when I wouldn't have to be around him .

College days finally came, but not with the success I had anticipated. Socially and emotionally I was not ready. I was immature and naive. My ability to deal with peer pressure was limited. I failed miserably my first year. When I transferred to an out-of-state school, I began to grow emotionally, academically, and socially. However I carried a heavy yoke upon my shoulders. I held tight to my hatred and fear of my father. It affected my entire being. My relationships with males were fearful and awkward. Dating was difficult. I feared male teachers. I sometimes detested men. I envied their powers and the control they automatically seemed to possess. It was an unfair world.

I finished college and went to graduate school. Not once did I feel that my accomplishments were of value. I was not proud. I assumed no one else was proud either. Achieving my degree was like washing dishes, something that had to be done. No joy. No pride.

After graduate school I returned home to teach. I was educated but broke. The surroundings had improved but little. My father hardly spoke to me. I was terrified of him even though I was twenty-three years old! I became a child again in his presence. He made me terribly nervous. I hated myself when I was near him and considered myself dumb in the same way I figured he thought I was.

After two years I moved to South Carolina where I could see the ocean and be warm. Here I thought

I could be content. I could start again and be someone different like I'd always wanted to be. It would be wonderful.

One carries one's self with one however, and I was no different. My social skills still had something to be desired and I held four jobs at once to relieve my nervous tension. I experienced the weight of my yoke terribly. I was here all alone and felt no love for myself.

After two years I married. I was lucky. My husband loved and cherished me. Six years later I was the mother of three children. I experienced a fulfillment only a mother can identify with. I became content. I vowed that I would never treat my children as I had been treated. I'd love, cuddle, and cherish them and make sure they knew they were loved. I held fast to those vows. My husband lovingly stood back and watched as I filled my hungry self with the joy that children can bring.

I didn't dwell on my father. I'd let go of the feelings. At least, I thought I had. My yoke was no longer needed. I kept the memories stored deep inside. On occasion I took them out to see if they still hurt. They did. Depression would set in, and I'd be lugging the pain and guilt of failure around for weeks.

I spoke only of my mother when referring to my family. People asked if my father was deceased. "No, unfortunately not," I'd reply. "But I'd certainly not mind if he were." Then the past would flood back again, cutting my heart deeply and leaving painful scars. The scars were the un-loved child in me, hurting from the ever hopeful dream that one day her father would love her.

I admitted eventually that I'd kept the yoke deliberately. Sometimes it was so heavy I could hardly keep going. I began to refer to my relationship with my father in third person. I referred to my

youthful self as "the child." It was "the child" he was cruel to. It was "the child" who was beaten down by his power.

My relationship with my own children was cherished. I had a passionate desire for their presence. My whole being became devoted to them. I felt worthless to myself and was grateful to have been given children. The more I loved my children, the more I hated my father. I hated him because he had tortured the mind of "the child." I knew how fragile the self-concept of a child can be and worked frantically to build up self esteem in my children. I feared I might do something to cause them to experience what I had experienced. "The child" in me became quite real at times. It was as though she were someone else and I wanted to help her. The only way I knew to console her and meet her needs was to do so with my own children and with the handicapped children I worked with in school. I tried to comfort her and love her but couldn't release her from bondage. I didn't know how. I was still carrying her yoke and couldn't get it off my shoulders.

During a trip home I visited a cousin whom I'd been told could help me research my family tree. We talked about our family history, looked through files, and discussed pictures. I had little desire to research my father's side of the family but did have a question that I wanted answered. My father had been involved in a train wreck when I was a child. I knew little about it and didn't know how to research the information secretly. I wasn't sure about own age at the time of the incident, but thought it would shed light on my early relationship with my father.

Before leaving my cousin's home I worked up courage to ask if he knew anything about the wreck and he showed me a newspaper clipping that changed my life! It was dated

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# MOUNT MADONNA

# EXPRESSIVE THERAPY

December 1954. There was my father, one of the “bad guys,” vulnerable, imperfect, no longer the dictator, no longer in control, and worse, no longer free. My insides crumbled. This man whom I’d feared all these years was wasn’t a “king,” he wasn’t any kind of ruler. He had no power at all. He was just a man.

I spoke with my mother about it later that evening. She told me they were separated for four year. She spoke of her trips to the prison where my father was incarcerated. She had to depend on friends to take her to see him. She saved money from odd jobs in order pay for the gas. The Welfare Department came for her children. Neighbors bailed her out with financial assistance and food. Amidst her loneliness and grief, she had to prove her ability to care for four children alone. She was two months’ pregnant with me when my father was sent to prison. What a horror it must have been for my parents.

I was nearly four years old when my father returned home! No wonder we didn’t accept each other and that our lives were so opposing. No wonder he didn’t know how to react to me or I to him.

I forgave my father for all the grief I’d been through on his behalf. There had been enough grief. There was no cause now for “the child” in me to be in pain. All was forgiven. I began to love my father, something I’d always wanted to feel but had given up on. I felt free and weightless as the yoke was lifted from my shoulders. There was a reason for all the hurt. My parents had survived worse than I’d been through. They had a lot to piece together for themselves and had done their best to make life easy for their children. I had to find out secretly about their grief in order to understand my own. And now I love them both. •





# *Intensives, Workshops And Seminars*

M A R Y   A N N   V A V A L E T T E

*Being with an intentional group of fellow learners facilitates personal growth. A summer vacation which includes an intensive program can be both inspiring and enjoyable. The following is a listing of workshops and seminars with a wide variety of topics.*

PHOTO PROVIDED BY HOLLYHOCK, REX WEYLER

C I I S   A D

- ART OF BEING has two life transforming intensives planned for this summer in Hawaii. July 1-15 is their Maui Adventure, a two week transformational vacation. July 16 - 23 is the Body, Heart, and Soul Part 1. This last intensive is featured on page 34 of this issue of *Lotus*. Intensives will be led by Alan Lowen, Paul Carter, and Niyaso Carter. For more information write: The Art of Being, PO Box 269, Paia, HI 96779. Or call (808)572-2234.

- ASSOCIATION OF HOLISTIC HEALING CENTER 1994 National Conference in Atlanta, Georgia, September 28-October 2, presents Embodying the Essences of Healing Energy: Love, Wisdom, & Will with Elisabeth Kubler-Ross, Clyde W. Ford and Marc Ian Barasch. Pre-conference Workshop leaders on September 28-29 include Caroline Myss and Mornam Shealy. Write or call for May brochure, AHHC, 109 Holly Crescent, Suite 201, Virginia Beach, VA 23451. (804)422-9033.

- BEAR TRIBE ACTIVITIES 1994 include many events for the summer and fall. Introductory Programs, a first step to the work, beliefs, and lifestyle of the Bear Tribe will be conducted on Vision Mountain, outside of Spokane, Washington; Michigan, and Germany during June, July, and August. There will be Vision Quests, Medicine Wheel Gatherings, Earth Awareness, Children's Program, Female Energy, and Self Reliance Workshops among the Calendar of Events. Contact Bear Tribe, Programs Office. (509)326-4505.

- CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF INTEGRAL STUDIES presents The Renaissance of the Sacred Feminine, a conference to be held June 2-5, with music, dance, poetry, prayers, creative dialogues, and discussions

from diverse religious and spiritual traditions. A workshop with philosopher and writer, Jacob Needleman, Great Questions of Life, June 10-11, and The Healing Voice, practical exploration of sound for healing; working with breathing, singing, chanting, and mantras will be presented by Jill Purce-Part I, August 20 -21 and Part II August 22-24. For information and registration, CIIS, 765 Ashbury, San Francisco, CA 94117. (415)753-6100, ext 241.

- CREATIVE CORE ENERGETICS, a 5-day intensive with Siegmund Gerken PhD and guest musician Rolf Exler, will be held in Santa Fe, NM, May 18-22, 1994, and includes lectures, demonstrations, movement, body-psychotherapy and rhythm, the focus of which is releasing the energy held in our bodies to touch the essence of our being as the source of healing, wisdom and joy. For more information on this and other training programs, including special workshops in the South of France during August, contact Life Rhythm, PO Box 806, Mendocino, CA. 95460. (707)937-1825.

- CREATIVE ENERGY OPTIONS has developed a series of in-depth intensive programs that fulfill both professional and personal goals. This year's program at The Country





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Place, a fifty acre retreat center in the Pocono Mountains, include those led by anthropologist Angeles Arrien, utilizing myth, ritual and storytelling; a program on the use of sound and music in therapy and personal development with Don Campbell; learning about the limitless potential of human intelligence with educator and philosopher Joseph Chilton Pearce; and Bridges To Remembering with Pat Rodegast and Emmanuel, aiming to deepen our intuitive connections. From August 12-21, a Power of the Southwest trip, with several days in Santa Fe working with Native American potters, river rafting on the Rio Grande and traveling to Canyon de Chelly, participating in a sweat lodge and work with Annie Kahn, Navajo medicine woman. Contact Creative Energy Options for information on these and other programs. (215)643-4420.

PHOTO PROVIDED BY NAROPA, LISA MATTHEOS

- DANCE OF THE DEER 1994 Special Events include: Alaska, A Living Dream, in-depth program August 4-14, meeting at Juneau's wilderness retreat center, celebrating the season of almost endless light, learning practices of Shamanic health and healing, drumming and singing; Mexico, Earth and Sky, a pilgrimage and seminar in a secluded villa, near Puerto Vallarta at the Pacific Ocean, November 18-27. Experience the spirit of Huichol Shamanism with dona Josefa Medrano and Brant Secunda in ceremonies of prayer, dreamwork, drumming, song and dance. Also, join Brant Secunda on the thirteenth annual pilgrimage to Mt. Shasta in Northern California, July 27-31, for a union with nature through the power of the heart and the power of the mountain. Contact

## Journey into Wholness ad

*Clayton School of Natural Healing*

Dance of the Deer, PO Box 699, Soquel, CA 95073. (408)475-9560.

- EDUCO offers unique and multicultural programs for the summer and fall of 1994, stressing teamwork and self-discovery in wildly beautiful settings. Domestic courses are based in Crestone, CO, and the diverse terrain that surrounds the San Luis Valley. Discovery and Rites of Passage courses are an opportunity for young people, age 11-18, to discover their own depth and power. Adult and International Courses include Natural Homebuilding, A Journey for Healers and Educo Africa. For more information and dates on these or other Educo programs, contact Educo, 5569 N. County Road 29, Loveland, CO 80538. (303)679-4294.

- EUPSYCHIA INSTITUTE offers Psyche's Treasure House, a six-day intensive exploring Myth, Symbol and Story as a Link to Immortality, June 6-12, led by Jacquelyn Small, the Eupychia team, and special guest presenter, Michael Mayer. The 14-day retreat, Healing Into Wholeness, a training program for health professionals and others seeking knowledge and experience of personal transformation, will be presented for Summer, July 10-24, and Fall, October 16-30, in Dahlenega, GA. For an application form or more specific information, contact Greg Zelonka at Eupychia, Inc., PO Box 3090, Austin, TX 78764. (512)327-2795.

- EXPANDING LIGHT, located in the foothills of Northern California's Sierra Nevada Mountains, continues ongoing programs of Meditation, Yoga Postures and Training, Weekends, and Personal Retreat, as well as Special Events for Summer, 1994: August 21-28, Spiritual Renewal Week, with classes each morning, work-



PHOTO PROVIDED BY DANCE OF THE DEER

shops on special topics, and inspirational evening entertainment. Families are welcome from July 3-10, and July 10-17, for family camping experience. Other summer events include July 4th Get away, A Weekend with Kriyananda and Kriyananda's Birthday. For more information and reservations, Call Ananda. (800)346-5350.

- EXPRESSIVE THERAPY INSTITUTE is an international community uses the person centered expressive arts process to explore how to feel more creative, alive, and productive. The 1994 Program schedule includes Level I: The Door to Creativity, a foundation, and Level II: Nurturing the Creative Self, to be presented in July in California, and August in New York. Using the expressive arts—music, movement, color, drama,

writing, and sculpture—these programs are designed for both professionals seeking training and those who aspire to a higher sense of self value and creativity. Call PCETI (800)477-2384 for specific dates, details, and other programs throughout the year, including several in England.

- FOUNDATION FOR SHAMANIC STUDIES offers Shamanic Counseling Training with Sandra Harner, June 12-17 in Sonoma Valley, California, and August 21-26 in the Catskill Mountains, New York. The Way of the Shaman, the basic workshop, which introduces core Shamanism, emphasizing the classic Shamanic journey, will be offered throughout the summer at various locations. For more information on dates and locations of basic and advanced training, con-

tact FSS at their new location in Northern California, PO Box 1939, Mill Valley, CA 94942. (415)380-8416.

- FULL CIRCLE, Center for Holistic Studies, 1994 Summer Workshops include Playing Awake: A Dance Workshop with Deborah Hay, a pioneer of postmodern dance movement that challenges experienced dancers and introduces the beginner to the joy of movement and expression. Other workshops in writing, drawing, storytelling and spirituality will be presented to encourage a knowledge and understanding of the inter relatedness of spiritual, physical and creative aspects of life. Call Full Circle, (810)541-3033, for more information.

- GODDARD COLLEGE, At The Source programs for the summer of

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1994 feature: Navajo Studies programs on topics such as language, music and dance, literature and history; Writing Workshops; Cultural Perspectives on Northern New Mexico, the history and culture of two peoples, the Pueblo and the Hispano, with hands-on participation; also Hawaiian Culture and History, held on the Big Island of Hawaii. Including history, traditional practices, mythology and crafts of native Hawaii. These programs run July 3rd - August 13th. For specific dates and detailed information, contact Jim Galloway,

(800)468-4888 or write Goddard College, At The Source, Plainfield, Vermont 05667.

• GOLDEN EAGLE MEDICINE SOCIETY presents Wilderness Retreat and Vision Quest, an ancient tradition used to attain spiritual rejuvenation and clarity. There will be two Vision Quests this summer, including four days and nights of reflection and solitude in the wilderness. The first in the Bull Mountains of Montana, August 12-21; the second in the Green Mountains of Vermont,

PHOTO PROVIDED BY OMEGA, ELAINE CRISCIONE

September 9-18. Contact Michael Young (617)628-0457.

• HOLLYHOCK, located on Cortes Island, off British Columbia's wilderness coast, plans more than 70 seminars and workshops in the arts and music, meditation, health, practical skills, and personal growth. Jungian analyst Marion Woodman will lead Relationships, a workshop using the Video Series "Bly & Woodman on Men and Women" from May 29-June 1 and June 2-5. The Path of Joy with Jean Houston, Deep Ecology Workshop with Fran & Joanna Macy, Wild Women Gathering with White Bear Woman and Lucie Blue, Honouring the Sacred Mysteries with Starhawk and David Miller, Kayaking and Sailing are among the many workshops available. For dates and more information contact Hollyhock, Box 127, Manson's

Landing, Cortes Island, BC, Canada VOP IKO. (604)935-6533.

• INNERQUEST presents personal growth wilderness adventures for the summer/fall 1994 to encourage new heights of aliveness and creativity.

Programs offered as High Sierra backpacks, wilderness canoe trips, and adventures in Hawaii are

designed to support and enhance empowerment programs and will not overwhelm the novice. For details and dates on workshops such as a Hero's Journey, Running with the Wolves (for women to explore their kinship with the wild feminine) or PleasureQuest, a trip to a primitive wilderness hot springs, contact InnerQuest, 2700 N.

*Association of Holistic Healing Centers*

Applewood Centre Ad

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Cahuenga Blvd #4322, Los Angeles, CA 90068. (213)874-1005.

• INSTITUTE OF NOETIC SCIENCES presents The Sacred Source: Life, Death and the Survival of Consciousness, July 15-17, at the

Hyatt Regency O'Hare in Chicago, Illinois. Sessions will highlight issues in the quest for understanding of conscious living and conscious dying and will be a mix of lectures, workshops, movement, and meditation sessions, panels,

and evening celebrations. Topics include: near death experiences, healing the soul, survival of consciousness, transformational grief-work, experience in consciousness research, and ethical issues in relation to death and dying. For further information: (317)329-1475.

• INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF INTEGRAL HUMAN SCIENCES presents Explore Your Unlimited Potential on July 26-31, 1994, at Carleton College, Northfield, Minnesota. This is the eighth annual retreat and is an opportunity for personal growth and fulfillment in an atmosphere of community and acceptance. The campus affords opportunities for walking, recreation, and quiet moments to reflect on the experiences of each day. For further information contact Barbara Fairfield, IHS, PO Box 1309, Minnetonka, MN 55345. (612) 474-7395.

• JOURNEY INTO WHOLENESS presents Dreamwork Seminar, June 19-24. Featured presenters will be Robert Johnson, Julia McAfee and Jeremy Taylor. The program consists of lectures, dream groups, personal time, and creative arts to help in the process of learning to work with our own dreams. The location is in scenic Western North Carolina. On August 14-22, travel to Langskib Island in Lake Temagami in the wilderness area north of North Bay, Ontario, Canada, for The Vision Quest, a ritual that can reconnect you with your own spirituality. For further information on these and other programs, contact Jim or Annette Cullipher, PO Box 169, Balsam Grove, NC 28708. (704)877-4809.

• MOUNT MADONNA CENTER for the Creative Arts and Sciences presents their Spring/Summer program of 1994. From June 23- July 31, Ayurveda: Ancient Health Science of India will be given by

# Expanding Light

John F Kennedy Ad





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Dr. Vasant D. Lad. Each week of the course will have a specific focus of Ayurveda as a science of self-healing as well as its uses in daily life. From June 30- July 31, Ashtanga Yoga: Teacher Training Intensive, especially designed for those who wish to become teachers, but open to others, will include practical training, theory, and opportunities for student teaching. For information on these and other programs contact the Center at 445 Summit Road, Watsonville, California 95076. (408)847-0406.

- NAROPA SUMMER INSTITUTE (June 20—July 31) offers classes, workshops and conferences in many fields of study including: Contemplative psychotherapy, Transpersonal psychology, Buddhist, Environmental, Dance and Theater, Traditional Arts, Visual Arts, and the Jack Kerouac School of Disembodied Poetics, which will feature A Tribute to

Allen Ginsberg from July 2-10. The Naropa Institute is a private, Buddhist-inspired liberal arts college located in Boulder, Colorado, in the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. For a complete list of summer offerings, please contact Sue Seecof (303)546-3510 or The Naropa Institute, 2130 Arapahoe Avenue, Boulder CO. 80302.

- NEW ENGLAND ART THERAPY INSTITUTE offers Gateways to Creativity by Dale Schwarz and Guillermo Cuellar, July 31-August 5, 1994, at the Williston-Northampton School in Easthampton, Massachusetts. In this experiential workshop, explore creativity as a catalyst for personal transformation, working with clay, paint, cloth, paper and masks. No previous art experience is necessary. For more information contact New England Art Therapy, 216-Y Silver Lane, Sunderland, MA 01375. (413)665-4880.

- OASIS CENTER offers a wide variety of programs oriented toward each of the three spheres of life: mind, body, and spirit. July 31–August 6 Gestalt Revisited: Updating Gestalt Methodology and Its Applications for Professionals with Jane Gerger and Charlotte Rosner will combine experiential, conceptual and practicum approaches to learning. Jean Houston, PhD, will be doing a week-long workshop November 11-17, 1994, on the subject, Healing the Soul, using music, song, dance and words to create an art of celebration and empowerment. For additional information on these and other programs contact Oasis Center, 7463 N. Sheridan Road, Chicago, IL 60626. (312)274-6777.

- OCAMORA FOUNDATION, a retreat center located in Northern New Mexico offers a unique experience of nature in a remote valley

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within the complex of a hundred year old ranch house. Rooms are available or guests may bring their own tents. Vipassana Meditation Retreat will be held June 3-11, and silent mindfulness will be observed except for instructions and talks by Bhante Gunarantana. Diane Haug will lead Inspiration, an exploration of breath and the creative spirit from July 14—17, and Rem-embering, an introduction to shamanism and the wisdom traditions from August 11-14. For more information, call or write: Ocamora Foundation, PO Box 43, Ocate, New Mexico 87734. (505)666-2389.

• OMEGA INSTITUTE at its lakeside campus in the Hudson River valley is providing a combination of education and vacation with more than 200 workshops, professional training, conferences and retreats in a wide variety of subject areas. Diversity Training for Professionals, Living Music Village with Paul Winter, Arts Week, African Dance and Percussion, Drawing and Writing Workshops, Meditation, Family Week, Holistic Nursing, and Advanced Level Workshops and Training are only a few of the many programs. For a catalog or more information, contact Omega. (800) 944-1001.

• ONSITE TRAINING AND CONSULTING Couples Renewal Workshop, August 27-September 1, 1994, will address issues affecting sexuality and intimacy, negotiating and communicating, and will benefit couples striving for intimacy and fulfillment in personal and relationship growth. Learning to Love Yourself, a workshop in discovering self-worth, and the Living Centered Program, an intensive group therapy program, will be presented throughout the summer and fall season. For more information on these programs and dates, contact Onsite. (800)341-7432.

