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# Lotus

**Journal For Personal Transformation**

*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, which illustrates that prototypes of all things exist in the nonphysical world before unfolding in the physical world.*

*The lotus plant grows up through the water, having its root in the mud, and spreading its flower in the air above. The lotus symbolizes our development. The root sunk in the mud represents material life, the stalk rising through the water, and the flower floating above the surface symbolize our development into spiritual beings.*

*The lotus is a profound and 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..

**W**e have many means of communication: telephones, fax machines, and e.mail, yet we feel lonely and misunderstood and endure conflicts. There is not enough true communication between loved ones. We have little ability to hold meaningful conversation or to deeply listen. When we cannot communicate, we suffer and those around us suffer.

We need to develop loving speech to bring joy and compassion into our homes. By choosing our words carefully we make those around us happy. Loving words ease suffering and free creative energy. They join people and resolve conflict.

Loving speech is a discipline. To cultivate it we have to look deeply within. Anger and despair must be freed so we can truly hear and respond. Embroiled in inner battles, our listening and speech are contaminated and we hurt those around us. Inner turmoil is healed through deep listening. When we listen lovingly, anguish and debilitating thoughts are revealed. Feelings are released simply by expressing them after we soothe and tend our wounds. We surrender old attitudes, judgments, and expectations upon realizing their real nature which is to protect us from pain and abandonment. Loving speech applied within teaches compassion and wisdom. We uncover our desire to love and be loved. We discover that early decisions and buried suffering, results of living with a wounded and wounding family and culture, protected us during childhood but wound us and others in adulthood. Freed from the tyranny of the past, we give family and friends confidence, joy, and hope with our speech.

Loving speech is truthful. Fundamentally that means telling the truth about feelings, thoughts, and desires to ourselves and others to create authenticity and intimacy, the foundation of joy. We don't distort or exaggerate facts. Thus we are trustworthy, believable, and clear seeing. We are consistent. We do not tell one person one thing and another something else. Our intent is to promote harmony and clarity and, therefore, we do not gossip or spread news that we are uncertain of.

Loving speech inspires. We emphasize the positive, praise effort and success, proclaim faith in possibility, and encourage the discouraged. We listen deeply to ease distress and to access creative energy, transforming the life of our loved ones.

Our happiness requires that we listen and speak with wisdom and compassion. Let us commit to the practice of loving speech. Let us begin now.

Welcome to LOTUS.



Mary NurrieStearns  
Editor

# Lotus

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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.

## WHAT ABOUT LESBIANS AND GAYS

Thank you for your great magazine. I always find the stories and personal testimonials of people on the path to be inspiring and wonderful and at times a source of courage. I look forward to receiving *Lotus*. However, there are people whose stories I feel are missing something. I miss hearing regularly from Hispanic people, from African Americans and Asian Americans, Native Americans and particularly gay men and lesbians. I have actually not read a single article in *Lotus* about or by a lesbian or gay man as a single person or in a relationship, unless I just haven't noticed. However, because the articles are highly personal and people generally talk about their partners openly, I would imagine I would have been able to glean this from their writing.

In any event, I look forward to *Lotus* embracing more diversity with its contributors and readers.—  
*S. Lee Nelson, Mill Valley, California.*

*EDITORS NOTE: We select material on the basis of content and not according to the race, religion, or sexual preference of the writer. We welcome all writers.*

## VIOLATES THE TRADITION

Your article "Celebration of Change" in volume 3 number 5 violates the tradition of anonymity that is the spiritual foundation of AA. I refer you to the book, *Alcoholics Anonymous* for further information. Neither you nor Mr. King benefit the fellowship of AA by your behavior. Mr. King's "deep debt of gratitude" could be better demonstrated by following the traditions of AA.—*Bill A, Thousand Oaks, California.*

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# A Promised Visit

MARY SCHRAMSKI

**M**y father, always the southern gentleman, asked me to bring his guests something to eat or drink. His eyes looked beyond me as I studied his gaunt face, the high cheekbones and prominent nose protruding even further because of his weight loss, the folds of the pillow forming a halo around his head. Alone in the back bedroom of my home, my father lay in the hospital bed that had been ordered for him a month earlier.