• SACRED CIRCLE, celebrating the Light of Summer, presents two musical, magical events: All One Tribe: the Rhythm and Pulse of Community from June 15-19, 1994, dance, music, song and stories led by Arthur Hull, an accomplished performing musician, and Dr. Susan Rangitsch, whose work draws from Shamanic and healing arts; and A Summer Gathering from June 23-26, 1994, preceding and including the Montana Summer Solstice celebration, with morning meditations and healing processes, afternoons of drum making, rhythm, and storytelling, and evenings of reflection led by Dr. Susan Rangitsch, Paula Allegrini, Anuheha Meyers, and special guest Scott Fitzgerald. In the Fall, celebrate the 6th Annual Women's Harvest Celebration, In Blessed Fullness, from September 21-25. Contact The Circle, Dr. Susan Rangitsch, 400 Cote Lane, Missoula, MT 59802. (406)542-2383.

• SECOND INTERNATIONAL HERB SYMPOSIUM with over 50 workshops for beginners to advanced herbalists will be held June 10, 11, and 12, 1994, on the campus of Wheaton College near Boston, Massachusetts. There will be herb walks, herb marketplace, and traditional and modern uses of herbal medicine. For more information, write to International Herb Symposium, PO Box 420, E. Barre, VT 05649. (802)479-9825.

• TAI CHI IN PARADISE RETREATS offers spectacular environments for the 1994 summer retreats: The Island of Hawaii, June 25-30, Kalani Honua Retreat Center, just south of Hilo, Hawaii, situated in an oceanfront jungle setting, near black sand beaches and the Volcanoes National Park; and Mt. Shasta, California, August 14-19, at Stewart Hot Springs, a forest canyon with



PHOTO PROVIDED BY HOLLYHOCK, JIMERSTEIN

healing hot springs and mountain stream. Learn Tai Chi Forms, Philosophy, and Push Hands. For more information on these and other workshops, Costa Rica in the Winter, contact Chris Luth, PO Box 962, Solana Beach, CA 92075. (619)259-1396.

- WALDORF INSTITUTE OF SUNBRIDGE COLLEGE aims to foster spiritual insight with an attitude of practical service in areas of education, the arts, economics and social life. Highlights of the summer of 1994 include: Introduction to the Waldorf Kindergarten, educational philosophy and artistic workshops for the adult working with children, Three-foldness in Social Life, Sculpting as a Spiritual Activity,

Introduction to Anthroposophy, and The Arts in Education—Education as an Art, exploring the applicability of Waldorf ideas in the public school system. For more information on these and other

courses throughout the summer, contact Sunbridge College, (914)425-0055.

- WISHING WELL 20TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION, July 15-17, 1994, San Diego, California. This will be an all-woman event during Gay/Lesbian Pride week. For complete details contact Laddie Hosler of The Wishing Well. (619)443-4818.

- UPAYA HOUSE on July 31-August 7 offers Mountain Walking Retreat on the Continental Divide, a practice of meditation and mindful walking in the high mountains of Southern Colorado, in which to explore the sky tradition of Buddhism in relation to deep ecology. Retreatants should be in good physical condition; llamas will carry your gear. Buddhist ecologist Randy Fox joins Joan Halifax, Upaya's director and Buddhist teacher and cultural ecologist for this event.

Other retreats include The Art of Healing, June 23-26, Wilderness Fast in September, and Arts & Meditation in Bali and Orangan Camp in Borneo in November. For details, contact UPAYA, 1404 Cerro Gordo Road, Santa Fe, New Mexico 87501. (505)986-8518.

- VOICES OF THE EARTH, an interactive conference that invites presenter and participants to examine spiritual awareness and social responsibility from an ecological perspective will bring together spiritual and environmental visionaries from around the world. The conference runs Friday, July 29, through Sunday, July 31, at the University of Colorado in Boulder. For information on the Conference program, contact The Colorado Sacred Earth Institute, 1120 Pine Street, Boulder, Colorado 80302. (303)442-6760 or (800)442-6768. •



# *Body, Heart, and Soul*

MARY NURRIESTEARN S

*Celebrate your sexual, sensual nature; heal your personal wounds; and free yourself of cultural taboos that inhibit intimate sharing and love-making. That is the message workshop leaders Alan Lowen, Paul Carter, and Niyaso Carter have for participants in "Body, Heart and Soul."*



*Alan Lowen (center) is an internationally renowned teacher and facilitator of sexuality workshops. He designed "The Art of Being" workshops as a comprehensive approach to happy, healthy, and enlightened living. His work was recently featured in the documentary film "Sacred Sex." Paul Carter Ph.D. (left) was trained in hypnotherapy by Dr. Milton Erickson and in family therapy by Dr. Virginia Satir. He has also received training in Gestalt process, system theory and expressive arts. Niyaso Carter has comprehensive training in body awareness, female sexuality and Tantra. Recently she was featured in a HBO special on sexuality.*



**B**ody, Heart, and Soul is an opportunity for people to restore their capacity for open and profound ways of relating and sexual sharing. This seven day intensive training program explores the roots of our sexual being and is structured as a series of experiences designed to heal the sexual-sensual and emotional wounds that many people in our society carry. The healing and educational sessions serve to dissolve fears, guilt, shame, and restrictive beliefs that decrease the pleasures of intimacy and sexual loving. The workshop is highly experiential; it uses movement, music, creative art, breath work, hypnotherapy, and meditation in a context of intimate and playful sharing that promotes full aliveness of body, feelings, energy, and awareness.

Alan Lowen developed this program in response to the need for an education that would heal the cultural taboos and personal wounds people have suffered and enable us to celebrate the natural sexual, sensual beings that we are. The training is a laboratory for healing, self-acceptance, play, inner awareness, sensuality, and pleasure as participants deepen their capacity for love and

awareness. People learn to move their bodies, to be playful, and enjoy pleasure.

Many people experience life through impaired senses. They only "half-see" and "half-hear" because they have deadened their senses to protect themselves from pain. As they learn to notice and be guided by whatever senses they do feel, more senses gradually become available. With increasing awareness, intuitive senses develop and subtle energies emerge. Spiritual living is the result of profound sensitivity which means that our senses are receiving. By being touched on the surface of our bodies and in our feelings, bellies, and hearts, a sense of caring grows. The more we feel, the more we care, and the more we are able to find love.

We are all touched by violence. We live through episodes of pain in order to become loving. We discover love when we are willing to live and feel everything through our senses. As we are able to experience our senses, everything that hinders our ability to love falls away. We don't have to learn love, we have to dare to live everything that blocks the path way to love.

Becoming loving and aware is part of our journey of



approaches them gently and says, "You can allow yourself to keep living; you don't have to die in this moment. Dare to feel." You will discover that the world doesn't end, people don't walk off, and the ground doesn't cave in under your feet. Life will go on and you will feel more alive. In this way, people reclaim aspects of themselves that they are frightened or mistrustful of or have rejected. When they permit themselves to feel more, they become relaxed, as powerful feelings and energies emerge, which then become resources to draw upon. Recognizing sadness enables us to experience compassion and empa-

self-acceptance. We allow and include all of our feelings, energies, and experiences as real. We accept rather than deny, reject, or suppress our inner reality. Awareness is the ability to listen, feel, and see without judgment. It is 'waking up' and recognizing clearly what is happening. We have to be aware and to care so that we can be guided by love.

This training takes people on a journey of accepting inner experience and who we are. Self-acceptance is loving self with all its imperfections, fears, fail-



ings, talents, and challenges. Self-acceptance enables us to love others. We can only love others after we have learned what loving is within ourselves.

During the days of training, situations are created where people truly experience themselves. Sadness, fear, pain, libido, and erotic desires are touched. At times people may be unable to allow sadness, joy, sexual arousal, or loneliness. When that happens, staff

thy. Sexual energy gives passion and aliveness. Playfulness awakens creativity.

Throughout the week participants are asked to accept and celebrate their whole being — body, heart and soul. All are honored with integrity and wholeness. The body is the physical home of the soul. Honoring that oneness is a way to recognize where power really exists. Our culture separates us from most body experience and our sexuality from our being. When any power center, or part of the body, is cut off, people feel disempowered. Consequently, they often play games in relationships to gain a sense of power. Having power is important and taking power from somebody can feel good whether the technique is seduction, domination, or guilt.

The only real solution to abusive relationships is for people to claim their true source of power — which is embodied. Our physical world is our direct link to spiritual power, our authentic source of power. When we recognize our true source of power we make relation-



Participants move to music throughout each day. Music is a universally accepted form of touch. It is a direct touch. Vibrations of sound intimately touch our physical bodies and our emotional beings. Participants also do spontaneous drawings, illustrating facets of themselves. Drawing is a way to reveal various aspects of truth, unique for each individual. People draw quickly, without thinking, allowing the unconscious can produce the images. Physical touch is another way to connect

to dread our bodies. We are not educated to accept and appreciate our bodies — our physical form and the sensitivity, playfulness, and vitality with which we are naturally endowed. Learning to love all that you are is most powerfully accomplished when we experience ourselves nude among others who are learning this, too. After group trust is established, participants are encouraged to take off their clothes in some activities and allow themselves to feel comfortable being in their own bodies.

Our culture sexually abuses us when it teaches us to fear and mistrust our sensual and sexual nature, to treat it like a commodity, and to deny its sacredness. This week helps people restore a sense of delight and innocence in being man or woman — becoming free to experience sensual aliveness and sexual feelings while embracing all the joy, sorrow, fear, anger, pain, excitement, laughter, and love that is hidden in our bellies and hearts. As we accept our nature we become graceful and bal-

ship choices with integrity. Power and love become integrated.

During the training, experiences are designed to help people become embodied and to accept pleasure as natural and good. The program is experiential because simply understanding something does not produce change. These exercises evoke body memory where healing and learning occur on a cellular level. The body, our deeper inner-knowing part, assembles and integrates the exposed information. The body has a unison and wisdom. Given opportunity, it will work through old wounds and integrate new possibilities. Becoming embodied is often painful as well as pleasurable. It often requires passage through a tremendous amount of shame, induced by the cultural indictment that our interior life is bad or unimportant.

with 'body' consciousness or unconsciousness. As participants touch and massage one another in groups, they work through intimacy issues such as fear of touch, mistrust of others, and discomfort with pleasure.

All the exercises are done within the workshop community. Since our culture is disrespectful of our sexual nature, it is seldom honored and celebrated in community. Re-owning our bodies, our power, and our sexuality occurs most profoundly within the context of a loving group. The community becomes a safe space for people to appreciate the nature of their bodies. We are indoctrinated to dislike, distrust, deny, and even



anced, peaceful and loving, self-confident and powerful. •

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 For information on the "Body, Heart, and Soul" intensive, see the listing "Art of Being" on page 24.

# Joy Is Your Nati



C H A R L O T T E   D A V I S

*Joy has the power to open our hearts, remove fear, instill hope, and foster healing. Joy leads us to wisdom because it connects us to all we are—our mind, heart, power, and spirit. Joy stimulates our immune system, increases our energy, and gives us mental clarity. It helps us heighten our level of consciousness so we can more readily tap our inner wisdom. Instead of agonizing over decisions, we become more able to simply listen within and know what to do.*



# ural Birthright

Charlotte Davis, Ph.D., is a psychologist, healer, feminist, Quaker, and social justice activist who is at the forefront of the new empowerment movement within the recovery field. The author of "Women, Sex and Addiction" and "Many Roads, One Journey," she brings a holistic approach to all her work. She lectures and leads workshops in the United States and abroad and lives near Missoula, Montana. Copyright 1994 by Charlotte Davis Kasl. From the book "Finding Joy: A 101 Ways to Free Your Spirit and Dance with Life," by Charlotte Davis. Printed by arrangement with HarperCollins Publishers.



As we open ourselves to joy we experience the breadth of human emotions, realize our connection to all life, feel compassion, and dance lightly with the dramas of our lives. As our joy expands we feel deeply connected to ourselves and to something bigger than ourselves.

When we have the ability to access joy, we are more able to stay centered in the midst of life's difficulties and tap our creativity. This helps our creativity pour forth uncensored by our rational minds. We become able to recapture the spontaneity of childhood before we were taught to stop our wild scribbling and start coloring within the lines. Creativity that springs from joy also helps us reach beyond the boundaries of traditional thought for new, original, compassionate solutions to the problems and challenges of our lives and our society.

Joy is not about getting high, or prolonged indulgence in sense pleasures. While enjoying our senses in a balanced way helps us touch the

*Our culture  
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lazy or deceitful.*

experience of joy, ultimately joy comes from moving beyond our senses to a deeper experience of stillness and inner knowing. Once we touch this place, even momentarily, our lives are altered because we become aware of the vast resources of our intricately interwoven body, mind, and spirit in shaping the course of our lives. When we develop our capacity for joy, it lives within us like a wellspring of awareness that heightens our ability to be intimate with others without fear.

We are all born with a capacity for love and joy. Yet many of us feel

uneasy at the thought of seeking more joy in our lives. That is not surprising because we have been taught repeatedly that growth comes through struggle and suffering. Joy and happiness are suspect in our culture, often regarded as childlike, indulgent, or immature. Our culture is focused on competition, control, activity, striving, and productivity.

While you may not have been taught directly that quietness or idleness are to be feared, it is an undercurrent that pervades our culture. An echo of the old phrase—"Idle brains are the devil's workshop"—still lingers in many people's minds, creating uneasiness, guilt, or discomfort at the idea of relaxing or doing things solely for pleasure and delight. Yet the journey to joy includes allowing ourselves time to do nothing, be idle, and let our inner world be known. An idle mind helps us to slip beneath the activities of our daily lives into the quiet knowing place that resides in each of us, a place at once secure, peaceful, and vast. Our culture may fear joy, because joy empowers people to feel alive, exuberant, self-respecting, and unlikely to tolerate being exploited or harmed. Thus becoming a joyful, happy person can feel like a crime against the powers that be, an act of arrogance or willfulness that is somehow wrong. But it is not wrong. An inner sense of joy is our spirit coming alive.

Our culture also emphasizes control and obedience which are based on fear—fear that people allowed free expression of emotions and

thoughts will go out of control, rebel, be lazy or deceitful. Thus, people become divided inside, their passion, anger, and tears constricted like an unseen enemy that could attack if not closely guarded. People fear they will cry forever if they let themselves feel sad, become violent if they allow themselves to vent their rage, or gain one hundred pounds if they allow themselves pleasure with food. For many, constant external striving and control of our natural joys lead to a point where our inner child or spirit rebels, yelling, "Enough of all this work, let's go outside and play."

When we don't listen to this healthy rebellion we are likely to experience anxiety, depression, or lack of energy. When we deny ourselves natural joys we tend to substitute counterfeit joys—substances, sex, food, status, activity, new cars, new hairdos, fewer wrinkles, and snazzy clothes. It's the right search at the wrong door because true joy is not something we buy off a shelf, but rather it is a richness of spirit that dwells within and is expressed through our relationships to others.

I believe we are born blessed as an integral part of all creation. We all have the potential to access our inner world that leads to joy and peace. Sometimes we encounter this quiet resting place much more easily than we expect. Other times it is illusive, something just outside our grasp. But it is always there.

#### A W A K E N   Y O U R I N N E R   F I R E

Joy is a source of personal power. Joy awakens as we open ourselves to the wonder of the universe, both inside us and around us. As we allow the expansive power of joy to flow through ourselves, our awareness expands and we see beyond the concrete world to a world of love, intimacy, creativity, and wisdom.

We create room for joy as we

move beyond "shoulds" and "musts" to an expansive state where we accept our capacity to be both powerful and gentle, expansive and reclusive, delighted and bored, wise and confused, passive and assertive, giving and receptive, generous and withholding, frightened and adventuresome, angry and loving. As we become accepting of ourselves we are more able to reach inside and speak our truths: Yes, No, I want, I can, I feel, I believe, I see, I love. This is a form of self love that creates unity and peacefulness within because we are living at one with our wisest self.

Joy leads us to the heart of our spiritual journey because it ignites the fire of transformation that enables us to change our thoughts, perceptions, and feelings. In doing so we are able to transcend an empty, humdrum existence and infuse our lives with vitality, awareness, and the ability to move beyond the limited boundaries of self. Finding joy doesn't mean life will always be easy, rather life becomes rich because we live near the pulse of possibility. To open the door you can start by saying, I am willing. I am willing to feel, to know, to love, and to expand. I am willing to let the concrete walls of my beliefs slip away and move into a new level of awareness.

In his "Ode to Joy," the German poet Friedrich Schiller wrote, "By that holy fire impassioned, to thy sanctuary we come." When we allow ourselves to feel joy, we create an inner sanctuary, a home for the soul that allows us to feel safe to laugh, cry, be angry, question, and think for ourselves. When we create this home for truth and delight, we feel a sense of inner strength. Unkind remarks and difficult situations lose their ability to singe our souls or tear at our hearts because we are no longer candles in the wind. Rather, we become the fire of life itself—a being, an iden-



tity that cannot be blown about or extinguished by external events because we accept all of who we are.

#### R E M E M B E R   J O Y A N D   F I N D   H O P E

*Hope is the thing with feathers.  
That perches in the soul. And  
sings the tune without the  
words. And never stops, at all.*

—Emily Dickinson

Joy brings hope and hope brings joy. Imagine joy as a memory dwelling within you—a bird perched on your soul singing a song of hope. Let yourself know it is always there. Sometimes we lose contact with that voice and feel despair. In those times if we can remember that the *potential* for joy



## REMEMBER THE MIRACLE OF YOUR BODY

We have been given a miraculous body to live in. Many religions and spiritual philosophies have made a separation between body and spirit. At worst people have been told to beat on their lowly flesh because it was of the devil. I believe our body is a blessing of creation, a wondrous home intertwined with our spirit, something to enjoy and care for. When our body is well and alive, it is easier to feel our spirit and experience joy.

So ponder your amazing body. Your brain can store vast amounts of information. Your heart has been pumping blood every minute of every day of your life and your liver works day and night to detoxify all the toxins or junk food that get into your body. Your immune system, which works to clear out anything that doesn't belong in the body, has about a hundred million trillion molecules or antibodies, and in the time it took you to read the last two sentences your body has produced a million billion new antibody molecules. Just imagine! And now it has done it again.

When you run, talk, walk, see, move, a million billion things are working together in your body, like an information system more vast and intricately interwoven than all the phone lines in the world. Intelligence literally circulates throughout your body. If you injure yourself, your body immediately responds to the situation with adrenaline, blood movement, heart rate change, and so on. I remember going into shock and within seconds my heart rate dropped to 54, my temperature to 94. It was my body's amazing instantaneous survival response to a sudden trauma.

To help you ponder this marvelous body you live in, I suggest you watch the video *The Incredible Human Machine*, produced by

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lives within us, we may regain hope and find the strength to take steps to improve our lives.

If you feel down, blue, depressed, or tend to be hard on yourself, take time to remember the good things you have done for yourself, the risks you have taken, the ways you have survived. Remember times when you experienced contentment or joy. Then hold these images in your heart and tell yourself you can re-create them. You have the power to create happiness in your life; the potential for joy is within you. You might ask yourself what in your life right now blocks you from feeling joy, and consider what you need to do to get on a path toward greater happiness.

The bird of joy that “perches in

the soul” never stops singing—we just stop listening. When we can hear the promise of joy within us, we have more power to come alive to our desire for life.

### PREPARE FOR JOY

Joy may seem illusive or fleeting, yet there is a path we can walk that brings the delight, passion, and sweetness of joy into our lives, sweeping over us, filling us, transporting us, making life feel worth the trouble. Joy may appear to come suddenly, but in reality we prepare for joy every time we speak our truths, care for ourselves, expand our knowledge, nurture our friendships, let people love us, take on new adventures, and go where our hearts lead us.



# Sexuality

M A T T H E W F O X

*Anthropologist Mircea Eliade warned us of what havoc the Modern era has played with our understanding of sexuality when he wrote, "Except in the modern world, sexuality has everywhere and always been a hierophany and the sexual act an integral action and also a means of knowledge." Sexuality is meant to be one of the sacred experiences of people's lives—provided we know we live in a sacred cosmos.*

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All spiritual traditions celebrate sexuality as a sacred act of the universe—a theophany—by which we are indeed connected to the Great Work all around us. The Song of Songs devotes itself to this truth. It is as cosmological as it is beautiful, and it tells all lovers that their love is a holy, mystical act in communion with all the other sacramental acts of the universe. In human love, as depicted in this book, the true Sabbath is re-enacted—the delight of creation; the delight God takes in creation and creation takes in God; the coming out of all of creation—animals and plants, stars and moon to share in the joy of lovers. A veritable creation story or re-creation story, a redemption of the story of the Garden of Eden is offered in the Song of Songs.

Sexuality is part of the “Great Work” of the universe. We know this because the universe invented it and approved it, or in Thomas Aquinas’ words, has recognized sexuality as “a great blessing.” Sexuality is a power that like any power requires that we honor and respect it; first within ourselves, then in others, and finally between self and another. But if we have no spiritual ways by which to honor the power within, we will never honor it in others but will use them and sexuality for works that are not

*Today young and old alike need to be re-educated about sexuality. Sexuality has been banished to the periphery—to closet pornography and video allurements. Sexuality has been banished from the sanctuary, swept under the rug by religion in a futile attempt to try to repress it. This is not only strange but dangerous.*

worthy of the Great Work of the universe.

Today young and old alike need to be re-educated about sexuality. A machine era has left us without passion and eros in our lives, and so sexuality has been banished to the periphery—to closet pornography and video allurements. Sexuality has been banished from the sanctuary, swept under the rug by religion in a futile attempt to try to repress it. This is not only strange but dangerous, for one way in which all of us find ourselves connected to the “Great Work” of the universe is by

way of sexual experience. At least, this ought to be the case. In our culture the mystical and cosmological discoveries that sexual love offers often become deeply polluted by consumer sex, addictive sex, compulsive sex, abusive sex, or neurotic sex. A culture with no cosmology—with no spiritual practices which teach the young inner discipline and cosmic interconnectivity—dissipates the power of sexuality and turns it into something negative: an escape, a weapon, an addiction, and in the time of AIDS, an early death or perhaps a solitary existence.

It is my experience that today’s young people want the truth about sexuality. The first honest thing we need to say about sexuality is that it is a sacred power with which we are all blessed. Thomas Aquinas said that of all the powers of our souls—nutritive, augmentative, and generative—the greatest is our generative power, for it makes us most like God who is “supremely fecund.” The *Via Creativa*, the Third Path of Creation Spirituality, is concerned with sexuality insofar as it is about generativity and creativity—not only the literal act of generation, that of conceiving and birthing children, but the deeper acts as well: those of blessing a relationship, of sharing intimacy, of self-discovery and other discovery, of cosmic grace shared, of the Cosmic Christ played with and wrestled with in the joy and sensuousness of love-giving and love-receiving, of educating one another and another generation about how to play in the world with wisdom.

Because sexuality in its fullest form falls under the *Via Creativa*, it presumes the experiences and disciplines of the *Via Positiva* and *Via Negativa* that precede it. In other words, it cannot substitute for the *Via Positiva* experienced in many other realms of awe and wonder in addition to sexual experience; and

it cannot fill the void left when we ignore the Nothingness of the *Via Negativa*. Healthy and wholesome sexuality presumes the disciplines of letting go, of emptying, of waiting, of solitude, of humor, of chastity, which the *Via Negativa* teaches us. If we have not learned lessons of solitude we should not be playing

then we must indeed have a culture filled with ignorant and dangerous men.

The Inuit peoples' term for making love is "to make laughter together." And we need much laughter in these troubled times. Sexuality can contribute to that laughter, but only to the extent that

macy, to teach healthy celibacy when appropriate. In short, honesty is a whole field of work that we could spawn if we wished to, and it is what the upcoming generations deserve about the praxis and theory of sexuality. There is good work to be done regarding sexuality and the linking of the Great Work to sexuality for all ages.

The transforming of our sexual awareness is important not only for the young but for the youth in all of us. The return of eros is an important energy source in any cultural renewal. The fear of sex that exists today—both because of disease and out of a deeply ingrained dualistic ideology that pits matter against spirit and that fundamentalist religion has always taught in the West—can interfere with the



around with the power of sexuality. It is so powerful a mystical experience that approaching it without discipline is like having a weapon in our hands. We may self-destruct or we may ruin our own lives and others not only by spreading disease but also by parenting children before we are ready. How readily adults' and children's lives can be damaged by the immature use of our sexual powers.

We need rites of passage that initiate us into the mystery and the responsibility of our sexual power, for only ritual teaches us to honor the sacred. And if Robert Bly is correct when he says that males learn "only by ritual," and if ritual is as rare as it appears in our culture,

its greatness is set within the larger context of the Great Work. There lies its origin, its purpose, its beauty and grace. To re-educate about sexuality to lift it out of commercialization, consumerism, escapism, or addiction, to remove it from moralisms and guilt where so many religious traditions have relegated it—this would be a way to reinvent work in our time.

Renewing sexuality will require workers of many kinds to educate, to perform rites of passage, to lead discussion groups, to help people adjust to mistakes made, to teach healthy solitude, to raise consciousness about homophobia, to strengthen marriages, to help singles explore alternative ways of inti-

return of healthy eros. Without a passion for living and an integration of all our passions, our species will not have the energy to overcome its inertia and to reinvent itself. The generativity that we need in our lives will not happen if we run from the generative powers with which we have been blessed. By rediscovering healthy and honest sexuality, the young may prove to be spiritual directors to the elders who might sometimes find it more comfortable to ignore the whole subject. The demands that youth put on the elders for wisdom about sexuality can contribute to better and deeper communication between generations, as well as to more joy in everyone's lives. •

MARTIN HOOPER/THE IMAGE BANK



# Learning From Your Inner Critic

S I D R A   &   H A L   S T O N E

*One of the fundamental principles of learning to work with and handle the Inner Critic is what we call the conversion principle. What we mean by this is the ability to convert your distress at the Critic's attack upon you to an understanding of the underlying anxiety and fear that motivates this attack. We hope to bring you a deeper focus to this issue and to teach you how to use this understanding in a practical way.*

ALAN HICKS/ALLSTOCK

Hal Stone Ph.D. and Sidra Stone, Ph.D. are clinical psychologists, and authors of "Embracing Ourselves" and "Embracing Each Other." Hal founded the Center for Healing Arts in Los Angeles, one of the first holistic health facilities in the country. Sidra directed Hamburger Home in Los Angeles, a residential treatment center for adolescent girls. From the book "Embracing Your Inner Critic," by Hal and Sidra Stone. Copyright 1993 by Delos, Inc.. Printed by arrangement with Harper San Francisco, a division of Harper Collins.



People respond in a variety of ways to the attack of the Inner Critic. Some people do not know what is happening and just feel depressed. In this case, they are victims of the Critic and of life in general. Others jump to the attack and, instead of feeling inadequate and depressed, become judgmental toward other people. A strong Judgmental Self is a sure sign that a strong Inner Critic is operating beneath the surface. It is often the case that people who appear the most powerful and judgmental are at their core intensely vulnerable and self-critical. Under the impact of some major adversity they may discover that their Inner Critics are, indeed, alive and well.

A third way of dealing with the Critic is to project it onto the people in one's life who tend to be judgmental. Here the battle seems to be with the people on the outside, and the Inner Critic is able to do its job with quiet authority and without interference on the inside. We find this often with people who have had very judgmental parents. They live life as rebellious children and project their Inner Critics onto the outer authorities of the world, who remind them of their judgmental parents. Similarly, some people may break from formal religions because the religious teachings seem too judgmental. These people often move in the opposite

*To go beneath the criticisms of the Inner Critic and convert your distress to understanding, you must always remember how and why the Critic was born. You must remember the important role that it has had to play in protecting that very young, vulnerable, unprotected, and sensitive child that you used to be.*

direction and adopt a value structure that is antithetical to everything that their church stood for in their earlier lives. Judgment remains projected onto the church where indeed it may reside. Unfortunately, such people may never realize that the church and its judgments also live inside their heads and that the judgments they so hate are directed toward themselves via the Inner Critic and toward the church and other people via their judgmental nature. The more extreme the judgments with which we were raised, the harder it is to step out of the family war zone and realize that it is all happening on the inside as well as the outside.

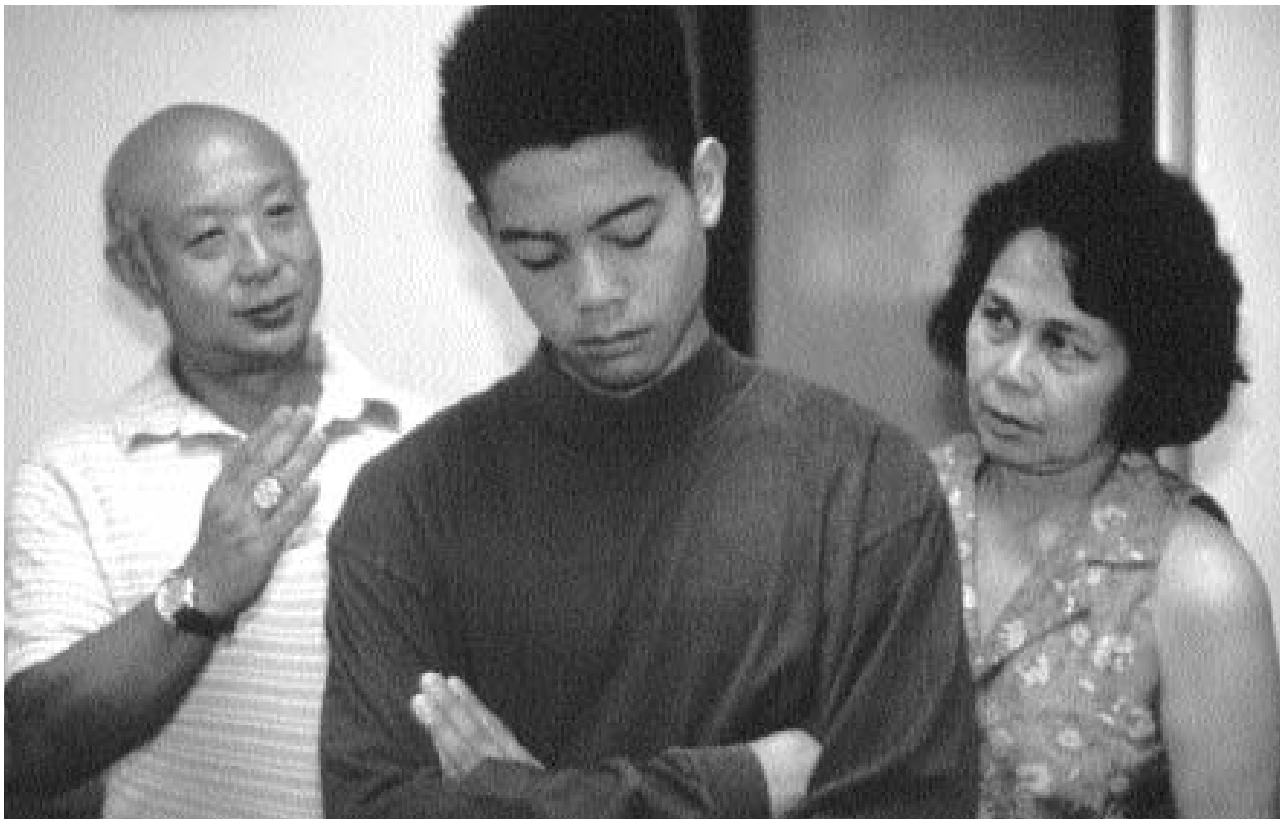
A fourth way of responding to Critic attacks is to turn around and attack the Inner Critic itself. People who do this usually have some sense of the Critic on an inner level. They will jump to the other side of what the Critic wants. For instance, if the Inner Critic says that Mamie is too self-absorbed and should be nicer to Aunt Em, Mamie gets angry and refuses to phone Aunt Em on her birthday. People like Mamie thus become rebellious sons and daughters to whatever it is that the Critic is advocating. This is reinforced, by having a judgmental parent on the outside who is saying the same thing that the Critic is saying. Thus, the individual is rebelling against both the outer parent figure and the demands of the Inner Critic.

People may also rebel against the Inner Critic if they have been in therapies where they were taught to assert themselves against its inner demands. They learn to be strong and tough, and they say to the Inner Critic in no uncertain terms, "You won't get away with this kind of crap anymore!" Their Inner Critics do not go away. They simply go underground and wait for another day, and they then reassert themselves as smugly and powerfully as ever. Attacking the Inner Critic solves nothing.

#### GOING UNDERNEATH THE CRITIC

What we are proposing is that the attack of the Inner Critic is in fact a cry for help. It is like an alarm system that rings inside of you, warning you of danger. It lets you know that at some level the Inner Critic is unhappy, anxious, and deeply concerned about what you are doing, feeling, or thinking. It fears that you will experience pain, rejection, or abandonment. Your Critic is terrified that you are going





to look foolish and bring shame onto the system.

To go beneath the criticisms of the Inner Critic and convert your distress to understanding, you must always remember how and why the Critic was born. You must remember the important role that it has had to play in protecting that very young, vulnerable, unprotected, and sensitive child that you used to be and that continues to live with you today and forever.

The Critic remembers the pain you felt when your feelings were hurt. It remembers the humiliation and the shame that you experienced and how terrible that was. It remembers the hurt when people laughed at you, when your mother screamed at you in front of friends, when your father laughed at the wooden box that you made with your first tools. It will do anything to help you avoid that pain, even if it means destroying you. It remembers vividly the terror you experienced when you felt abandoned by your parents and siblings, whether this abandonment was physical or energetic. It remembers the anxious nights when your parents were

gone and you were at home with a strange baby-sitter. It remembers the bad dreams and the terror you felt at waking up in the dark with repetitive nightmares. It will do anything to avoid repeating that pain!

That is why the Critic is generally such an enemy of the Inner Child. For the Inner Critic, the vulnerability of the Inner Child and the feelings of pain, shame, and terror are irrevocably associated with one another. The Critic must have us always in control, doing things right, feeling right, eating right, learning right, mothering right, working right. Then maybe we can be safe. If it had the power to do so, it would buy multiple antipain and antishame insurance policies to ensure our safety and well-being.

The Critic always sits on top of the Inner Child, keeping it down so that life will work right. The Inner Critic cannot come to us and say, "I'm feeling very vulnerable about the way you are eating. I'm afraid that you're going to become ill and not be able to work, and that is very frightening to me." That is the kind of thing that the Child might

say to us. Instead, the Critic, always pushing away our vulnerability, says to us in its inimitably cold, rational, and judgmental tone, "You're such a slob. When will you ever have control? This stuffs poison for you. You're just weak."

When we apply the conversion principle to this statement and really go underneath the attack, we finally get to the vulnerability that lies at the heart of the Inner Critic. Then we hear its voice, sounding totally different, telling us how bad it feels about our eating and how frightened it is of illness and how confused it feels by all the conflicting information that is fed into it. We see that the Critic is really asking us for help because it feels so overwhelmed by the world and its demands and requirements. Then we find that as we learn to take care of the Critic we are also learning to care for the Inner Child.

## JOURNAL WRITING

In the Voice Dialogue process, it is necessary to have a facilitator talk to your selves in order for you to become aware of these selves and



Voice Dialogue. The more that we develop an Aware Ego that is separated from the different selves, the more effective is the "I" that talks to the different parts. Without any separation from these parts, it is not possible to engage in the dialogue process in journal work. What is important in this kind of writing is to put oneself into the writing as fully as possible. We need to involve our feel-

learn to see, hear, and feel them. In addition, Voice Dialogue helps you to establish an Aware Ego by helping you become aware of and separate from your primary selves and ultimately become aware of and experience your disowned selves. Eventually, however, it is a good idea to learn how to address these selves on your own. One of the best ways of doing this is through journal writing.

Journal writing is a natural process. After all, people have been writing in journals for hundreds, perhaps thousands, of years, and much of our information about the world and about historical figures is gained from personal journals. Traditionally, the writer writes about events, feelings, and ideas. What has been added to this process really began with the work of C. G. Jung and his process of active imagination. In this process, Jung began to carry on discussions with the figures of his inner world. He would write to dream figures, to inner voices, to sensations and

feelings exactly as though he were carrying on a dialogue with another person, which in fact he was, though the person was on an inner rather than an outer level.

The process is very simple. You sit down in front of a notebook and begin to write from the "I" that is talking to one of the selves. It would look like this:

I: I wanted to talk to you because I've become aware of just how powerful you are and just how much influence you have in my life.

CRITIC (or any other self): Well, I'm glad that you appreciate just how important I am. If you would know that and always do what I say, things would go much better.

I: No, that isn't what I meant exactly. I appreciate your power, but I'm also becoming aware of how much on the muscle you are with me. You've been criticizing me all my life.

CRITIC: Well, better me than them...

We can see how journal writing is a significant complement to

ings and emotions as well as our minds. The more feeling we put into the dialogue, the more meaningful the outcome to us. Because of the simplicity and effectiveness of this process, it has become one of our main recommendations to people for continuing their explorations of their different selves.

Within us live all kinds of fascinating selves, in addition to the Inner Critic, that we can talk to in journal work. There is a Vulnerable Child, an Inner Therapist or simply an objective voice, a Supportive Parent, and a Wisdom Voice. We can speak to the Responsible Parent, Rebel, Shy Child, Magical Child, Pusher, Perfectionist, or Power Voices. There is no end to the possibilities for exploring the many selves that live within.

Sometimes people talk to the selves just in their own imagination without writing them down in dialogue form. This too can be very effective. If it works, use it. Our experience, however, is that the writing tends to objectify the voic-

es more clearly and strengthen the Aware Ego since it requires a stronger focus.

Other people describe allowing the voices to speak into a tape recorder, and yet others allow the different voices to sit in different places on couches and chairs in the living room. If we liken the selves to the varied musicians and instruments of an orchestra, then we must remember that it is the orchestra conductor who ultimately must be strengthened. It is the conductor who represents the Aware Ego, and without the conductor's power there is no way for all the disparate elements to be brought together in a way that can create lovely music. So whatever method you use to become aware of the different selves, please always keep in mind that the Aware Ego must remain the primary focus.

### GETTING TO THE INNER CRITIC'S ANXIETY

John has begun to recognize the voice of his Critic. It is always criticizing his body. It tells him many things that are wrong with his body but one of its primary criticisms is that he is losing his hair. It keeps telling him that he is becoming bald. John has spent much time scrutinizing his hair and trying to figure out how much it has changed. This has affected his relationships with women because he feels self-conscious and assumes that the woman is looking disapprovingly at his hair. Up until now he has been the victim of his Inner Critic, which has functioned in much the same way his own mother functioned in his growing-up process. His mother was always scrutinizing him and commenting on what might be wrong with him.

Because of his Inner Critic work, John has learned to recognize station KRAZY. He has separated from his Critic. He has developed an

Aware Ego that can hear its voice and that is beginning to have some choice about how to relate to it. One day he is writing in his journal, carrying on a conversation with the Critic. He asks the Critic, "Why are you always criticizing my hair? Why is this so important to you? It must bother you an awful lot. Why are you so upset?" He is no longer intimidated by the Critic. He is no longer fighting the Critic. He is quite impersonal about the whole thing and really wants to understand what is upsetting the Critic.

The answer of the Critic amazes John.

CRITIC (via the journal writing): I'm afraid that no one will ever want you and that you'll be all alone an your life.

JOHN: And why does that bother you so?

CRITIC: People won't respect you. They'll feel you can't get a woman. I'm afraid of all the judgments that people will make about you. And then, too, what will happen when you're old? I'm afraid of being alone with no one to take care of you.

John's dialogue with the Inner Critic continued. We have excerpted only a few sentences for illustration. How different this discussion was from the years of attack and condemnation he had experienced! This time he has dug beneath the Critic's attack rather than remain a worried victim to all its criticism. He heard the attack as a call for help, and he went underneath to the fundamental issues of anxiety and vulnerability that have been fueling the Critic most of the years of his life. No wonder so many people feel as though they have come out of prison when they make this discovery. Suddenly it is the Inner Critic that needs parenting rather than the other way around.

In contrast, Janet's Critic focused on her lack of organization. In Voice Dialogue sessions it would

comment on how sloppy she was at work, how she never knew where anything was, and that it was a miracle that she was still able to survive on a job. Janet began to recognize the voice of the Critic, and she was beginning to sense its underlying anxiety. One day in the course of writing to her Critic, Janet asked it why it was always so upset about her lack of organization. She told it she was aware that she was not very well organized, but the Critic's concerns seemed much greater and deeper than this particular problem. The Critic answered her as follows:

CRITIC: It frightens me when you're not organized. Things feel out of control and I'm afraid of what might happen.

JANET: What is it that you're afraid of?

CRITIC: Catastrophe! You might be fired. Someone might scream at you. I feel so terribly embarrassed when you misplace something because I'm afraid someone will find out and say something. Last week you couldn't find one of the files and I was terrified your boss would yell at you. He didn't but it was a close call.

Janet has now applied the conversion principle to her Inner Critic. She hears the attack and she is aware that the Critic is frightened. Her vulnerability is threatened and the Critic is rising to its defense. Janet now has an Aware Ego in relationship to the Critic, so she is able to speak to it with compassion—no longer its victim but at last able to bring to the Critic the support that it so desperately needs.

### IN SUMMARY

As the Aware Ego develops through our readings and all of our psycho spiritual work, it separates from the Inner Critic so that we are no longer identified with and victim to the Critic. We start listening to the Inner Critic with some

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V E R O N I C A   R A Y

# Choosing Happiness

*Our personal identity and self-image affect all that we think, feel, and do. What we believe of ourselves is fundamental to our perspective on everything. If we see ourselves as merely bodies and conscious minds, we are likely to remain unhappily searching for perfection in these areas. If we see ourselves as incapable of love, peace, joy, cooperation, and forgiveness, we won't be able to see the opportunities for them in our lives.*



*Veronica Ray is the author of "Design for Growth: A Twelve Step Program for Adult Children" and the "Moment to Reflect" meditation series.*



**H**uman beings have struggled with the question of identity since the beginning of time. We have turned to philosophy, religion, and science for the answers, and countless theories, ideas, and possibilities have evolved. But we often become disillusioned and even angry when these answers prove to be imperfect or incomplete. The truth is, at this point in history, we just don't know the meaning of life with absolute certainty.

We all want to find a clear, simple understanding of ourselves and our world. But just as no one can control everything, no one can know everything. Once we accept

it, we can live with this limitation quite fully and happily. We don't have to have all the answers, and even more, we *can't have all the answers*. This acceptance frees us to be more open to hearing the truths already whispering in our hearts. Acknowledging our confusion can be the first step toward letting go of our old, self-defeating beliefs and behaviors.