“Dad are you sure you don’t want something?” I asked. He had not eaten anything in over three weeks, only taking small sips of water to moisten his mouth but every day, five or six times, I offered him food. My hope for his life and recovery died a very slow death. His big brown eyes searched my face and he smiled slightly.

“No, but get everyone else whatever they want, Honey.” Automatically, I glanced around the room. Everyone else? His sincere look told me not to doubt what he was saying, and even though his cancer had rendered him helpless, his southern upbringing kicked into gear and he played the good host.

“Dad, who are these people you want me to get something for?”

“I don’t know them.” He shrugged, not worried.

“Where are they?”

“They’re right there beside you.” He paused, looking over



*Mary Schramski, Keller, Texas.*

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# Feldenkrais

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# Eupsychia

## *Success Story*

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my shoulder, then closed his eyes. Fatigue was his friend now, slipping him into a more gentle painless sphere.

I glanced around again, hoping to catch a look at my father's new found friends. I could not see the people he talked about but to me, this was a sign my father would certainly die and probably soon.

All my life I had heard from relatives and read that when people are dying, they see people, spirits from the other side who come to guide the dying, helping to make their transition easier. I had often doubted these tales, never experiencing or seeing them myself. And now my father, whom I trusted and loved, was asking me to get his spiritual visitors refreshments.

It had been a long road for us; two years ago the doctors diagnosed Dad's backache as terminal cancer. Now he was fighting the final stages. My husband and I had made a commitment to Dad; we would care for him in our home. With the help of hospice, we would fight the battle with him. We all struggled, watching a vital man cut down by cancer, thin slices of human dignity taken away day after day.

Sheets of light showered his bedroom. Where were these people my father saw? When my father said something it was believable. Not a man of frivolity, he had flown airplanes for thirty-five years and plotted courses that never varied. Now there were people surrounding him who he did not know but he was not afraid. His graciousness touched my heart. He was so ill yet he thought of others, helping me realize even in the face of death we are not alone.

This was a message; my kind

father was leaving and I needed to let go. We had fought for so long, thinking many times he will win this battle with cancer. Now I needed to realize there wasn't a war.

The day after his invisible visitors, my father's health aide from hospice made her usual house call. Dad loved Julia and trusted her. He often called her Julia Childs, his sense of humor never leaving him, as she diligently helped him with his bath.

Checking to see if Julia needed any help, I knocked on the bedroom door and stuck my head in. She and my father, who sat on the edge of his bed, stared at me.

"Your father, he wants to take a shower," Julia stated in her lyrical African accent. My father had refused showers for over a month because of his fatigue and Julia had dutifully prepared sponge baths for him.

"Do you think you can get him in the shower, Julia? I can help you." Her muscular body was more than capable of handling my father, his weight now down to just under a hundred pounds. My voice grew squeaky with hope. We had been entrapped in an emotional death maze for so long, just hearing my father say he wanted to take a shower sent my mind reeling. At that moment I didn't care what the doctors or hospice said, if he wanted a shower, he was not going to die. The three of us became a tableau of hope facing a miracle.

"We'll try, right Mr. Hauser?" Julia encouraged. Dad looked up at me, his haunting limpid eyes scanning my face.

"I'm going home, Honey," he stated matter-of-factly, not blinking, waiting for my response.

P E N G U I N

O U G H T E N H O U S E

# FRONTIERS PRESS

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## *Success Story*

*Continued from page 13*

“You’re going home?” I asked, my hopes bounding again.

“I’ve got to go home,” he answered, looking confused at my question. Over the months I had become the mother in a way, feeding him, helping him in and out of bed and for the last three weeks even changing him. I knew my father. This elegant southern gentleman wasn’t going anywhere without a shower.

“I think that’s a great idea, Dad. Go home, it’s time. Julia will help you get cleaned up so you can go.” The words flowed easily out of my mouth realizing my father was talking about dying.

“When shall I go”? His question stunned me; how could I play God, telling him when to die, but thankfully a quick strength took over.

“Dad you go home when you want to; you have to choose the time. But Dad, will you come back and visit me”? I couldn’t give my father permission to die without some promise I would see him again.