When we give up our desire for indisputable evidence of absolute truths, we can begin to accept some comforting, helpful, guiding ideas. Once we accept that there may always be some unanswered questions, we can choose our beliefs about being human based on whether they enhance our lives and the contributions we make to others. We can choose to view life and ourselves in ways that help us live better, healthier, happier lives.

To each of us, "truth" is made up of our own perceptions. Whether or

not we realize it, we are always choosing our perceptions, beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors. When we begin choosing consciously, we can learn to avoid those that cause our unhappiness and self-defeating actions. We can pragmatically choose those perceptions that help us instead of those that hurt us.

#### *M A N O R B U T T E R F L Y ?*

There is an ancient Chinese legend about a man who dreamt he was a butterfly. It was the loveliest dream imaginable. He felt himself floating about through the air, light and free. He felt completely, blissfully happy. Everything in this dream was beautiful, peaceful, and joyous. According to the legend, when the man awoke from this dream, he was never again certain whether he was really a man who had dreamt he was a butterfly or a butterfly who now dreamt he was a



man. This story illustrates the split we feel as human beings. We are uncertain of our identity—are we body, mind, emotions, or spirit? Are we naturally loving, peaceful, happy, angry, afraid, aggressive, or cooperative? All of these things and more seem to be part of being human, but some get more attention than others—they're noisier. It's hard to ignore a feeling of rage within us and easy to miss the quiet voice of peacefulness, gentleness, and love. But that doesn't mean the loving part isn't there.

To simplify this whole confusing picture, let's stick with the idea of the man/butterfly. Let's call all of those noisy feelings, thoughts, beliefs, and actions our ego. This is the "man" part of us fearful, defensive, angry, territorial, and worried. This part of us keenly feels the needs and desires of survival and pleasure and in fact, feels nothing else. In his book, *Good-bye to Guilt*, Jerry Jampolsky defines our ego as,

"our body/personality or lower self."

But also within each of us lives a higher self, a *butterfly*: a purely loving, peaceful, joyous spirit untouched by anything in the outer world. This part of us is quiet, gentle, peaceful, forgiving, accepting, and fearless. From Plato to Spinoza to Thornton Wilder, humans have always expressed a feeling that we are somehow eternal. This butterfly, or *spirit*, is the eternal part of us, the part that is free of the cares and concerns of the world and is connected to our Higher Power and to the spirits of all other people.

#### USING OUR MINDS

John Milton wrote, "The mind is its own place, and in itself can make a heaven of hell, a hell of heaven." Our mind chooses which viewpoint to see—our ego's or our spirit's. It can live in a self-imposed hell of fearful, angry thoughts or a heaven of loving, peaceful

thoughts. But we can choose how to use our mind.

For example, if someone says something unkind to us, our ego will probably immediately perceive this as an attack against which it must defend itself. It will fill us with anger, hostility, and fear. It may prompt us to attack the other person verbally or in some other way. But if we understand our ego and its frightened, defensive viewpoint, we can turn to our other way of seeing—the way of our spirit. Our mind can see our spirit's loving, forgiving, understanding perspective, and help our ego to calm down and temper its response.

Since we are both ego and spirit, we can't always behave in a perfectly loving way. But we can take control of our actions before our ego gets carried away and causes harm. If we've already caused harm, we can still find our spirit's perspective after we've calmed down and then make appropriate amends.

As we become more accustomed to seeing ourselves as responding either from our ego or our spirit, we can learn to recognize our ego's feelings and reactions more quickly and let our spirit take over sooner. Our unhappy, self-defeating feelings and behaviors can become less intense and long-lasting.

Simplifying our view of our reactions, beliefs, feelings, and behaviors by identifying them as either belonging to our ego or spirit can help us accept ourselves and improve our lives. We don't have to be angry or impatient with ourselves. That would only be our ego fighting against itself. Instead, we can accept that we have these two parts or viewpoints within us and learn to work with them to produce the best results.

#### O U R E G O

In his play, *Our Town*, Thornton Wilder wrote, "Whenever you come near the human race, there's layers and layers of nonsense." Our ego is the part of us that creates these layers and layers of nonsense. Egos are not inherently *bad*, they simply have certain capabilities, limitations, and a specific viewpoint. It is not our goal to eradicate our ego, even if that were possible. But rather, we can learn to understand it, accept it, and use it for our highest well-being.

Our ego can be thought of as a level of consciousness that includes much of what we think of as ourselves, including our bodies and personalities. It is convinced that it is us, complete in itself. It misinterprets everything and creates our self-defeating behaviors and beliefs. It convinces us that it can make us safe and happy, but it never does.

Our ego is the part of us that always needs to be right, to have the last word. It values conflict and always feels threatened. Its only modes of communication are attack and defend. But it often disguises

these with elaborate rationalizations and justifications. It denies, lies, tricks, confuses, hurts, blames, hates, and fears. And all the while, it is certain that it is acting only in our best interests.

Our ego will never change of itself. It's like a child who is incapable of growing up. This is why we so often react and behave in self-defeating ways even long after we feel we know better. But our ego does not have to rule us. We can learn to recognize its confusion, mistakes, its fear, and its pain. We can learn to choose love over fear, and joy over pain.

#### O U R S P I R I T

Our spirit is our ego's direct opposite in many ways. It's incapable of feeling anger, pain, worry, fear, or sorrow. It never feels threatened in any way, because it is absolutely certain of its invulnerability. It knows itself to be eternal, at one with all other spirits, and connected to a Higher Power.

Our spirit is only capable of unlimited love and joy. It has no interest in who is right or wrong. It has no use for conflict. It values peace, love, and sharing above all else. It recognizes the abundance of the universe as infinite and available to all of us, always. It only offers unconditional love, acceptance, and forgiveness. It is purely joyful, generous, content, and gentle, and always knows our true best interests.

#### O T H E R S ' S P I R I T S

Recognizing our own spirituality can transform our self-image, behavior, and lives. Likewise, recognizing the spirit in others can transform our outlook and all of our relationships. But it's sometimes difficult to see the good, spiritual part of another person, especially when he or she has done harmful things or expresses a callous, self-centered attitude.

We can begin by recognizing that everyone has an ego that is always afraid and acting out self-defeating beliefs. We can think, with understanding, *Look at what their egos did*, instead of thinking, with condemnation, *Look at what they did*. If we take a moment to let our initial ego-reaction pass, and to overlook the ego reactions of others, we can move beyond them to more peaceful, happy relations with other people. This can help us stop defining people as their egos and we can begin overlooking and forgiving their faults and mistakes. Then instead of searching for what we can judge as *good* in them (which can sometimes be very hard to find), we can simply *know* that they also have within them a perfect, loving spirit even if we can't see it beneath all those layers and layers of ego-nonsense.

#### S P I R I T U A L G R O W T H

I don't believe our spirits need to grow or evolve at all. I believe they are already perfect. What spiritual growth or evolution means to me is that we human beings need to grow in our awareness of this spiritual aspect of ourselves and get to know it. We need to learn to see its viewpoint and hear its guidance. Then we can learn to extend its qualities out into our lives and the world. This way our spirit grows in the sense of expanding, touching the spirits in others, and growing together with them.

Every day, situation, and relationship contains opportunities to open up to our spirit's viewpoint and guidance. Everywhere are chances for us to extend the highest, best, spiritual part of ourselves out into the world. No matter who we are or what our particular circumstances might be, we can all discover the power and peace of our spirituality.

We have to take the time needed

for spiritual growth and not allow ourselves to become impatient. There is no end to the wondrous discoveries we can make on this journey. But we have to allow them to unfold in their own time. It may take many months, or even years, for us to see that we have turned a corner in our spiritual evolution. As the meditation book, *God Calling*, reminds us, “When climbing a steep hill, a man is often more conscious of the weakness of his stumbling feet than of the view, the grandeur, or even of his upward progress.”

Faith, hope, and persistence will keep us growing spiritually.

### O U R I N N E R T R U T H

Because our egos are so noisy and demanding, they often obscure our awareness of our spirituality. But since we can never experience true happiness through our ego, we feel a nagging sense of dissatisfaction until we turn to our spirit. When we are in conflict within ourselves, that conflict is reflected in our outer lives. It’s a kind of self-betrayal to place our center of personal energy outside our true selves, as we do when we define ourselves as our egos. It makes us sick, tired, and unhappy to go against our own inner truth.

We must each experience our spirituality for ourselves. Reading, thinking, talking, or writing about it doesn’t give us the *experience* of it. These things may help us move in the direction needed to open ourselves up to our own spirituality but eventually we must turn inward.

Deep inside, we all know that we are spiritual beings. As long as we ignore this part of ourselves, we may feel a kind of gnawing ache, like a vague memory, a yearning for something we can’t quite name. We may feel a sort of homesickness for our spirits whenever we recognize

great beauty or experience moments of unconditional love. We may experience brief flashes of inspiration or perfect peace when we *know* we are something more than our egos.

There is a sense of familiarity, of *coming home*, in discovering—or rather *rediscovering*—our spirituality. It’s like hearing an old song, suddenly remembering where you were when you first heard it and who you were with and recalling the feelings you had then. Think of an old love song that reminds you of a special person you once knew. How much more powerful, more beautiful, more moving is the recognition of our spirituality than even this fond memory!

Only when we rediscover our spirit and begin letting it grow into our conscious awareness can we experience the peace of harmony and balance between our bodies, minds, and spirits. For some of us, this begins with a transformational experience—a spiritual awakening.

### S P I R I T U A L A W A K E N I N G

In *The Varieties of Religious Experience*, William James identified the following characteristics of a spiritual experience:

- It defies description; it must be experienced first-hand to be understood.
- It brings a sense of certainty, of knowledge or profound insight into truth unreachable by the usual sensory or intellectual means.
- It doesn’t last long.
- It feels as if one is not willing or controlling the experience; it includes a sense of a superior presence or power.
- It is a deeply memorable experience, leaving a sense of its importance.
- It changes the inner life of the person who experiences it.
- It changes the outer behavior,

attitudes, character, and outlook of the person experiencing it.

We’ve all had some spiritual experiences of varying intensity and effects. *Deja vu*, creative inspiration, intuitive knowledge, and deep love are the everyday experiences of our spirituality. Intense, even overwhelming feelings of wonder and appreciation of the beauty of nature; a sudden jolt of recognition or understanding; a momentary sense of oneness with humanity and the universe—these are all spiritual experiences.

But these common experiences don’t necessarily affect us in a dramatic or long-lasting way. They can be thought of as flashes or sneak previews of a more profound and transformational spiritual awakening. For some of us, a deeply painful experience—some form of “hitting bottom”—provides the necessary openness to experiencing a true spiritual awakening.

### O U T O F T H E D A R K N E S S

Like the man who dreamt he was a butterfly, once we awaken to our spirituality we can never again be quite sure of ourselves as mere egos. Having opened a window to the light of our spiritual selves, the darkness in our minds can never be quite so dark again.

For most of us, coming to our true spiritual identity doesn’t happen suddenly. We have to persist in being open to it and take advantage of all our opportunities for spiritual growth. We do this by patient awareness of the lesson each present moment brings. We do it by accepting where we are right now, today, without anxiety over where we have been or where we are going.

We can help ourselves experience our spirituality through prayer, meditation, and *Acting as if*—trying to discover the loving part of ourselves by behaving in a

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# *Learn From Love*

DOROTHY JONGEWARD & MICHELE RAFFIN

*If you've ever experienced a hurtful relationship, you may have thought long and hard about what attracted you to it in the first place. Many things attract us to other people: looks, voice, mannerisms, the way they move their bodies, and even the way they smell. In fact, on the basis of recent studies showing the attraction of hormones called pheromones, perfume companies can exploit this notion commercially. But, even deeper than the way we smell, more profound motivations pull us toward others like magnets. These kinds of attractions occur at a whole different level and the remedies are not that easy to "sell."*

Dr. Dorothy Jongeward has authored or co-authored eight books, including, "Born to Win" and "Women as Winners." She is an internationally prominent management consultant and a licensed marriage, child, and family counselor. She has been with her permanent partner for over 40 years. Michele Raffin earned her M.M.S. at Stanford and has been a computer company vice-president, lecturer, and venture capitalist. She developed the concept of "Social Networking" as a means of finding a husband while handling a demanding work life. She currently writes and lives in California with her husband, four children, four dogs, and two house rabbits.



The people we attract into our lives often have something to teach us. Whether these "lessons" seem to be for better or for worse, it is possible to learn a great deal about ourselves from others. Both negative and positive experiences hold nuggets of wisdom, if we'd only pay more attention to the messages. Rather than allowing things to happen randomly, we suggest that you examine what you project (seeing yourself in others) and what you admire (qualities in others that you respect) to accelerate your growth. Eventually, you can call those qualities that seem so special in others your own. You can "Be What You Seek." Clearing away as many negative projections as you can, helps you achieve a higher consciousness about who you are.

#### LEARNING THROUGH PROJECTIONS

We can be drawn to people who compel us to examine who we are, who, through the phenomenon of projection, give us many opportunities to discover our innermost secrets—our subconscious selves. When we are projecting, we are seeing ourselves in others. We attribute the thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that originate in our own minds to them. We see others

*It's hard to see  
a fault in  
someone else  
that we don't  
possess to some  
degree  
ourselves. You  
have heard  
that "it takes  
one to know  
one."*

as having those thoughts, feelings, and behaviors. What disturbs us about another person often allows us to discover a disturbance deep inside ourselves. Our projections come from thoughts, feelings, and beliefs that, for whatever reasons, we deny. Rather than confront these inner "gremlins," it seems easier to keep them buried and only recognize them in others. The gremlins may eat away at our guts, orchestrate our feelings, fuzz our thinking and blur our vision, but how many of us are willing to confront them for what they are?

When you are serious about personal growth, projection is a great tool for self-knowledge—for facing our gremlins. Once you muster up the courage, the people in your life,

especially family, can help you face these inner issues. They don't have to do anything but be there. Yes, relationships offer one of the greatest potentials for growth, but fear and ignorance can keep us from going through the growing pains.

#### SEEING OURSELVES IN OTHERS

At times we dislike, are mad at, or fear in others exactly what we are capable of ourselves. Qualities such as lying, cheating, anger, lust, meanness, greed, and even cruelty are distasteful to admit. In fact, it's hard to see a fault in someone else that we don't possess to some degree ourselves. You have heard that "it takes one to know one." How true! Similarly, if we do not have the fault, we tend not to see it in others. There is no "charge" on it, by which we mean that the behavior doesn't upset us. We may look at people and think they have a quirk, but it doesn't really bother us; we don't get distraught.

People with whom we have close contact, like our families, often serve as wonderful and sometimes astonishing "growth helpers" by being our mirrors and reflecting us back to ourselves. The projection of our negative traits onto others makes it possible to "see" our own behaviors—to see what's inside us, what we're capable of—like a movie on a screen. We can see clearly those behaviors we've carefully hidden from our own view. They are not hidden from others' mind you (they know!) but from us.

This phenomenon is happening to us all the time, saying, "use me, use me," but it's all too easy to get mad at the people "out there" and not recognize that it's our own personal movie that is going on and *we're* the ones who are mad. When we say of someone, "He's always angry," we can very well be disowning our own anger and seeing

it in someone else. Jealousy is often a projection. A sense of “I’m afraid my spouse will cheat on me” may belie our own “unbelievable” urges. We even project ourselves on inanimate objects. Have you ever hollered at your stupid car for running out of gas?

Those parts of us that we tuck away in our blind spot have great stories to tell us about ourselves. If we can learn to “see” these behaviors, embrace them as our own, and then release them to the universe, it lightens our load considerably.

Murphy spent a lot of time complaining about his boss. His boss was a controlling so-and-so and he was sick and tired of it. When he turned this thought inward and asked himself, “Could I possibly have high needs for control?,” he burst into a broad grin. Of course, he did! At a dinner gathering, Tess felt anger and disgust toward a man whom she “saw” as trying to be the life of the party. When she turned this question inward, it was pretty clear to her that she was the one who wanted to be the life of the party. With this realization, she laughed and, shaking her head with a smile, enjoyed the feelings of her frustration lifting from her.

Bringing what’s subconscious—what we’ve hidden from ourselves—to our conscious minds can further our healing. While it might be shocking and even sad, it is most often amusing. It’s amazing what a

little awareness and a sense of humor can accomplish.

How do you go about doing this? The answer is simple but again not always easy. It needs to become a conscious practice. Every time you see something “wrong” in



another person, something that disturbs you, go inside and look for that same trait or behavior in yourself. Ask, “Could I possibly be the one who is angry (depressed, controlling, mean, guilty, confused, dishonest, arrogant, acting stupid)?” Do your best to be honest. Usually you’ll know if you have hit upon the truth. If you think maybe your imaginings have got out of control, talk them over with a trusted friend—someone who

knows you well, sees you for who and what you are, and accepts you. In some instances, this may need to be a trained therapist. For example, if fear persists, you may need a qualified professional to assist you.

Once we own up to the rejected parts of ourselves that seem too negative to admit the tendency lessens to see others falsely. Our vision clears. We shift our perception of others and see them more clearly for who they actually are. The practice of looking into our “mirrors” and searching for the truth about ourselves is a fertile field for growth. This practice takes some determination but has great rewards .

Lee had been working at using the concept of possible projections to shed more light on what she called the shady side of her own behaviors. She had married and divorced the same person twice. One evening she attended her regular study group where she and three other people had been meeting weekly for several months. When she entered the room and sat down, she noted that she had a strong negative feeling about one of the women who was chatting with the man across from her. She thought to herself, “She’s always acting like a know-it-all.” As was becoming her habit when she felt annoyed by someone else’s behavior, she went inside herself and asked, “Do I act like a know-it-all?” It occurred to her right away that she usually dominated these meetings. When

she wasn't, she wanted to. Just this realization amused and amazed her. But, in addition, it gave her a great sense of relief and allowed her to monitor her behavior.

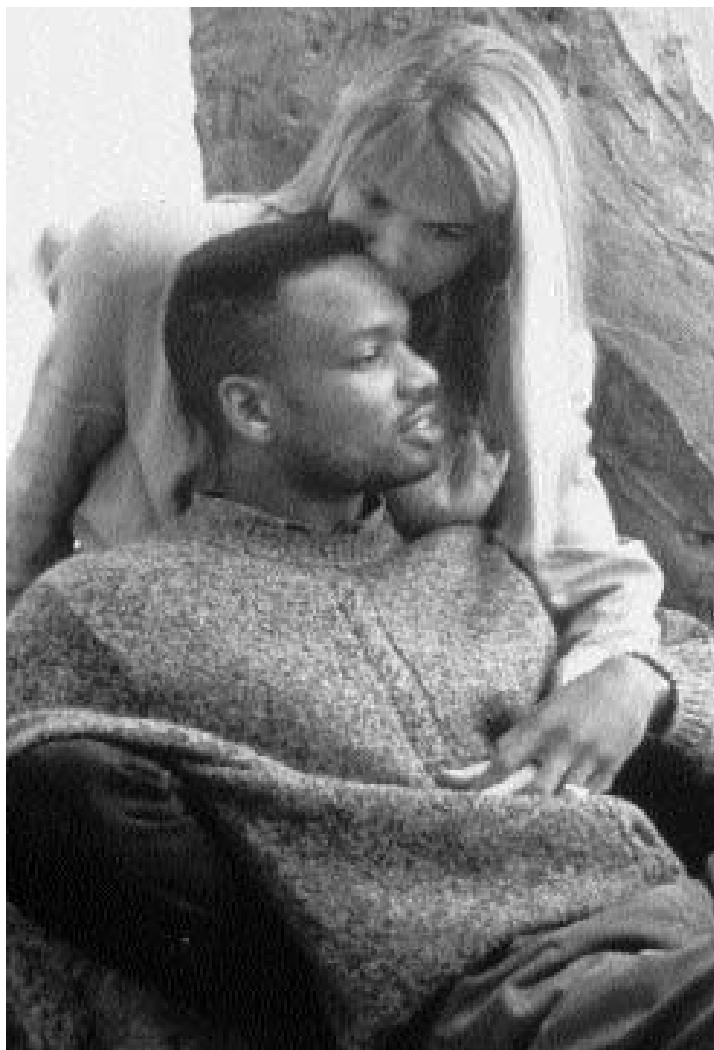
When we talk about learning from projections in order to gain more insight, we are encouraging you to become more aware of your own reality, to *pay attention to your own tendencies*. It is very often a relief to recognize and acknowledge—to bring to your consciousness—something negative inside yourself that you had not acknowledged before. And believe it or not, it's sometimes even funny.

But there is another side to this same coin. We really are each other's teachers! In addition to learning about our negatives by looking for ourselves in others, we can also make personal gains by looking for positive traits. Clearing away projections can help us get to what we admire. We can observe those traits we admire in others but believe we don't possess, and then bring them to maturity in ourselves. When we face our darker side and consciously develop admirable qualities, we open ourselves to new possibilities for being high-quality permanent partners. We take an active part in the process of becoming whole.

#### LEARNING FROM ADMIRATIONS

There are many ways we can bring our fragmented selves togeth-

er and become more whole. "Be What You Seek" is about just that—becoming whole. It's about putting our pieces back together again. It's about developing pieces we weren't aware we had. If we are incomplete ourselves, we are likely to attract others who are incom-



plete. Men and women who seek partners to "fill up their own emptiness" or "get someone to help them out" or "make their own life bearable" or who play the Dominant-Submissive Game have not yet learned how to be true partners. Rather than seeking a "better half" which can only lead to disappointment, focus on developing a "better half" within. Real partner-

ship implies give and take. You can't give if you are excessively needy. You can't take if you've learned to reject what others try to give you.

It takes a whole egg and a whole sperm to create a new life. If either the sperm or egg is incomplete, the process fails. The same idea holds true of human partnerships. Two whole people are needed to make one healthy permanent partnership. Susan's story illustrates how the principle of "Be What You Seek" and the quest for wholeness operated for her. Even though it took place over 18 years ago, it has as much relevance today as it did then.

Susan is a clear thinking, ambitious woman, who practices setting goals. She had two major goals. The first was to be financially secure. The second was to meet and marry a wonderful man who would be her life partner. She had grown up in a poor family, did not have any specialized schooling and for a long time felt that the way to achieve financial security was to marry into it. It's not that she intended to compromise on the other qualities she sought in a mate: honesty, nurturance, and commitment. But she did think it might be just as easy to find a well-established man who was wonderful as one who was poor and wonderful. The problem was that Susan was not meeting men from back-

MICHAEL NEWMAN/PHOTO EDIT

grounds much different from her own. She worked as a clerk in a back office and rarely met men on the job. So she asked herself, "How can I tap into the caliber of people who make good livings and who are lovable and respectable. What qualities do successful people possess that I don't? How can I set about being these things myself?"

Susan went to work on being what she sought. For her, this meant first joining a church group. The social aspect of religion had been an important part of her childhood but one that she had left behind when she left home. She decided to rediscover this part of herself and took the step. She enjoyed her group immensely, feeling as if a part of her had "come home." This gave her the confidence to make another change. Susan changed professions. She felt that her job did not bring her into contact with enough people who fit the ideal qualities she was seeking. So, Susan went into real estate sales with the intention of focusing on larger, better homes. She reasoned that she would be making contact with wealthy clients who just might introduce her to a wealthy man. She took the training she needed and further developed her abilities and style. She became more open and honest, dependable, considerate, assertive, and smart. These were qualities she'd admired in others. She loved her work.

To her own astonishment, Susan became a millionaire in her own right. She not only had financial security—her first goal—but she also met and married a wonderful man—her second goal. However, her plans had taken a surprising twist. The man with whom she fell in love and married had not been introduced to her by her clients and was not exactly wealthy. But even so, he played a big part in her achieving her need for security. He became her biggest cheerleader. He

was her major supporter and comfort during the tough years of building her career. It paid off. She opened her own real estate office, now has a large number of people working for her, and is known as one of the most successful businesswomen in her state. A wonderful partner with whom she could share her journey facilitated her personal success. Susan became what she sought in a most profound way.

Matt is an out-going, pleasant-spoken man who gives the impression of being sincere and continues to study toward his degree in chemistry, knowing that it would enhance his career opportunities. Matt sums up his experience with relationships like this, "I'm glad now that I had to face negative relationships, although at the time I would have said that it was a miserable state to be in. However, I can look back now and be grateful that I was forced to confront the deficiencies in who I was and how I was behaving. I like myself so much better now that I am living the way my soul wanted me to live. I can barely recognize the person I was in those days. Being in a very disturbed relationship, wanting to recover from it, and be able to find a mate and have a family forced me to change the priorities in my life."

"I used to spend my summer weekends partying in the Hamptons [a resort area on Long Island]—just living it up. For me, when I made my decision to change, living my values meant joining a Bible study group, and giving up my weekend excursions. The group met on Saturdays. I'm now back at the Hamptons on the weekends, but I'm having a good time with my wife and two sons. My wife is the sister of one of the members of the study group. We met six weeks after I joined and were married eight months later. Doing my best to live out those values that are important not only led

me indirectly to her, it has helped me be a better father to my sons. I feel that I teach them how to be a person with high self-esteem by example and not just words."

In rare instances, incomplete people may force each other to grow in positive ways. But far more often, such relationships drain our energy and eventually sour our spirits. Instead cultivate in yourself the values that you seek in others. You will not only find your spirit soaring but also increase your personal appeal.

On your own personal journey, if you desire positive qualities in another person such as honesty, dependability, trustworthiness, integrity, tenderness, warmth, humor, joy, look to see if you manifest these qualities yourself. If not, it is likely that they lie dormant in you. We often admire in others exactly what we are capable of ourselves. When we say, "I wish I could be more like him. He is so warm and affectionate," we may be seeing potential qualities with which we've lost touch—qualities which don't seem to be part of our current repertoire of behaviors. If you want affection from a mate, you have to be able to give affection. If you want nurturing, you have to be nurturing. If you want fidelity, you have to give fidelity. If you want intelligent decision making, you have to be able to give intelligent input into decisions. If you want emotional intimacy, you have to be capable of emotional intimacy. If you want respect, you have to be respectful. If you want honesty, you have to be honest. This is an essential step for growth. As you keep working on it, your possibilities will continue to unfold. Other people who have these qualities are around you all the time. Learn from them. Read books. Take seminars. See a counselor. Your personal power, self-confidence, and esteem will mushroom and multiply.

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# The Awakened Heart

G E R A L D M A Y

*There is a desire within each of us, in the deep center of ourselves that we call our heart. We were born with it; it is never completely satisfied; and it never dies. We are often unaware of it, but it is always awake. It is the human desire for love. Every person on this earth yearns to love, to be loved, to know love. Our true identity, our reason for being, is to be found in this desire.*

JOHN NEUBAUER/PHOTO EDIT

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I think William Blake was right about the purpose of humanity; we are here to learn to bear the beams of love. There are three meanings of bearing love: to endure it, to carry it, and to bring it forth. In the first, we are meant to grow in our capacity to endure love's beauty and pain. In the second, we are meant to carry love and spread it around, as children carry laughter and measles. And in the third we are meant to bring new love into the world, to be birthers of love. This is the threefold nature of our longing.

You can find evidence of the longing in great art, music, literature, and religions; a common universal passion for love runs through them all. Psychology offers evidence as well. The passion for love can be found at the core of human motivation. There is even evidence in neurology. The researcher Paul MacLean says the highly developed human cerebral cortex "makes possible the insight required to plan for the needs of others" and gives us "a concern for all living things."

But for real proof you must look at your own longings and aspirations; you must listen to the deep themes of your own life story. In most of us the desire for love has often been distorted or buried, but if you look at your own life with honest and gentle eyes, you can discern it in yourself as a deep seeking of connectedness, healing, creation, and joy. This is your true identity;

*I cannot  
specifically  
define love, but  
I am convinced  
it is the  
fundamental  
energy of the  
human spirit,  
the fuel on  
which we run,  
the wellspring  
of our vitality.*

it is who you really are and what you exist for. You have your own unique experience of desiring love, but there is something universal about it as well. It connects you with all other human beings and with all of creation.

You probably already know your longing very well. You have felt it as hope for relationship, meaning, fulfillment, perhaps even a sense of destiny. Think for a moment about what has prompted you to do what you have done in life. When you have tried to be successful in your studies or work, what have you been seeking? When you have wanted to be pleasing, attractive, or helpful to others, what have you really been hoping for? Remember some moments in your life when

you felt most complete and fulfilled; what did you taste there? Recall also feeling very bad, alone, worthless; what were you missing?

If you pause and look quietly inside, you may be able to sense something of your desire for love right now in this moment. Sometimes it is wonderful to touch this deep longing. It can seem expansive and joyful. At other times it can be painful, lonely, and even a little frightening. Whether it feels good or bad, its power and depth are awesome. When the desire is too much to bear, we often bury it beneath frenzied thoughts and activities or escape it by dulling our immediate consciousness of living. It is possible to run away from the desire for years, even decades, at a time but we cannot eradicate it entirely. It keeps touching us in little glimpses and hints in our dreams, our hopes, our unguarded moments. We may go to sleep, but our desire for love does not. It is who we are.

Sometimes, in moments of quiet wonder, it is possible just to be with our desire. We can sense its power and beauty even when it aches for fulfillment. In truth it is an utterly simple thing. I can remember experiencing it in childhood, standing in a field and looking at the sky and just *being* in love. It wasn't love for any particular thing or person. It was more like being immersed in an atmosphere of love, feeling very alive, very present in the moment, intimately connected with everything around me.

Now and then we experience the same simplicity as adults. But for most of us it does not last very long. We have difficulty just being; we think we must get on with more important things. We have to be efficient. In becoming adults, we have been conditioned to believe that efficiency is more important than love.

## EFFICIENCY AND LOVE

Efficiency is the “how” of life: how we meet and handle the demands of daily living, how we survive, grow, and create, how we deal with stress, how effective we are in our functional roles and activities.

In contrast, love is the “why” of life: why we are functioning at all, what we want to be efficient *for*. I cannot specifically define love, but I am convinced it is the fundamental energy of the human spirit, the fuel on which we run, the well-spring of our vitality. And grace, which is the flowing, creative activity of love itself, is what makes all goodness possible.

Love should come first. It should be the beginning of and the reason for everything. Efficiency should be “how” love expresses its “why.” But it gets mixed up so easily. When I was a young parent, I wanted to take good care *of* my children (efficiency) because I cared so much *for* them (love). This was the way it should be. But soon I became preoccupied with efficiency. What were my kids eating? Were they getting enough sleep? Would we be on time for the car pool? My concerns about efficiency began to eclipse the love they were meant to serve. Getting to the car pool on time became more important than attending to a small fear or a hurt feeling. Too often the report card—the preeminent symbol of childhood efficiency—was more significant than the hopes and fears of the little one who brought it home.

It happens to all of us. Some people are so caught up in striving for efficiency that love seems like a luxury or even an obstacle to efficient functioning. Taken far enough, this makes for the ominous prospect of people who are very unloving and very efficient at what they do. For nearly a decade, Adolf Hitler was extremely efficient at expanding

the Third Reich. A medical school professor I remember told his students that he found it more worthwhile to love his surgical successes than to love his patients. “As soon as you start feeling your patients’ pain,” he said, “you start losing your skill.” He was only trying to help.

### WHERE YOUR TREASURE IS

In most cases, thank God, love and efficiency are not mutually exclusive. It is entirely possible to use your money charitably and still balance your checkbook, though I have not yet achieved either. It should be possible for your work to contribute to the welfare of others and for you to receive adequate recompense for it, though most homemakers have yet to achieve it. We should be able to educate our children well while we are loving them, though in practice it sometimes feels impossible.

The problem is not whether we want love or efficiency; it is which we want *more*. Which do we give the higher priority? On the surface it seems natural to value love more highly. Nearly all the great institutions of our culture—religion, philosophy, art, even politics—give lip service at least to love as the supreme virtue. Most say that efficiency should exist only to serve the cause of love. The common sense of our human hearts says the same thing.

It is easy to say, but very difficult to put into practice. Individually and corporately, no matter how noble our words about love may sound, we are conditioned to believe efficiency is everything. Efficiency is the standard by which every person and enterprise is judged in our modern, developed culture. We weigh people’s worth by how well they function. The value of blue collar workers is determined by their productivity. The

worth of executives and professionals is based on their success. The merit of entertainers depends upon their draw at the box office. With such standards, the person disappears behind the product. We have even come to refer to children as “products” of their home environments.

We measure ourselves not by beginnings but by ends, not by what is in our hearts but by what we are able to accomplish. Even in marriages and families where we might most easily say, “I love you for who you are, not for how you look or what you do,” we seldom act according to our words. Too often we disparage the spouse who fails to meet our expectations for attractiveness, entertainment, and affirmation of ourselves. Too often we scorn the child who does something wrong and says, “I didn’t mean to.”

But there is a worse thing. Our society encourages us to believe that love is just another function, an ability to be learned and refined. There are techniques for love, we are told, and if we love efficiently we will have something to show for it: well managed, smoothly functioning relationships, social popularity, emotional security, sexual fulfillment. Seen in this light, expressions of love become commodities, loved ones become objects, and the pains of love become problems to be solved. In therapy, people have told me, “I don’t know how to love,” or “I think I am incapable of loving.” What sadness! No one is incapable of loving. We all have difficulty expressing love. It would not be love if it didn’t cause us trouble. To some extent we are all afraid of love; we do not want to be hurt. Sometimes people become so afraid or embittered that they are indeed paralyzed in expressing or perceiving love. But everyone loves. No matter how much trouble we have



expressing or appreciating it, love is inescapable; it is what causes us to care. "Was it not love," I asked my patients, "that wounded you in the first place? And is it not your love that makes you care enough to miss it now?"

Let me say it again. No one is incapable of loving. When it comes to love, *capability* is the wrong word entirely. Capability is competence at performing a function. There is much I do not know about love, but of this I am certain: love is not a function. It is a quality of being that exists beneath and before all our functions. The word we must use is *capacity*. Capacity implies space; it refers to how much we can hold, perhaps how much we can bear. This has much to do with love. Machines have capabilities. Vessels have capacity. Love is always with us, seeking to fill us to our capacity.

If we give love primacy, if we claim it as our true treasure, there will still be plenty of room to develop our capabilities, our efficiency. But with efficiency as the ruling standard there is little or no space for love. We are led to doubt the value of love and our capacity for it.

When we hold efficiency as our primary value, we expect to achieve control, success, and security on our own terms. Even when our expectations are not met, we still believe we will come out secure and satisfied if we just do things differently, learn more, or make ourselves better in some way. Thus, we make a god of efficiency, an idol of success, a deity of achievement. These are the false gods that tell us we should be gods ourselves, in charge of our lives.

By worshipping efficiency, the human race has achieved the highest level of efficiency in history, but how much have we grown in love? Are we really any more graceful than our forebears were? The nations of our world have taken

some significant steps toward freedom and justice, but at the same time technology has made us more destructive to one another and our planet. I do not know how the balance works out, whether we are really becoming more loving. But it is clear that our love has not kept up with our efficiency. We have too often sacrificed love for progress.

#### THE INVITATION OF LOVE

If we want to set the relationship between efficiency and love in its rightful order, we must go beyond laws and proclamations. If we desire a more loving society, we individual persons must return to the deepest common sense of our hearts. We must claim love as our true treasure. Then comes the difficult part: we must try to live according to our desire in the moment-by-moment experiences of our lives.

There is nothing more beautiful and freeing than living with conscious dedication to love. The way of love invites us to become vessels of love, sharers in grace rather than controllers of achievement. It invites us toward increasing freedom from all our slaveries and addictions. It encourages us to ease our grasping and striving for false security. It asks for vulnerability rather than self-protection, willingness instead of mastery. It beckons us toward participation in the great unfolding of creation, toward becoming one with it rather than standing apart and trying to overcome it.

But the invitation of love is as challenging as it is beautiful. Whether you have in mind such wide goals as reshaping human rights and world values or something as intimate as simple gratitude for the grace in your own life, saying yes to the invitation of love will hurt you. Living for love requires openness to love itself, a

radical vulnerability to consciously being in love. To claim this is to enter a gentle warfare against immense internal and external forces. The enemy is that which would stifle your love: your fear of being hurt, the addictions that restrict your passion, and the efficiency worship of the world that makes you doubt the value of love. It is warfare because these forces are very real and very threatened by love. They will fight to keep their power. But the warfare must be gentle on your part; your only weapon is love itself. It feels more vulnerable than David facing Goliath. David had a sling and knew how to use it, but love can never be used. It can only be embraced and trusted. Love does not conquer all, because *conquer* is the wrong word entirely.

I am not exaggerating. Choosing love will open spaces of immense beauty and joy for you, but you will be hurt. You already know this. You have retreated from love countless times in your life because of it. We all have. We have been and will be hurt by the loss of loved ones, by what they have done to us and we to them. Even in the bliss of love there is a certain exquisite pain: the pain of too much beauty, of overwhelming magnificence. Further, no matter how perfect a love may be, it is never really satisfied. The very fulfillment of a desire sparks our passion for more. Sooner or later we discover a deepened yearning within what felt like satisfaction. Even in their beauty, the beams of love can often seem too much to bear.

In both joy and pain, love is boundless. Love is open, allowing our hearts to be touched and moved by what exists. Love is honest, willing to be present to life just as it is, in all its beauty and ugliness. True love is not blind at all; it sees what is and feels it as it is with no rose-colored glasses and no anesthesia. •



# Taking Responsibility

H E N R Y K   S K O L I M O W S K I

*The new story of the universe indirectly tells us that if you understand it, you have to assume responsibility—for your own future, for the future of the planet, for the future of the universe. This last proposition is again so big and awesome that it is overwhelming. So let us express it in different terms. The universe is thinking through us and wants to take responsibility for its own fate through our wills, understanding, and care—insofar as we are capable of taking responsibility for things larger than our small egos. Cultivating your own little garden in times of stress, chaos, and confusion is a good strategy. But it is an escapist strategy. At this juncture of human history the universe requires more of us, namely that we become active participants in this enormous cosmic story.*

JOE SOHM/ALLSTOCK

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Taking responsibility for things larger than your own self is nothing new in the world. It has always been a prerogative of enlightened souls. We simply need to remind ourselves that *to live as a human being is to live in the state of responsibility*. To live in the state of responsibility is the first condition of living in grace. Let us discuss the meaning of responsibility in some depth, for it is quite crucial to our new role as the custodians of the Earth and as redeemers of ourselves.

We cannot live a full human life without exercising our responsibility. *Responsibility, as a peculiar power of human will and spirit, is a crucial vehicle in maintaining our moral autonomy and in repossessing the Earth.*

Responsibility is a subtle concept. It is hard to define; and yet, paradoxically, even harder to live without. Responsibility is one of those subtle, invisible forces—like will power—for which there is no logical necessity but without which we atrophy. To reiterate, *being human is to live in a state of responsibility*. When we are unable to be responsible or voluntarily give up our responsibility, we are in a sense annihilating our status as human beings.

“Chosen by the gods” are those who possess a sense of responsibility bordering on obsession, like the Buddha or Jesus. “Forsaken by the gods” are those who are void of their sense of responsibility—especially for their own lives. Great spiritual leaders of humankind, as well as great social and political

leaders, are stigmatized with an enhanced sense of responsibility.

The sense of responsibility is not limited to the great of the world; it is known to everybody. For what is the awareness of “the wasted life” if not the recognition that each of us is a carrier of responsibility which goes beyond the boundaries of our little egos and our daily struggles.

Responsibility, seen in the larger cosmic plan, is a late acquisition of evolution. It comes about as consciousness becomes self-consciousness, and furthermore as self-consciousness (in attempting to refine itself) takes upon itself the moral cause: the burden of responsibility for the rest. Responsibility so conceived is a form of altruism. The tendency to escape from responsibility is a purely biological impulse, a self-serving gesture, a form of egoism. Therefore, these two tendencies, the altruistic (accepting the responsibility for all) and egoistic (escaping from it into the shell of our own ego) are continually fighting each other within us. Each of us knows the agony of this fight.

When we observe the lives of great men and women, the lives that are outstanding and fulfilled, we cannot help but notice that they were invariably inspired by an enhanced sense of responsibility. Those who sacrificed themselves in the name of this responsibility did not have the sense of wasting their lives. Their examples are received as noble and inspiring.

*The sense of responsibility is now built into our psychic structure as an attribute of human existence and a positive force.* The negation of this force is sin because it represents the betrayal of the great evolutionary heritage which brought us about and of which we are always aware, if only dimly.

The smallness or greatness of a person can be measured by the

degree of responsibility he or she is capable of exercising for his or her own life, for the lives of others, for everything there is. Infants and the mentally ill are outside the compass of humanity precisely because they are not capable of exercising responsibility, either for their lives or for the lives of others. They are beyond good and evil, beyond sin and virtue, beyond great moral causes which propel the human family in the long run.

Though fundamental to the core of our existence, the very word “responsibility” (particularly within Protestant culture) is dreaded as a heavy burden. However, when seen as enlarging our spiritual domain, responsibility is a force that continually elevates us. “Responsibility” is a word that has wings. We must be prepared to fly on them.