“Yes, I will,” he answered.

The transformational moment ended and Julia tried to get my father into the shower, but it proved impossible. He was too weak. After a sponge bath, he drifted into a peaceful sleep. The next day, Saturday, he progressed into a semi-coma, dying Sunday morning at 3:00 a.m.

Four days later at 2:30 a.m., my father kept his promise by appearing in my bedroom. Dad woke me with a hug. I felt the pressure of his familiar embrace against my shoulder as he knelt over my bed. It was dark in the room, but I knew it was he. Dressed in a brown robe, a hood covering his head, monk-like, he communicated the thought, now



can I do the dishes? The communication was clear and the impression strong. Even though my husband was gone on a business trip, I was not afraid; I felt great joy just being with Dad again.

My father left just as quickly as he had drifted in and I lay in bed, savoring the experience. The hug had meant so much. During the last few months of his illness, Dad and I hugged four or five times a day. In the beginning, I would hug him and tell him I loved him. He would respond in kind and as his illness progressed, the hugs grew more important to both of us. A profound love surrounded us, pure and caring, a father and daughter struggling through life and facing death together.

Now can I do the dishes? Not a very earth-shattering message, but it contained a special meaning for me, too. Before cancer shattered his life and took away his strength, I did the cooking and my dad and I would banter every night about the clean up. He wanted to do the dishes, but there was a problem he didn't know about. When my father cleaned the kitchen, he ran a lot of water. My husband, a conservative man, would roll his eyes at me as the water in the kitchen ran and ran, and I would shrug my shoulders. My father was oblivious to this pantomime. Every night I would offer to wash the dishes, but would give in knowing it made my dad feel useful.

If anyone would keep a promise, it would be Dad. He was a man of his word. The message he brought me wasn't profound, nothing about the mystery of life and death but it is mine. Now I know, without doubt, my father didn't die; he just went home, leaving his tired sick body behind.

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## S A G E P U B L I S H I N G

## M A R K E T I N G P A R T N E R S

## Success Story

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# Deepening My Understanding

L I N D A   C L A R K

**T**ransformation is a funny thing. You never know where, when, or under what circumstance it will tap you on the shoulder and ask you to look directly and deeply into your soul. It causes you to be quiet and savor what really is. I hesitate to call my experience the “dark night of the soul” because there were so many aspects of it that were filled with grace and peace. Angels were present.

I had just finished taking a Yoga workshop in Durango. The day was mild; shorts weather, when we finished the workshop and made plans to drive back to Denver. Three of us headed out and within three hours of leaving Durango found ourselves in the middle of a Spring snowstorm, not an unusual occurrence for the Colorado Rocky Mountains. We continued on as we were driving a four wheel drive Bronco. Driving was slow and we were extra careful as we drove toward the mountain range. Visibility was poor and we were pretty sure we saw a sign half covered with snow that said road damage. “Slow way down,” we all said at once. No sooner had we made that statement than we hit a hole so deep that it lifted me out of my seat. Next thing we knew the Bronco was sliding sideways, out of control. That sliding was the beginning of the greatest challenge of my life to date. I settled back into the seat, held on, began to breathe deeply,  
*TURN TO PAGE 18*



*Linda Clark, Denver, Colorado.*

# Tell Your Success Story

Each issue, *LOTUS* presents stories of *success* from people who have changed or transformed their life.

Do you experience inner peace and joy? Is your life fulfilled with loving relationships? Are you directed by your wisdom and aspirations? *LOTUS* wants to present your inspiring story. We want to tell our readers how you changed your life.

You may have overcome some major trauma or handicap. You may have made a major career shift to one truly suited to you. You may have developed your creative potential. You may have filled your relationships with love and understanding.

Please send a recent picture of yourself and a 1000-word essay, typewritten and double-spaced, describing your success,

why you did it, how you felt during the process, and how your family and friends reacted.

*In your story please include:*

- Events or experiences that launched your transformation process.
- Decisions that greatly impacted your growth.
- Coping skills during the time of change and disruption.
- Resources that helped you.

Send your essay and picture along with this completed release form to *LOTUS*. We will not return photos or stories.