We have now arrived at the context within which to view the idea of responsibility as a theological category, indeed as a pillar supporting our new religious quests. There is no doubt that we have been called upon, in our times, to assume responsibility for the future of our planet and for the future of our lives. God will help us if we help ourselves. What will finally matter is the accumulation of good Karma, good deeds performed together, rather than acts of redemption coming from heaven. *Our sin will be in failing to assume the responsibility that is thrust upon us.* Our redemption will be the act of accepting such a responsibility. We have much to learn from Eastern traditions as far as Karma is concerned. Another term for Karma is responsibility exercised. •

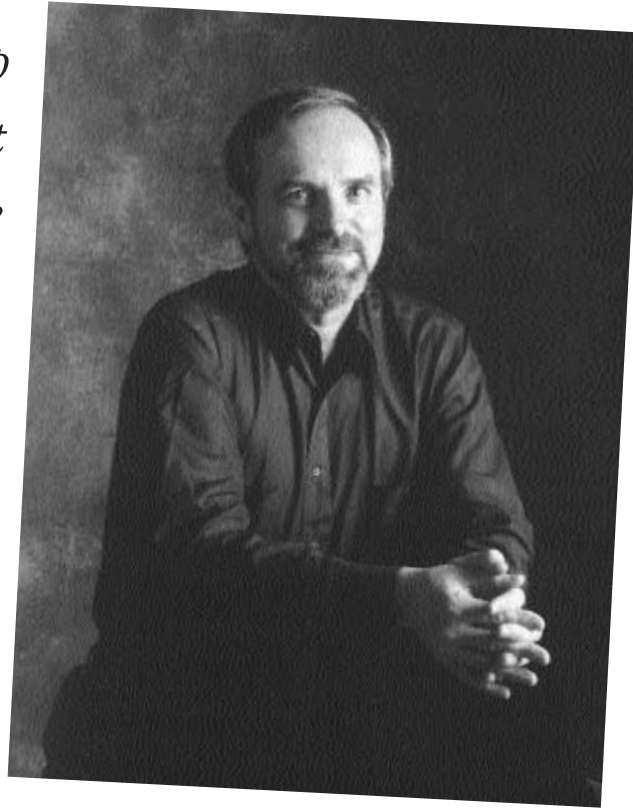
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# Intimacy



*Intimacy begins at home, with oneself. It does no good to try to find intimacy with friends, lovers and family if you are starting out from alienation and division within yourself.*

*A soulful relationship offers two difficult challenges: one, to come to know oneself; and two, to get to know the deep, often subtle richness in the soul of the other.*



*The word “intimacy” means profoundly interior. It comes from the superlative form of the Latin word “inter,” meaning “within.” It could be translated “within-est,” or “most within.” In our intimate relationships, the “most within” dimensions of ourselves and the other are engaged. ❧ “Within” doesn’t necessarily mean introspective, self-absorbed, confessional, inactive, self-conscious, or narcissistic. People can be engaged intimately while playing a game of tennis or cards, holding a conversation, taking a trip together, arguing heatedly, or sitting in a room, each quietly reading a book. The deep interiority of a person may be revealed in her transparent life—allowing her emotions to show, letting her thoughts out, being familiar with her deeper soul. It is the controlled, tightly lidded individual who finds intimacy difficult, because she is disconnected from her interiority and therefore it has no place in her relationships. The unintimate person hovers nervously in air, separated both from her own depth and from the souls of others.*

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Intimacy begins at home, with oneself. It does no good to try to find intimacy with friends, lovers and family if you are starting out from alienation and division within yourself. I'm not suggesting that all psychological experience is interior, but it's clear that the dynamics, dramas, and characters of the individual soul play themselves out in the external world so that relationship is always a dialectic between inner and outer, a dance between actual people and one's own life of soul.

If we do not take into account our own relationship to soul, then the inner and the outer may become confused. Being a friend to yourself is no mere metaphor or purely sentimental idea. It is the basis of all relationship, because it is a fundamental recognition of soul. We may feel tension in our lives and assume it is due to problems in a relationship with someone, but that seemingly outer tension may be an echo of inner conflict.

For example, we may think we're lonely because we have no friends, when the fact is we have no relationship to ourselves, and for that reason feel lonely and friendless. Something is always stirring in the soul that will have an impact on our relationships. Since we Americans are such an externally directed people, it's easy to think

that anything troubling to the heart has its roots in the world, particularly in an intimate relationship, but the reverse can also be true: a current emotional disturbance can be rooted deep in the far reaches of the soul where it may affect what happens in the world. And certain people, certain kinds of relationship, and certain events can evoke familiar, long-standing patterns set deep in the soul so that although the relationship is in a sense the "cause" of the disturbance, it is not the ultimate source.

"Intimacy with oneself" is an odd phrase. It assumes a differentiation between "I" and "self." But as Jungian and archetypal psychology have made abundantly clear, the relationship is even more complicated. Soul is made up of a multitude of sub-personalities. Jung called them the "little people" of the psyche, complexes that have a consciousness and will of their own. If we take the figures who appear in dreams as representations of these soul-persons, then we see that they, too, enjoy relationships among themselves. The mother of my soul has a relationship to the children of my soul, for instance. A thief figure steals from me and is pursued by the police of my soul.

If I am unaware that I am made up of these many personalities or if I think that what we call ego is the whole of what I am, then my life will become an arena in which these relationships are lived out blindly. I will be unconscious of my own rich inner life and of the crowded inner lives of the people with whom I am in relationship as well. The result can be a simplistic view of relationship and a narcissistic style since the attention remains on a narrow conception of self instead of on the soul.

In his essay "Marriage as a Psychological Relationship," Jung explores these notions in an interesting way, including the limita-

tions of a narcissistic approach to relationship. He notes that one of the most basic problems in relationship is unconsciousness on the part of the people involved. Two people in an intimate relationship may be completely unaware of the themes that give their life together its meaningfulness and its tensions. People whose marriages are in danger of collapse often provide superficial reflections on their problems. Sometimes, apparently to avoid stirring the waters too much, people will restate truisms that have little to do with their particular situation, or they will offer sincere comments on their relationship that are so general and vague that they provide no insight and foster no movement.

Another narcissistic problem Jung points to is the tendency of people in a relationship to assume that psychological life is simple. One person may not realize how complicated the other is and may assume that she is as transparent as she appears. One person may be psychologically naive, expecting his partner to be like himself. In Jung's words, "One person presupposes in the other a psychological structure similar to his own." In a soulful relationship, in contrast, the partners know that we are all individuals with our own kind of richness that may not be fully and plainly revealed in daily life and that an intimate relationship demands a courageous and openhearted acknowledgment of differences.

An unconscious relationship begins in unconscious individuals. Naturally no person and no relationship is going to be perfectly free of unconsciousness. To be completely conscious, were such a condition possible, is not even desirable since "unconsciousness" is a negative word for what could be described more positively as the richness that lies beneath the surface of awareness. Much of what



goes on in a relationship, and even much of what accounts for its pleasures and rewards, is unconscious. Still, conflicts and difficulties can arise from faulty connections to that richness of personality and soul.

“Becoming conscious” may not necessarily entail an analytical understanding of what is going on in the relationship, but rather a sophisticated, thoughtful, not so literal attitude toward people in general and relationships in particular. A person who is familiar with the soul knows that it is extremely complicated and rarely conforms to the norms and expectations of rational thought. The psychologically conscious person is savvy about the multi-dimensional ways of the soul and so is able to *read* the expressions and experiences of an intimate friend, a family member, or a partner, knowing that things are not always as they appear to be.

I am reminded of a couple who came to me to discuss their marriage and who demonstrated the

two poles of psychological consciousness and its avoidance. They were suffering from a rather common malady. If I were inclined to multisyllabic jargon, I might call it “asymmetrical revitalization.” The wife was going through a remarkable period of renewal. She was waking up to possibilities for herself that she had never considered before. Her husband, however, was still asleep, going through the rote motions of a career and marriage. It was his habit to blame the external world for everything negative that was happening to him. His wife, her mother, his boss, the town in which they lived—all these things were at fault. He never said anything of substance about his own thoughts, feelings, or experiences. From the outside at least, it appeared that he had no relationship to his soul.

One sign of soul is reflection. The soul doesn’t have to know what is going on in life. It doesn’t need interpretations, explanations, or

conclusions, but it does require musing, reverie, consideration, wonder, and exploration. This man’s wife couldn’t say exactly what was happening in her life at the moment, and she didn’t know when or why it began in the first place, yet she wondered what it all meant and where it was headed. Her husband wanted to ignore the upheaval she was experiencing and his own reactions to it as well.

Maybe the husband was protecting himself from opening up issues he knew would be painful and would reveal the bad condition of his marriage, certainly threatening the status quo and maybe even signaling separation or divorce. But he also seemed to suffer the common malady of indifference to the life of the soul. Many people imagine relationship fundamentally as a simple structure of being together. They may have never considered that a whole world of thoughts, images, and memories lies just beneath the surface, often giving a powerful

emotional charge to the simplest interactions.

In this case, the wife decided after a while to go her own way. She felt that her husband would never be a real partner, that he would never be able to appreciate the intense experiences she was having or to be there himself as a person, alive with fresh thoughts and reflections. Even the separation that his wife eventually insisted upon didn't seem to stir him to look at his life with open eyes.

It's difficult for a relationship to have soul if the people involved don't wonder about what is happening to them, especially in times of ferment. I am not referring to endless analysis and introspection, which can dry out a relationship with the drive toward understanding. Wonder and open discussion are more moist. They keep people close to their experience, while at the same time they offer a degree of imagination, an element sorely needed in every intimate relationship.

A soulful relationship offers two difficult challenges: one, to come to know oneself—the ancient oracle of Apollo; and two, to get to know the deep, often subtle richness in the soul of the other. Giving attention to one side usually helps the other. As you get to know the other deeply, you will discover much about yourself. Especially in moments of conflict and maybe even despair, being open to the demands of a relationship can provide an extraordinary opportunity for self-knowledge. It provides an occasion to glimpse your own soul and notice its longings and its fears. And as you get to know yourself, you can be more accepting and understanding of the other's depth of soul.

If I am aware that I occasionally fall into a deep, illusory period of paranoia, for example, then I may be better able to accept moments of



irrationality in my partner and in others. Recently I had just such an experience. One morning I received a magazine article in the mail about one of my books that tore my writing to shreds. The reviewer had no sympathy whatsoever for what I was doing, and in many pages devoted to my book the magazine attacked me personally and questioned my honesty and veracity. I knew the attack was coming from an ideological position contrary to my own, yet the anger and hatred in the attack stung me.

That same day the head of an organization called to tell me they were taking back an invitation to give a lecture at their annual meeting. Immediately paranoid thoughts began pouring into my

head: "Did they read the negative review? Were people now coming out of the shadows and launching their attacks on me? Did this person represent a group within the organization who were fighting it out with others who valued my point of view?"

Later I learned that the problem was only a matter of scheduling, and was soon resolved. I could then see the paranoid nature of my thoughts and the effect one strong emotional experience had on another.

Sometimes, of course, our paranoid fantasies have a solid basis in reality. Maybe even now I don't know all that was going on behind the scenes in the decision to rescind the invitation to speak. The point

TONY FREEMAN/PHOTO EDIT



is, on that day my imagination was more affected by criticism than I was willing to admit and my soul, reeling from the attack, was ready to look through paranoid eyes at anything that came along.

Something similar may happen in our relationships. We may be deeply affected by something that happens in another part of our life and not realize how deep the effect is. Then we may interpret some interaction in a relationship from within a soul condition that is not clean, that has been so affected that it colors our perception. Only sophistication about the ways of the soul can save us from acting on such irrational thoughts and feelings.

Sometimes popular psychology lays down impossible rules and expectations for a relationship. We are told to be clear and forthright in the expression of our feelings. We are supposed to *communicate* to our partners. We are expected to be good listeners and to be full of patience and empathy. We are given the illusion that it's possible to understand ourselves and others. But it seems to me that these expectations ignore soul. The soul is always complicated. Most of its thoughts and emotions could never be expressed in plain language. You could have the patience of Job and still never understand your partner because the soul by nature doesn't lend itself to understanding or to clarity of expression.

If we are going to be soulful in our relationships, then we will have to give up these expectations that are foreign to soul. We may have to enter the confusion of another's soul, with no hope of ever finding clarity, without demanding that the other be clear in expressing her feelings, and without the hope that one day this person will finally grow up or get better or express herself more plainly.

There are many aspects of the soul that change very little over

*Mutual vulnerability is one of the great gifts of love: giving the other sufficient emotional space in which to live and express her soul, with its reasonable and unreasonable ways, and then to risk revealing your own soul, complete with its own absurdities.*

time. There are many things that will always be located in a thick, tangled skein of memories, fears, confusions, and intricacies. Soulful intimacy demands that we enter this thick soup, this multicolored kaleidoscope of personality, with an appreciation for its richness, and without unrealistic expectations that are psychologically moralistic. We may think that "it's only right and proper" that a person change her ways and that her soul be something other than what it is, but this kind of thinking moves us away from the person's own nature. Sometimes it appears that there is more moralism in the field of psychology than there is in religion.

It isn't easy to expose your soul

to another, to risk such vulnerability, hoping that the other person will be able to tolerate your own irrationality. It may also be difficult, no matter how open-minded you are, to be receptive as another reveals her soul to you. Yet this mutual vulnerability is one of the great gifts of love: giving the other sufficient emotional space in which to live and express her soul, with its reasonable and unreasonable ways, and then to risk revealing your own soul, complete with its own absurdities.

The idea of a soulful relationship is not a sentimental one, nor is it easy to put into practice. The courage required to open one's soul to express itself or to receive another is infinitely more demanding than the effort we put into avoidance of intimacy. The stretching of the soul is like the painful opening of the body in birth. It is so painful in the doing that we often will attempt to avoid it, even though such opening is ultimately full of pleasure and reward.

What I am suggesting about intimacy in relationship here is a particular aspect of the general need to respect the soul's wide range of mood, fantasy, emotion, and behavior. Most of us contain ourselves fairly well, but eventually some type of irrationality may come to the surface. We all have skeletons in our closets and monsters in our hearts. It can be taken as an axiom: the person who displays his or her sanity and morality most dramatically is likely to be the very person who finds it difficult to be sane and moral.

Being in a soulful relationship is to some extent frightening because by nature such a relationship asks that we show our soul, complete with its fears and follies. In *In Praise of Folly*, the Renaissance humanist Erasmus says that it is precisely in their foolishness that people can become friends and intimates. "For

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C H R I S T O P H E R   H A Y E S ,   D E B O R A H   A N D E R S O N  
&   M E L I N D A   B L A U

# The Truth about Mid-Life Divorce and Women

*“Do you need a hand?” inquired a concerned male voice. ❀ “I have two hands, two feet, and a strong backside,” the woman shot back sharply. She wasn’t in trouble; she was only pausing at the top of the mountain for a moment to catch her breath and appreciate how far she had come. “If I need help, I’ll ask—but I’d rather do this ‘on my own!’”*

*❀ Lorraine Feldman chuckles as she relates this telling anecdote—a particular memory that seems to separate the “before” and “after” of her life. “That poor guide could never have known that this was more than a mountain-climbing lesson. It was an exercise in my own survival. ❀ “Discovery, adventure, survival”—those were new words for me. Going back twenty-five or thirty years, if you were to ask my ex-husband about me, he’d probably tell you that my idea of adventure was a trip to the Eatontown Mall and discovery was a closeout sale on shoes!”*

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Yet there Lorraine was, rafting down the Colorado River and hiking up rugged mountain trails with people she barely knew. She had scaled the treacherous mountainside fearlessly, climbing hand over foot, the jagged stone edges often cutting into her fingers. "At an earlier time in my life, I would have taken the guide's hand, because I always thought that I needed help. First from my father and then from my husband—my chosen 'guide' for life. But then my husband decided to be someone else's guide."

Perched atop that slippery peak in Colorado, Lorraine was finally guiding herself. It was a long way from the flatlands of New Jersey to the peaks of the Rocky Mountains, but at that moment, Lorraine knew she had survived her husband's infidelity, survived his abandonment, and survived their divorce. "That was my first real adventure. I was really doing something on my own, not connected to Marv, not connected to the kids. It was *mine*. When I was married to Marvin, I would never have done it—alone or with him. In those days, nothing was as important as being part of a family."

Being a good wife and mother was *everything* to Lorraine Feldman, even if it meant sacrificing her own identity. A product of her time and



typical of women who married in the fifties and sixties, Lorraine internalized the message: *Home and children are the most important aspect of your life*. Even as a child she knew that marriage was her admission ticket to Adult Life.

Eternally in the shadow of a handsome, athletic older brother who was "going places" with his life, Lorraine Davidson was adored but not necessarily encouraged to *be* anything. Her upper middle-class Jewish parents valued education—for girls as well as boys. But

Lorraine knew that she was sent to an Ivy League college for a different purpose than her brother. Just as tennis and riding lessons enabled Lorraine to feel at ease at the club or at the riding stables—places you could meet rich, eligible young men—a college education would train her to keep up her end of the conversation. Someday, she would be a tremendous asset to a husband moving up the career track; she would help him get into the right social circles.

Understandably, Lorraine's view

of life was vastly different from that of her brother, who eventually went to law school. It was not, "What will I be?" but "Whose wife will I be?" Not "What kind of interests will I have?" but "What kind of family will I have?" And not "How will I take care of myself?" but "Who will take care of me in the happily-ever-after?" At twenty-one, Marvin Feldman seemed to be the answer to everything.

Given this mindset, it's not surprising that after twenty-two years of marriage, Lorraine was crushed when her husband, Marvin, walked out on her. Reeling from the shock of his betrayal, she believed her life had ended. Her three children, aged nineteen, seventeen, and fourteen at the time, didn't need her as much as they once did, and now Marvin was throwing her away too.

To her credit, Lorraine instinctively began to help herself heal. A few months before the breakup, she had started working part-time as a realtor. When Marvin left, she upped her hours, knowing that keeping busy would help her through the long and painful days. Sadly, she got scant support from most of her old friends who were still married and felt threatened by a suddenly-single woman in their social midst. So, she made a new friend—a woman in her office who had gone through the process a year before. "I've just become a statistic," Lorraine declared for her coworkers to hear.

Lorraine's private agony was very much a matter of public record. Her husband was the big-fish mayor in their small-pond town on the Jersey shore, a community sub-

stantial enough to handle a bustling summer tourist trade and small enough to be galvanized by year-round gossip. When Mayor Feldman splashed just about everyone in town felt the waves.

Knowing that her neighbors were aware of, if not all talking



about, Marvin's affair, Lorraine often felt humiliated but she managed to hold her head high. "People would ask how my husband was and I'd just say, 'Fine.'" As for the stress, she says, "I would get in the car and scream and I'd keep driving around, screaming. Next thing I knew, I'd be whistling—and then laughing out loud. I also started jogging. I was up to a mile. I lost a lot of weight."

Almost four years lapsed between Lorraine's and Marvin's initial separation and the actual divorce. During that time, the ups and downs of the legal process and the wrangling over money and past debts proved as painful and exhausting as the emotional trauma. "I am so tired within. I am physically tied up in knots when I must encounter Marv," wrote Lorraine in her diary. "Just when I think things are sliding along on an even keel, he hits me with a new wallop."

The diary itself—which spans the four years, from the days of her early suspicions about Marvin's lies and infidelity to Lorraine's trek up the mountain—also helped her get through. "I had no one else to talk to. I just wrote down what I had to say."

Lorraine's growth was very much like that of a butterfly emerging from the cocoon—the "cocoon" being her marriage. The butterfly's wings—damp, weak, and a bit shaky at first—are soon hardened by the outside air, and new strength courses through its veins. So it was with Lorraine. Her eyes began to sparkle again. She stopped screaming in the car. She began to date, to make new friends, and to talk to real people, instead of just confiding in her diary. The little girl who had put herself on the back burner for a domineering father, an older brother, and then a husband was finally playing front and center stage.

#### *THE MYTHS OF MID-LIFE DIVORCE*

Lorraine Feldman is truly a survivor. After her divorce, she reawak-

ened aspects of herself that had been repressed during her marriage, and at the same time, she rediscovered the girl she had left behind. Seeing her today, it is hard to believe that words such as *discovery* and *adventure* were ever foreign to her vocabulary. She relishes life. Warm, confident, and quick-witted, her glow is infectious. It is abundantly clear that this ebullient and now successful real-estate broker is recovered from the devastation of her divorce and

study captures the voices of 352 women throughout the country. Their message—as evidenced in the survey data—clearly challenges the cultural status quo and flies in the face of many widely held beliefs about divorced mid-life women.

MYTH #1: It's too late for women to change if they're divorced and over forty.

MYTH #2: Divorce debilitates women and causes them to lose control over their lives.

ness exaggerated by an empty bed at night and a lack of shared activities for the weekend,” summarized one psychologist. “The end of marriage becomes a loss of identity,” wrote another, implying that without husbands divorced women are washed up and dried out.

However, that picture doesn't describe the throngs of divorced women who enrolled in the PREP (Pre-Retirement Education Planning for Women) seminars offered

throughout the country by the National Center for Women and Retirement Research. (For information on PREP call 800.426.7386) These workshops originally were developed to assist married women with their life-planning needs. Some were newly divorced and struggling to figure out how to navigate through a storm of emotional and financial changes;



firmly rooted in her own life. Today in her mid fifties, she is remarkably youthful-looking and energetic, despite her mocking disclaimer, “You should have seen me in my *forties!*”

Though she is unique—the star of her own individual story— in many ways Lorraine Feldman is also the personification of hundreds of other women who participated in a groundbreaking research project: the “Divorce After 40” study conducted by the National Center for Women and Retirement Research. The first ever to focus specifically on mid-life women and divorce, the

MYTH #3: The dream of every divorced woman is remarriage.

MYTH #4: Sex is no longer part of divorced women's lives.

MYTH #5: Divorced women are lonely.

MYTH #6: Mid-life and older women “live through” their children after divorce.

MYTH #7: Divorced women fear old age.

It's no wonder that such myths abound. Prior to the “Divorce Over 40” study, researchers offered a dreary prognosis for mid-life women after divorce. “[Older] divorced women suffer from loneli-

they viewed the seminars as an opportunity to gain survival skills. Others, divorced two or more years, were beginning to spread their wings, looking for ways to increase their ability to be independent and to shed the last vestiges of dependency.

Many of these women were already living dynamic, vibrant lives. They had resumed their schooling, gone back to work, embarked on new relationships. They wanted to learn money management skills and get advice about protecting themselves in the future. Suddenly single—whether by

choice or by default—most felt unburdened for the first time in their lives. And they weren't risking remarriage if it meant being restricted. They were out to discover who they were.

The discrepancy was puzzling: were the divorced women attending the PREP seminars atypical or was mid-life divorce somehow misrepresented or misunderstood by previous researchers? To find out, the Center for Women and Retirement Research launched the first survey of mid-life divorced women—forgotten women who, according to conventional wisdom, had little hope for a fulfilling life after divorce, unless, of course, they found a man.

THE SURVEY  
UNBOUND:  
DEBUNKING THE  
MYTHS

Once responses to the "Divorce Over 40" survey began pouring in, it quickly became clear that what was happening in the PREP seminars was not an isolated phenomenon. The survey respondents' comments also mirrored what the study's findings proved. These women were not only surviving but *thriving* in their post-divorce lives.

I would like to say that after two years I am happier and more at peace than I have been in my life. I have a group of friends who take "mind" trips, play cards, go to plays and out to dinner. I have a better relationship with my children. My family is proud of me. I worked two jobs until I got a promotion at the full-time position I'm in. I feel much better about myself, and I know I can make it on my own.

Clearly, these divorced Cinderellas simply did not fit into the slippers society had made for them. They weren't waiting for

*Women over forty actually grow more adaptable as they age. Instead of retreating from life after divorce, an overwhelming eighty-two percent experience a renewed sense of independence and strength to survive difficult times.*

Prince Charming—and they weren't putting themselves out to pasture. Many of them were rewriting the myths as they went along, not only having to battle the emotional dragons of divorce but having to stand up to society's stereotypes as well. Consider some of the myths in light of the findings:

MYTH #1: *It's too late for women to change if they're divorced and over forty.* Not only do they change their lives, divorced women over forty actually grow *more* adaptable as they age. Instead of retreating from life after divorce, an overwhelming eighty-two percent experience a renewed sense of independence and strength to survive difficult times. The vast majority (eighty percent) have a more positive self-image and higher self-esteem after divorce, as well.

MYTH #2: *Divorce debilitates women and causes them to lose control over their lives.* On the contrary, nearly two-thirds of these women find that the process inspires them to gain control over their lives for the first time. They are able to redefine themselves and, in the process, reawaken their own hopes and dreams. The energy formerly invested in their marriages and the nurturing once lavished only on husbands and children are rechanneled toward developing a strong, self-reliant sense of identity.

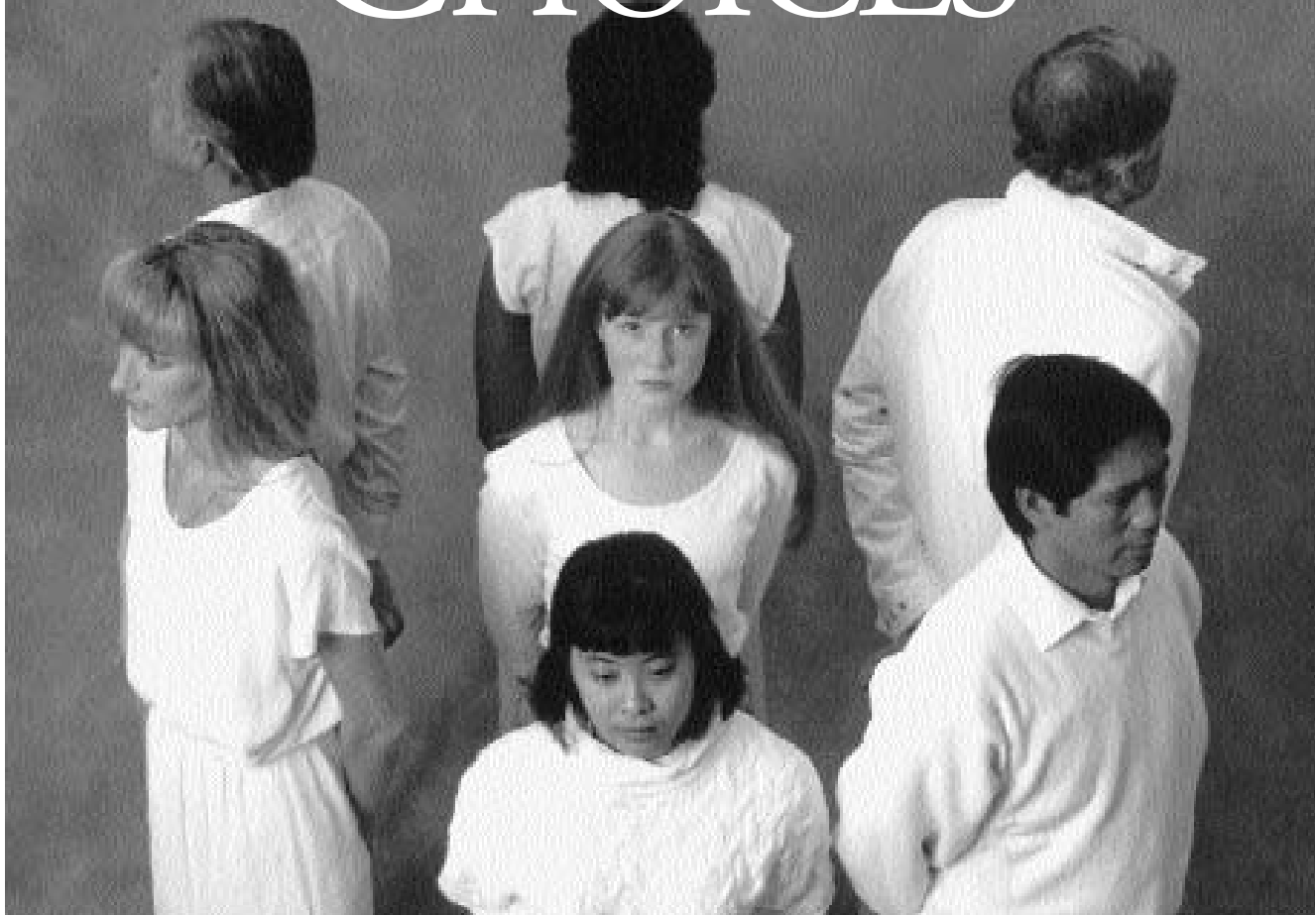
MYTH #3: *The dream of every divorced woman is remarriage.* Divorced women *rarely* dream of remarriage. Although fifty percent of the survey respondents say that the hardest part of suddenly being single is the loss of sharing a life with someone on a daily basis and having a regular companion for social events, five years after divorce, three-quarters of these women place a high premium on their own privacy and independence. Instead of wanting to remarry, they want the time to get to know themselves.

Many in fact fear losing their newfound independence to a second marriage. Of the women between the ages of forty and forty-four, twenty-nine percent *prefer* to remain single, and that figure increases among the older age groups—forty-one percent between forty-five and forty-nine opted not to remarry, and forty-six percent between fifty and fifty-nine. It would appear that the older the woman, the better she understands what it means to sacrifice her independence. Also, she has fought longer and harder to achieve autonomy.

MYTH #4: *Sex is no longer part of divorced women's lives.* Approximately one-third of the women in the study experience *more* sexual enjoyment after divorce. It's not surprising that sex (and sexual experimen-

TURN TO PAGE 95

# RESPONSIBLE CHOICES



H A R O L D B E C K E R

*This incredible journey we call "Life" is paved by the choices we make along the way. Every moment of every day, we can choose a new path, a new beginning, a new reality—and a new way of life. We have the unlimited potential within to be everything we ever dreamed of being and more, much more. ✦ The process of self-discovery begins with the choices we make. We possess the ability to choose and act upon the thoughts we have, allowing ourselves to create the reality we want. What a powerful opportunity!*

JIM CUMMINS/ALLSTOCK

Harold W. Becker is the founder of *Internal Insights* and teaches seminars around the country that utilize the principles of *Internal Power*. He lives in Tampa, Florida.



What are choices? They are the decisions we make from moment to moment, the kinds of thoughts we choose to entertain. Everything we experience in life comes from our thoughts. If we want to manifest something physically in our lives, we first think about it, and then make numerous decisions until we accomplish our goal.

Think for a moment about the many decisions that occur, for example, when you go for a loaf of bread at the supermarket. If the thought of buying bread occurs to you at home, you do what is necessary to prepare yourself to get into the car, drive to the store, and make your purchase. Although most of your physical effort is spent just obtaining the bread, your thoughts continue at an incredible pace—thoughts of finances, experiences, desires, fantasies, emotions, and so on run through your mind.

In our simple example, we have not considered the other interactions or distractions that normally occur while going to the supermarket. Such situations multiply our thoughts many times over.

Even when we are physically quiet, our thoughts never cease. What do we do during “quiet time”? We may read, watch a sunset, listen to music, daydream, meditate, contemplate, pray, take a bath, go biking or jogging. What are we also doing during this time? Thinking, of course! The process never ceases. Even when we sleep, our mind continues to think as we dream. And with every thought, we have an opportunity for choice. We have the chance to accept or reject

*When we don't pay attention to the thoughts we have, we allow memories, experiences, fears, guilt, emotions, and other people's beliefs to run our lives. We give our Internal Power to others, to society, to the moment, to an event. We allow the thought processes of others to control our thinking instead of following our inner truth and guidance.*

any thought and to alter it or change it to a new one.

Without our thoughts, we would cease to exist; we must think in order to function in life. We can observe and experience our physical world only through the thoughts we have in our minds. Without thought, what would there be?

#### CONSCIOUS AND UNCONSCIOUS THOUGHT

We choose the lives we lead through a combination of conscious and unconscious thought. For too many of us, the unconscious

thought process is permitted to dominate our thinking and govern the majority of choices in our lives. We surrender our conscious choice to this unconscious process. The first doorway delivers conscious choice back into our thinking, allowing us to bring our unlimited potential into focus.

Unconscious thought is being unaware of our thoughts. It is what most of us engage in throughout most of our days, because we lack the training to pay attention to what we think. When we don't pay attention to the thoughts we have, we allow memories, experiences, fears, guilt, emotions, and other people's beliefs to run our lives. We give our Internal Power to others, to society, to the moment, to an event. We allow the thought processes of others to control our thinking instead of following our inner truth and guidance.

Unconscious thought is a process in which we allow our habitual thought patterns and emotions to over-influence or intensify an experience and therefore lead us astray. In this reactive state, we often receive a flood of disturbing thoughts and limited perspectives that combine with a general fear of the future. When we are unconscious, or not in control of our thoughts, we often do and say things that we wouldn't do or say otherwise.

You *can* choose your thoughts and decide what is right for you. There's no need to give your power away to an unconscious process or to accept the views and perspectives of others. Unlimited potential becomes a reality when you learn how to think in unlimited ways, choosing the highest and best thoughts that are appropriate. You can of course continue to think unconsciously and in limiting ways. The choice is yours.

We can become fully aware of our thoughts—and aware of the



power they have—and begin to use their unlimited potential to our advantage. At the moment we begin to work actively with our thoughts, we bring into our lives conscious choice which is the key to our unlimited potential. When we learn how to shift our thinking process from unconscious thought to conscious thought, our choices begin to reflect our dreams and desires, and we begin to live those dreams.

You can transform your life by simply paying attention to what you think! The concept of conscious thought puts you back in touch with *your* thoughts. When you begin to acknowledge the kinds of thoughts you have, the focus and power they have in your life, and the choices you are making with them, you can learn to redirect thoughts that are not in alignment with your highest and greatest good. You can literally adjust your thoughts in a positive, conscious way.

And when you develop your ability to take control of random thoughts, you'll discover that your Internal Power is truly unlimited.

What are we really doing when we engage conscious thought? We are paying attention, aware at any moment whether or not our thoughts are congruent with our beliefs and goals. Conscious thinking allows us to have conscious choice. When a thought or thought process is different from what we wish it to be, we can invoke our conscious choice to change its focus. Conscious thought means being aware of ourselves as individuals and acting on what we know. Conscious thinking allows us to have conscious choice.

When we shift from unconscious thought to conscious thought, we regain control over our thoughts. Random thoughts no longer guide and dictate our perspectives. As we alter our perspectives to include a

*Many of us give our choices freely to people and events in our lives, allowing others to control us by accepting their beliefs and perspectives. We allow circumstances and events to overshadow our desires and wishes. We let our past experiences dictate our current reality by accepting the limiting beliefs and prior mistakes as the "way it will always be."*

higher and greater awareness, an acceptance of self and others, and a more loving approach to life, we experience a change in our mental and physical worlds.

Some may ask, "Aren't we always engaged in the process of conscious thought?" Not usually. In our rapidly changing world, information and technology have outpaced our ability to use them. We are bombarded by change from every direction, so we create structure, routine, and habits for our daily activities to avoid the need to think consciously about certain situations and to slow the pace a bit.

But when we engage in our routines, fresh ideas and experiences don't come as easily; our routines and habits become forms of escape. We can reverse this process by learning to shift our thinking back to conscious thought and bring choice back into our lives.

Why are conscious thought and choice so important? Because our thoughts have energy, they motivate us to take action in life. Through our thoughts, we pursue education, jobs, families, friends, and material possessions. Through our thoughts, we pursue peace, acceptance, wisdom, fulfillment, and love; through them, we use our imagination and creativity. When you consciously align your thoughts with your highest dreams and desires, you unleash your Internal Power. You become energized by your thoughts, and your thoughts become powerful allies.

#### F R E E D O M   A N D C H O I C E

Choice. Isn't that our ultimate freedom? As human beings we have the freedom of thought. We can choose the kinds of thoughts we have, the perspectives and beliefs we want, and the types of reality we wish to experience. Even in the most distressing situations, we possess the ability to view the event in many ways, from awful to joyful.

Many of us give our choices freely to people and events in our lives, allowing others to control us by accepting their beliefs and perspectives. We allow circumstances and events to overshadow our desires and wishes. We let our past experiences dictate our current reality by accepting the limiting beliefs and prior mistakes as the "way it will always be." We also give our choice to our negative thoughts, such as fear.

What goes on in our thoughts also goes on in our lives. For example, if we feel anger and hurt with-

in, we generally experience angry and hurtful events externally. If we choose to begin the process of redirecting our thoughts in more positive ways, then a corresponding shift will begin to occur in our experiences as well. If we smile, we receive smiles back. If we yell, people often yell back. *Smiling and yelling both start as thoughts in the mind.*

As we consciously pay attention to our thoughts, we create new opportunities for personal growth. When we are not conscious of our thoughts, we stagnate and repeat the same actions to the point of dull routine. Then growth and awareness cease. Life becomes a struggle instead of a joyful opportunity. The reverse is also true. Through conscious thought, we create happy, inspired, beautiful lives; lives of never-ending fulfillment, of growth and joy, of internal peace. And isn't that what most of us are searching for?

Internal peace and therefore Internal Power is an entirely personal statement of your own design. No one can provide it for you. You obtain such lasting peace only when you go within and choose it of free will. Choice is your ultimate freedom—not external choices of events outside yourself, but rather internal choice of your thoughts and perspectives on life. It is your choice to live joyfully or sadly, happily or angrily, in love or in hate, because your perspective is always but a thought in your mind.

Choice provides us with a powerful opportunity, translating directly to an Internal Power that intensifies our strength within. Conscious thinking affords us the opportunity to recognize what kinds of thoughts we have been living by. When we begin to see how many negative thoughts we have throughout the day, we may be astonished. Many of these thoughts have controlled major aspects of our



lives. To persevere to total conscious thought, we will have to do some work and recognize many things that have led us to where we are today. The journey begins with our commitment to choice.

### **R E S P O N S I B I L I T Y**

Who is really responsible for our lives? Our husbands, wives, boyfriends, girlfriends, lovers, bosses, parents, society, God? Don't *we* take an active part in our daily activities, consciously or otherwise? Don't we have some kind of thought before we act, whether we are conscious of it or not. This is a crucial concept to recognize: We have the ability to control our every thought and therefore our every action. In fact, we do control every thought; however, it is often done unconsciously. Aren't we then, from

a thought perspective, totally responsible for our lives?

Would we rather continue through life having many random reactive thoughts? Or, would we rather have conscious control over our thoughts and our actions? There are multiple ways we can view every situation or experience. Our perspective can be changed, if we want to change it. We can view a tragedy as an opportunity, if we desire to. Instead of viewing a situation as a struggle, we can change our perspective to see it as a challenge. We can choose higher, more loving responses at every point, if we want to!

We control the feeling of victimhood within our minds. How we live and what we do with our lives are solely at our discretion. Events that have shaped us may have hap-

JIM CUMMINS/ALISTOCK

pened at a very early age, long before we were physically or mentally prepared to deal with them. However, we do have this moment *right now*. It is the only moment we ever have and we are responsible for how we view it.

Choice and responsibility. What people do with their lives has an impact on themselves as well as on the people and the environment around them. This impact can have a wonderful effect, when people choose to be compassionate, caring, and loving in their every action. When people choose to be hateful, angry, wasteful, and harmful, this too has impact.

Why does one person lose a loved one in an accident and feel total forgiveness and understanding, yet another person carries hatred, anger, and an unforgiving view? Why does one person accept a diagnosis of cancer as a blessing and another as a spiteful, punishing act of God? One person takes responsibility for the thoughts and consciously chooses to take a more positive, loving approach. The other becomes mired in negativity and refuses to interrupt the stream of these thoughts long enough to acknowledge them and invoke choice.

Have you ever wanted something in life and wanted it strongly enough to receive it? Your thought process did it; you had to want it enough to do what it took to get it. You took responsibility for yourself and chose a stream of thoughts that brought you what you wanted.

Why is one person an unemployed high-school dropout while another works two jobs, starts a family, and gets a college education at night? Why do we pursue war rather than peace? Why do we argue rather than discuss and help one another? It's a matter of choice. Who is responsible for these choices? Each of us.

Because we can consciously

choose our thoughts, we are responsible for our lives. If we remain unconscious of our thoughts, we are still responsible, for we made our choice to have unconscious thoughts. It is up to each of us to recognize and embrace the responsibility of our lives. No one has ever had, or ever will have, dominion over our thoughts except ourselves.

### I N T E N T

If we pause and listen to our thoughts and if we understand we are always responsible for our thoughts, then we must also consider and comprehend our intent behind those thoughts. What is intent? Is it a moral, spiritual, or societal issue? Is it a political or business issue?

Let's look at an example of intent. If a clerk at a store gives us more money in change than is due, our intent will determine our thought processes at that moment and the subsequent choices we make. Several scenarios are possible. One, we may not check the change at all and therefore never detect the overage. No thoughts concerning the excess money are involved in this situation. Assuming we never catch the error, this scenario doesn't appear to involve our intent. Yet, aren't we responsible for our finances?

Two, we check the change and realize, while we are still with the clerk, that the change is more than it should be. We may think, "Should I say something and give the extra money back or keep it?" Here we enter the realm of responsibility and intent. What do we do? We may choose to justify the extra money as cash from "above" or as a discount on our purchases. We may even decide that it was supposed to happen because the store has treated us poorly.

Again, is this a moral, political, societal, or business issue? In some ways, depending on our view, it

could be all of these. What do we do? What feels right? Keeping the money may feel right at first. If we spend a lot of time justifying this process, however, the guilt may catch up with us. Would our decision be different if we found out that the clerk would lose his or her job because the cash drawer doesn't balance? Would it make a difference if that person was a wealthy store owner or a struggling store owner, a single parent with three children all dependent on that income? Tough issues. Or are they?

In another scenario, we receive the change and don't notice the extra amount. When we get home, however, we find that we have an extra ten dollars. We realize we were given the extra money at our last stop. We take a moment to listen to our thoughts and acknowledge them consciously. We then make a choice based on our intent as to what we will do.

We are totally responsible for our thoughts, and we alone govern our intent. What is your intent behind your thoughts? What is your intent for the direction you want your life to move in? These are important concepts to consider and periodically to reconsider.

Intent works alongside every thought you have. You cannot have choice without intent. You cannot have intent without responsibility. All three occur hand-in-hand at all times. Think of the potential ramifications when you allow unconscious negative thoughts and emotions to run rampant in your mind, and then consider what you could accomplish by using conscious thought and choice. It is up to you, for it is always a thought. Choice, responsibility, and intent—these three very powerful concepts can propel you to vast new heights of Internal Power. •

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more than we really are. Pretense drains energy. You will not be happy unless your possible mate falls in love with *you*—not some figment of your imagination or some false front. There is nothing wrong with being yourself. But don't hesitate a moment to *make yourself someone you like being*.

It takes time and energy to implement the principles of "Be What You Seek." But it's worth it. Becoming more whole and becoming more of what you really are feels good. As you keep growing and enriching your possibilities, you will also increase your possibilities of meeting the kind of person you can love and admire. Learn more about who you are by: 1) learning from your projections and 2) clarifying the qualities you want in others and learning how to manifest them yourself. This process will bring you to more of the wholeness essential for permanent partnership. Take the gamble and give it a try!•

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## **Intimacy**

*Continued from page 71*

that the greatest part of mankind are fools, ... and friendship, you know, is seldom made but amongst equals." The soul, as our dreams reveal, is not terribly lofty. We may present a high-minded image to the world, but the soul finds its fertility in its irrationalities. Maybe this is a hint as to why great artists appear mad or at least eccentric and why, in times of strong emotion and difficult decision-making, we so often act foolishly. More than one person in therapy has confessed to me that the most difficult part of an intense episode of jealousy was the fear of being made a fool by their

partners—a sign to me that soul was trying hard to enter their lives in the dress of the fool.