If your story is used, you will receive a one-year subscription to *LOTUS*, plus two gift subscriptions for friends.

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D H A R M A

R O C K C R E E K P R E S S

F R O M V O L 4 # 1

P A G E 2 4 T O P

J O H N F K E N N E D Y

F R O M V O L 4 # 1

P A G E 1 4 T O P

A N D E R S O N P U B L I S A T I O N

N O R T H S T A R

F R O M V O L 4 # 1

P A G E 1 4 B O T T O M

*Success Story*

*Continued from page 16*

and asked God to help get us through this experience safely. My right leg went numb upon impact with what we later discovered was a bridge. We rolled twice down into a river bed some 15-20 feet below the road and landed just short of the river. We thought we were OK, except that I couldn't feel my leg and we were hanging upside-down in the Bronco from our seat belts. When my Yoga mates dragged me out of the car, I discovered that my right lower leg had been severed at the knee and was still in the car. But I was alive and seemingly there were no other injuries. As the blood rushed from my body, I lay there in the snow and looked to the heavens for help. The colors in the snowy, dark sky were luminous and filled with a tender mercy. My eyes closed and I was afforded a look into the beyond. It was definitely inviting. I thought perhaps it would be best to let go but I kept thinking of my family and suddenly I heard this booming voice say to me, "breathe and stay focused!" There was a tremendous rush of energy around me and I was back in the snow, by the river with two crazed people doing everything in their power to keep me on the planet and take care of themselves as well.

It was a transformative experience for me. My entire life changed that night. It wasn't what I thought was going to happen at this stage of my life. It feels to me now, more than four years later, that I was given a second chance. Almost like God was saying, "Here's how you have lived up until now, here is what you can do with your life from now till the end—whenever that is."

I had been doing Vipassana med-

itation quite regularly since 1987 and had been practicing Yoga since 1971, teaching since 1980. I am so thankful that I had been in Yoga working with breath just six hours before because my mind, body, and breath began to work as one, at once. The accident, loss of my leg, and the ensuing four hours it took to get me down the mountain to the hospital was Vipassana in action: it became my practice. I focused, watched my breath, and stayed present with the experience all the way into the emergency room where they finally put me under.

Transformation is a continuous process of deepening our understanding about the world and the conditioned reactions in our minds, and how to be free from suffering through the skillful use of awareness. The hospital recovery and ongoing home rehabilitation in the past four years have definitely deepened my understanding and changed my response to the world in which I live and the people with whom I interact. My Yoga is stronger and more peaceful. My meditation is clearer and my mind more quiet. My spirit is kinder and filled with more compassion. I feel more sympathetic joy for humanity and feel loving kindness for the suffering that takes place. I am in a state of equanimity more often. I see that all our experiences are blessings if we are quiet in the present moment, trusting that in the larger scheme of things, everything is unfolding as it should be. With mindfulness, I am an active participant in unfolding my own internal Lotus flower, connecting head with heart: Om Mane Padme Hum. Namaste!•

B U I L D E R S

F R O M V O L 4 # 1

P A G E 8 7

F E L D E N K R A I S G U I L D

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## Success Story

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# Not the End, But a Beginning

T E R E S A   S T E V E N S

**I**t is so important to talk about breast cancer so that when someone is first diagnosed, she doesn't feel alone. It is vital to know that others understand what they are going through. They need precise and up to date information, ranging from support groups, to literature, cancer hotlines, options for care, questions for their doctors, to knowing that there is someone to talk to if the need arises.

In March of 1992, right after my twenty eighth birthday, while seven months pregnant with our second child, I discovered a huge lump in my left breast. A biopsy revealed that it was cancer. The clinical diagnosis was "Infiltrating Ductal Carcinoma Left Breast, Clinical Stage 3A." The stages of breast cancer go from 1-4, with 4 being the worst. I was admitted to Bethesda Naval Medical Center for a mastectomy. The night before surgery, I had a trail of doctors in and out of my room (OBGYN, Oncologists, Radiologists, Surgeons, Plastic Surgeons, Pediatricians, Neonatal Specialists, Anesthesiologists, Physical Therapists, and researchers from the National Institutes of Health.)