Oddly then, the most intimate relationships may be the very ones that appear foolish. The couple madly in love are "fools for love." The most unpredictable couplings sometimes make the best marriages. A person who appears quite ordered and logical at work may engage in outrageously irrational behavior at home. Some of the most tightly knit families don't hide their battles and jealousies. In short, when a relationship is soulful, the soul's irrationality will be revealed for all to see.

Within an individual, too, intimacy calls for love and acceptance of the soul's less rational outposts. Soulfulness is not so much a matter of knowledge and awareness, as of our relationship to the love and hatred that exist within our own heart. The "unconscious," that which we don't know, is too often also the "unloved," that which we do not accept. The trouble with defining therapy as "becoming conscious" is that it sounds like a purely intellectual operation, but the condition of unconsciousness, in the negative sense, is also a state of detachment. We not only need to know more about ourselves, we also need to love more of ourselves in an unsentimental way. We need to be close to the movements of soul that run deep and yet have everything to do with the way we act and feel in life.

Such love of the soul, sometimes felt as nothing more than tolerance of its unreasonable demands, is the basis for intimacy among people. Honoring that aspect of the soul that is irrational and extreme, we have far fewer expectations of perfection, in ourselves and in others—one of the most corrosive elements in any relationship. This kind of self-love also spills over into the kind of love of another that is toler-

ant, that knows the soul's tendency to move into new, positive areas through odd and apparently negative behavior. The truly soulful person may be surprised but is not completely undone by unexpected developments in those he loves. •

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## **Choosing Happiness**

*Continued from page 54*

loving manner. We can recognize our ego and spirit by their manifestations in our thoughts, actions, and lives. We can use our mind to choose our spirit's viewpoint.

Our deep inner happiness and ability to withstand all the problems and experiences of human life depend on recognizing our true spiritual identity. We are far more than our bodies, desires, mistakes, and behaviors. We are capable of living spiritually, lovingly, peacefully, and happily even in the world as it is. All we have to change is our minds. •

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## **Success Story**

*Continued from page 15*

waited for my book deals to close, and for articles to be published. (I still have some long-term book-keeping clients, so I feel confident I will meet my expenses.)

I expect to be a full time, self-supporting writer within a year. I know now this is my gift. Yet I never would have discovered it if I hadn't kept taking risks, baby steps though they were, and said "no" to what I didn't want and "yes" to what I wanted. Rediscovering in adulthood the natural talents of my youth has been a miracle for me. •

# Reviews



BY RICHARD HOLMES

## *Soul Life: How to Nourish and Deepen Your Everyday World*

*Thomas Moore Sounds True Recordings*  
\$53.00 cassette (6 cassettes in binder) 8 hours.  
(800)775-6887

Take a "care of the soul retreat" with Thomas Moore, a psychotherapist and best-selling author who is putting soul back where it belongs, at the core of a mindful life that is embedded in a spiritual context. Take a soul walk with him and listen to his advice to "allow the thoughts about soul to stimulate memory, imagination, fantasy, reflection, wonder..."

Take this retreat and take to heart what Heraclitus said about soul, "You cannot discover the limits of soul even if you travel every road to do so, such is the depth of its meaning."

Moore is drawn to these unfathomable depths of soul. He tells how you can become enriched through endless discovery about the vast "inner universe" of your individuality and the labyrinthine complexity that extends beyond your physical being. By the end of this soulful meditation on life, family, work, art, place, and religion (each the topic of a tape), you will perhaps appreciate and honor the mystery of soul and its paradoxical nature as, Jung noted, "something out there."

Soul cannot be defined neatly or explained systematically, Moore points out, and that's fine by him. So one might ask, "How can he talk for eight hours about soul?" The answer: With open-ended wonder and the frank admission that you will never understand all there is to know about soul. To become fully engaged in what he calls a "poetic way of life" or a soulful life sometimes requires the preservation of mystery. In other words, it can be as important to conceal as to reveal; otherwise,

obsessive delusional thinking can arise and control your life. He further advises that, besides learning what is possible in many realms of life, we "must educate ourselves in our ignorance," hence allowing soul to enter our hearts and minds and embracing both its shadowy and its light-giving manifestations.

It might almost sound like heresy for him to say that care of the soul "brings us further into the complexity, further into the murkiness of what it means to be a human being, further into the irrationality." But I think the beauty and strength of these tapes is his gentle, yet persistent, message that light and dark must commingle and be the resources for our possible transformation as human beings. We must face both, recognizing our limitations and our potentialities. Most importantly, he says, we must seek a balance between the two. We must be in a constant "dialogical relationship to soul."

For instance, he speaks of depression as a symptom through which our attention can be drawn towards soul itself. Allowing this and other symptoms to have their effect enables us to learn how our individuality fits into the larger picture.

In Tape Two, you learn how family fits into the larger picture. Despite twenty years as a therapist hearing the horror stories about family life (he never uses the word, "dysfunctional"), Moore thinks that "we are falling apart," not families. Not one to shy away from controversy, he insists on a re-emphasis of both patriarchy and the maternal instinct and a balance between the two. Not surprisingly, he recommends investigating the "darker dynamics" of family "so that the intolerable aspect of the family can be a means of initiation for ourselves."

In Tape Three, Moore teaches us that soul knows what it wants and knows its intentions regarding work, both in a practical and in an alchemical sense. "The materials out of which we are made as people," he says, "that is called the opus or the work, the work of the

## Reviews

soul." Achieving harmony between the practical and the alchemical can require a lifetime of effort. He teaches that even failure is useful in forcing us to re-examine ourselves, inferiority in keeping us grounded with the ordinary human condition, and mundane tasks in prevailing upon us to stay mindfully in the present.

Arts are at the center of a soulful life, Moore tells us in Tape Four. The soul yearns for esthetic experiences and continually operates "through images, through imagination," whether deriving from dreams or the products of art. Moore is also quite content to accept the fact that art "outwits us"—meaning it can never be controlled—and thwarts "this obsession we have with meaning." Art, in other words, goes beyond the information given by anyone and allows us to respond individually, according to our deepest desires and needs. We can exercise our imagination and, as Eliade said, participate "in the divine creation of the world."

In discussing soul and place (Tape Five), Moore is concerned with ecology as an "artful way of living" and as "being at home anywhere." A "soulful ecology," he reasons even includes finding a place to live where the daemon can feel at home. Finding this right place might be difficult, with dead ends and blind alleys, but in time, he counsels, we can develop an "ecological sensitivity" that might result in a brotherly or sisterly (figurative and literal) relationship with a place, where we can discover the "divinity within nature" and experience the world as enchanted.

Tape Six yields meanings about religion and soul. Taking an unpopular stance, Moore argues that placing religion back into spirituality is necessary—not in the sense of institutional confinement to one theo-

logical dogma or fixed way of belief, but in the broader sense of enriching our appreciation of the spiritual through study of many religious and mystical traditions from around the world. He advises that we rise above cynicism or literalism by exploring spirituality through more poetic means. And as a necessary part of this quest, we must become adept at "giving consent to things we don't understand."

I couldn't agree more with his counsel that we learn to live openly with the "great mysteries" that often characterize the religious and spiritual realms.

In fact, it is Moore's openness to all mysteries at all levels of experience that makes *Soul Life* a wonderful evocation of what it means to live our mysteries with confidence, joy, a flexible mind, and an open heart.

### *Tibetan Wisdom for Living and Dying*

*Sogyal Rinpoche Sounds True Recordings* \$53.00 cassette  
(6 cassettes in binder) 9 hours.  
(800)775-6887

"I try to speak on many levels," says Sogyal Rinpoche, an exiled Tibetan and "incarnate lama" who has taken Western students to the heart of Buddhism for well over twenty years.

Rinpoche, a funny, wise man with an infectious laugh, has indeed reflected his many levels of knowledge of Dzogchen Buddhism, a wisdom tradition that goes back at least twelve hundred years. He is intensely practical, intensely spiritual, and is a living embodiment of these two qualities in balance.

His talks, recorded at Holy Names College in Oakland, form a whole tapestry of just what the title indicates—Tibetan Wisdom for Living and dying. Teasingly, he says

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### Reviews

that thinking of death as “enlightenment insurance” that works for a dying person in terms of focus on “deeper issues” can also work for a living person through meditative practice. Either way, practice “brings all your discordant aspects together” and dissolves them gradually until the “skylike nature of mind” emerges. As Rinpoche puts it, you lose the clouds and gain the sky.

Death, he says, forces us to refine our lives, remove trivialities, look inward, and sort out priorities—all of which are antidotes to the “active laziness” (consumed by doing and achieving) that characterizes many Westerners. Being mindful of death, he counsels repeatedly, makes one increasingly aware that “death is very much alive in life through changes” and that obsessively holding onto change is pointless and futile.

Yes, Rinpoche often speaks quite simply about basic Buddhist principles (like those alluded to above), but slowly through much calculated repetition and many stories (often quite humorous), he weaves this expansive tapestry of Buddhist wisdom until, towards the end, his talks will put considerable demands on one’s abilities to comprehend. For example, it might even get somewhat complicated to hear about a bardo realm where a “mental body” travels through solid barriers and can converse with other travelers, where consciousness is seven times more intense than during life, and where life in this intermediate state can last from one week to forty-nine years.

Rinpoche leaves the most advanced (usually not publicly taught) teachings till the end (Tape Six). Throughout the other tapes, though, he is assuredly making a case that enlightenment is not elitist or otherworldly, but

grounded in what he calls the “wisdom of ordinariness.” He repeats himself often, laughs often, and will disarm you with an age-old message of true liberation. Though hearing only his voice, one will, I think, sense his compassionate nature and vast intelligence. He will enthrall and inform you, but the question of enlightenment, whether you choose “the wisdom in you” or “the confusion in you,” is decided by you in the end. As Rinpoche says, this choice need not come in the end, near or at the time of death, but can be made during your life. You can realize experientially that wisdom is natural habit, but that a lifetime of conditioned confusion shrouds this essential fact.

These tapes can help you rediscover that wisdom. There is so much to learn here—about inner and outer teachers, compassion as communication, unconditional love, “transcendental giving,” practices to help the dying, transforming suffering, purifying the mind, forgiving, the bardo of dying—and I have barely grazed the surface of this robust and compassionate body of wisdom.

Further, Rinpoche intersperses humor throughout his talks. For example, he minimizes the claim that he is supposed to be a reincarnated lama by saying that he doesn’t repeat this claim during interviews on Christian radio stations. He laughs, the audience laughs, and I’m betting that you, as listener, will laugh too.

I’m also betting that, after listening to Tibetan Wisdom for Living and Dying, you will laugh and learn your way to a much deeper understanding of Buddhist principles for your own life and eventual death. You might, as the saying goes, wake up and die right.



## Reviews

### *The Way of Chi Kung*

*Ken Cohen Sounds True Recordings*  
\$48.00 cassette (5 cassettes in binder)  
6 hours. (800)775-6887

Ken Cohen, a traditional Taoist priest (a rarity among Americans), is adept at the Chinese healing arts. In "The Way of Chi Kung" he shares his masterly knowledge of Chi Kung and guides listeners through 25 meditation exercises that are good for the body, mind, and spirit.

His definition of Chi Kung in Tape One (Introduction to Chi Kung) provides a necessary orientation to the topic, especially for novices. Chi Kung, he says, "is a way of using posture, movement, breathing, meditation, visualization, and conscious intent to cleanse or purify the life energy, to gather and accumulate it in the body, and to circulate it so that life energy gets wherever it's needed."

Chi means "life energy;" Kung means "work." Cohen elucidates the historical origins, medical benefits, developmental potential, and spiritual foundation of Chi Kung with great skill. Though recognizing its similarity to healing systems in other countries, he especially touts Chi Kung as unique because it attempts to work as both a way of spiritual transformation and medical healing. His detailed discussion of yin and yang correspondences to various organs of the body will make an imprint on your mind before the exercises are revealed. Cohen wants one to understand fully the intent behind Chi Kung before plunging headlong into the exercises, a few of which would be unnecessarily difficult for the unprepared student.

Also important is Cohen's caveat that Chi Kung should not be used as a substitute or even an alternative for allopathic medicine. Rather, he considers the practice to be complementary. In Western terms, he

thinks of Chi Kung as a "form of psycho-physiological self-regulation." Moreover, he emphasizes that practitioners should focus on self-learning, not performance.

The foundation of the training, he teaches, is meditation and self-awareness. Whether healing the body (Tape Two), seeking therapy (Tape Three), balancing the emotions (Tape Four), or "transforming consciousness" through its spiritual benefits (Tape Five), Chi Kung is an all-embracing system that can help one to attune to the "breath of life" that pervades all of nature, including human.

The signs of Chi—warmth, weight, lightness, vibration, stillness, and expansiveness—will eventually be experienced through the exercises and result in the life energy being dispersed evenly throughout the body. Cohen counsels, though, that working with Chi cannot be rushed, that stages must be faced and transcended in order to go from thoughts of self-importance to what he calls "nothing special," which is the perception of beauty in the ordinary and mystery in the everyday.

Most of the exercises Cohen carefully guides one through involve five stages: meditation to develop self-awareness; cleansing or purification to rid one of noxious Chi; recharging to build up vitality; circulating Chi to places of stagnation, tension, or blockage; and dispersing stagnation.

Most of the emphasis in the tapes is on meditative forms of healing and spiritual Chi Kung. Besides inner anatomy, one will also learn the correspondences each yin and yang organ has with an element, season, color, and direction (e.g., liver with wood, spring, green, and east). From this broad foundation, Cohen guides one through wide varieties of sitting and standing meditations and exercises for circulating Chi (e.g., "alternate nostril

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breathing”), massaging (to disperse stagnation), therapy (e.g., visualizations and affirmations), sexual vitality (e.g., the “deer exercise”), emotional balance (e.g., crane, turtle, and deer breathing), and “developing enlightened wisdom” (e.g., the “Big Dipper Journey”).

Which meditations and exercises one chooses is ultimately a personal decision, Cohen advises. But be assured that the five tapes in The way of Chi Kung have been studiously prepared by him to make sure the options are many. He should be thanked for designing a comprehensive course in Chi Kung with consummate skill and care. •

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### *Joy is Your Birthright*

*Continued from page 41*

National Geographic. It’s available at many video stores and it’s one of the best deals for 99 cents I’ve found in a long time. Although the body is much more than the video title suggests, the show is inspiring and inspiring.

#### L I S T E N T O Y O U R H E A R T , A L W A Y S B E A T I N G F O R Y O U

One of the first sounds you ever heard was the beating of your mother’s heart. As it was an echo in a cave, you heard it beating, beating, beating as you developed in her womb.

When you were only a few months old—womb time—your own heart started beating. And unless you have suffered a heart attack, it has never stopped. No matter whether you’ve been happy, angry, lonely, sad, tired, joyful, or just muddling through every minute of every day, your heart has been working, like a loyal friend, carrying blood through your body, transporting oxygen and other nutrients, keeping you alive. At a heart rate of 70, it will beat over one hundred thousand times today!

Find your pulse. Listen to the beat. Imagine your heart sending

blood, flowing out into your body, renewing you. The Sanskrit word for heart is *Anabata*. You might say it out loud: *Anabata. Anabata*. Hear the rhythm as you say it. It sounds a lot like your heart, always beating, never stopping.

As you listen to your pulse, think of your heart as more than a muscle that pumps blood. There is an exquisite link between your heart, your brain, and every cell in your body—a constant feedback loop. The cells of your heart have intelligence similar to the brain. They respond to signals that you are being loved, cared for, and are experiencing happiness. That’s why there are endearing terms such as sweetheart, honey, and sugar for people we love. Loved ones nourish our heart. Love is sweet. Part of our journey toward joy involves nurturing our heart with love so we can hear the calling of our heart.

Anodea Judith writes in *Wheels of Life*:

*We listen for the beat and fly,  
deep unto its sound.*

*We reach for ground, slowing  
down;*

*We still ourselves to listen deeper,  
quiet is the sound.*

*Deep within each person find the  
heart.*

*Everywhere around you find the  
heart.*

*Deep within ourselves we find the  
heart.*

*Every time we touch, we touch the  
heart. •*

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## Women and Divorce

*Continued from page 76*

tation) becomes a more important and more satisfying aspect of life after divorce. The majority of women did not experience sexual enjoyment in marriage, many came from repressed sexual backgrounds, and all were products of a culture that exhorted young women to be "good girls." Although it was not a question included in the survey, more than ninety percent of the women later interviewed were virgins on their honeymoons; and even if they dared to have premarital sex, their husbands were their first and only lovers! While a few women—about five percent of the interviewees—reported extramarital affairs while still married, for most, the freedom of divorce allowed them to first sample a bit of this and that from the sexual smorgasbord they had missed out on during the sixties and seventies when sexual mores were changing at a fast and furious pace.

MYTH #5: *Divorced women are lonely.* Most divorced women are anything but lonely. Although almost half of our women cite "growing older alone" as the hardest aspect of being single after so many years of marriage, an equal number begin dating again. More important, many stop defining themselves in terms of their relationships with men. Instead, they seek the company of other women and embark on new relationships that support their new life-styles. Eight out of ten feel that female friends are more helpful than any other source of support.

MYTH #6: *Mid-life and older women "live through" their children after divorce.* While seventy percent express concern about their children, mid-life divorced women certainly do not live through their children. In fact, the subject of chil-

dren rarely came up in any of the seventy follow-up interviews! It's important to remember that most of the survey respondents had teenage children or grown children, even grandchildren. The average age of their children at the time of the divorce was twenty years old, and only a third had children living at home after the divorce. Clearly a mid-life mother has a different perspective on children than a younger woman or a woman emerging from shorter-term marriage, who generally has younger children.

In short, the study indicates that women are most concerned with their own survival and personal growth—not with their children. Most feel competent as mothers; only fifteen percent report that they worry about raising their kids alone. The good news is that as they learn to stand on their own, divorced women become more competent mothers. Six out of ten perceive divorce as a better situation for their children. Of them, seventy-seven percent report having a better relationship with their kids, as well.

MYTH #7: *Divorced women fear old age.* Certainly, some women worry about getting sick, about living alone, and most of all, about surviving financially—but their concerns are not as dominant as one might expect. One survey question in particular is most telling. Asked, "When you look ahead to your retirement years, what do you see?" nearly half answered, "good health and productivity" and "more time with family," and fifty-six percent saw "more time with friends" in their futures. Seventy percent envisioned "involvement in interesting activities."

Those don't sound like the predictions of women worried about aging! In fact, on the down side, only one out of ten imagined that "sickness and dependency" were in store for their later years. We sus-

pect that women's fears about aging—understandable in a sexist, ageist world—are mediated by the exhilaration of finding new lives after divorce. Relishing the present, the future feels far away and somehow not so important.

Clearly, the survey spoke volumes of new and vital information about mid-life women and divorce. First and foremost, the findings proved that divorced women at mid-life can defy the cultural odds. Although, many of our women experienced hard times financially and many continue to face dismal economic futures, *psychologically and socially, the vast majority of women thrive in the face of divorce.* •

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*From the book "Our Turn: The Good News About Women and Divorce."*

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## Critic

*Continued from page 49*

objectivity. As this process continues, the attacking energy and voice of the Critic can be interpreted differently. We can see it as an alarm system that signals a call for help, a system that is alerting us to the possibility of pain, shame, and abandonment. It is as though the Inner Critic is dialing 911. "Emergency! Look out! Please help me because I cannot handle this situation!"

Thus the Inner Critic, because of our newly developed power and authority, takes on a different role. It in essence becomes a spokesperson for all of our vulnerability. When we have uncovered the underlying meaning of these attacks, it no longer hammers at us in the same way. We learn to handle the underlying problems about which it is concerned, and we learn to care for the Critic in a new way. •



# *The Marriage of True Minds*

Once when I was teaching at the University of California at Berkeley, one of my students tried to put me on the spot. "I have the choice of marrying for money or for sex," he said. "What would you advise?"

He was sure that he had placed me on the horns of a dilemma, but I thrive on such dilemmas. The audience lifted the roof when I answered, "If that is the only choice you have—sex or money—I recommend strongly that you marry for money. It will last a little longer."

I am all in favor of romantic relationships, but I would like to caution everyone - not only young people but also older people who are being caught in this trap—that romance is not based on sex. That is a superstition encouraged by television and popular magazines to sell everything from shaving cream to shampoo to shoes. Real romance is based on increasing tenderness and increasing respect for each other. Without such tenderness and respect, a relationship cannot last. In the end it will bring only suffering.

There is a beautiful place for sex in a completely loyal, completely loving relationship, but it needs to be pointed out that the nature of a purely physical relationship is to pall and become stale, to lose its freshness and appeal. When such relationships fail it doesn't

reflect on any body's capacity to love. That is simply the nature of a physical relationship.

Atomic physics provides an interesting perspective here. A physicist will tell you that your body and the body of your sweetheart are not solid. They appear solid only because of our imprecise instruments of observation. However painful it may be for us to hear it, our bodies are mostly space, and the little bit which is not space is changing every moment, getting older, losing its resilience, strength, and energy. This is a hard blow at physical romance. How can you be permanently in love with something that is mostly space? So don't blame yourself or anybody else if a physical relationship doesn't last. There was very little there in the first place.

On the other hand, there is no more dependable and delightful basis for a romantic relationship than two people working together for a great cause that is bigger than themselves, forgetting their personal differences in making the world a little greener for all. In Shakespeare's lovely phrase, this is a "marriage of true minds," which only grows more beautiful with the passage of time. •

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