It is important to get second and third opinions! I was lucky. I received eight or nine opinions, plus the input of the doctors with whom they conferred. They worked together and were very caring. We, the doctors and I, decided to postpone surgery until after few sessions of chemotherapy. This worked out well because we later found, by means of a mammogram and needle biopsy, cancer in the right breast as well.



*Teresa Stevens, Ellicott City, Maryland.*

After receiving two sessions of chemotherapy, one every twenty one days, (nineteen days after my first session all my hair fell out, but that's a story in and of itself), I was thirty five weeks pregnant and labor was induced. The induction went on for three days! On the third day, they broke my water and my son was born. He was five weeks early and had more hair than I had! What a joy! After a few more sessions of chemotherapy, I had a bilateral mastectomy. They also removed twenty lymph nodes, thirteen of which tested positive for cancer. After surgery the side effects from the chemotherapy hit me the hardest. My resistance stayed low until December; nausea was the worst of it. I finished chemotherapy in mid-September and my hair started growing back in December.

The most important point I would like to get across to women facing a mastectomy is this. It is not an arm or a leg. If it is cancerous, get rid of it! You can always have re-constructive surgery or wear a prosthesis which looks very natural. When I made an appointment for reconstruction, I was wearing my prosthesis. I was asked if I was there for a breast reduction and I replied, "I don't have any, I would like some please!" We all laughed.

I later decided against re-constructive surgery, and people are surprised when they find out my breast are not real. Even my close friends say they can't tell. I knew that silicone implants were dangerous, and after viewing programs focused on women dying from saline implants, I decided to get more information. I requested information from the FDA, and The Command Trust Network. I discovered that saline implants have never been ap-

proved by the FDA. It was revealed on a television program that the saline implant removed from one woman was toxic enough to kill twenty people, and her doctor told her she didn't have long to live. I wanted the opportunity to watch my children grow up and have children of their own. That far outweighed the benefits of having breasts.

It's easy to become depressed and wallow in self pity, but I look at it from the viewpoint of what I've gained, not what I've lost. Nausea and other side effects are very undesirable, but you have to get through it and learn from it. I have gained so much from the cancer. I receive disability compensation, which helped buy our first home. It enables me to stay at home with my children on a full time basis. I can instill values, self-confidence, and love in our children.

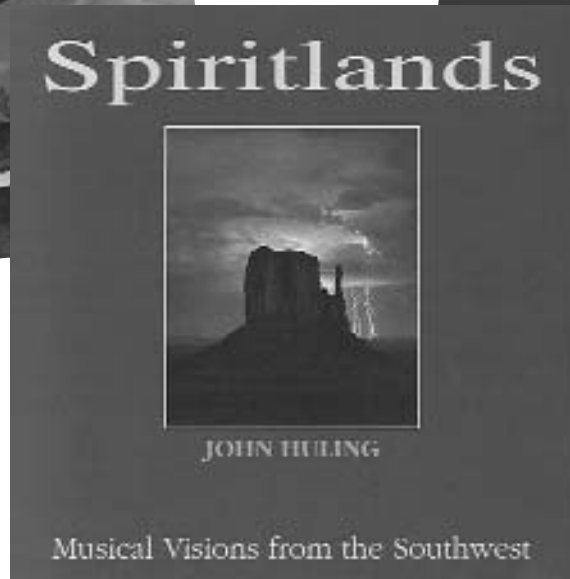
A cancer diagnosis is a real eye opener. It is a slap in the face and a voice screaming, "Wake up and see what's real!" The reason for my cancer was to put my life back on track. I was already a good person. It put my priorities into perspective. The cancer was huge and near my heart. I feel the balance of my mind, body, and spirit was off because I would take care of everyone else's needs and deny my own. This was compounded by a stressful relationship lasting for three years prior to meeting my husband. I love my husband and children with all my heart. Since the diagnosis I cherish every moment I can spend looking into their smiling eyes. Filling their days with love and happiness brings me more joy and satisfaction than I could have ever imagined!

Love, family, and exercising your body, spirit, and mind equally

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ATLANTIC  
UNIVERSITY

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P E R S O N A L   G R O W T H   R E S O U R C E S

# *Music: A Soundtrack for Our Lives*

P J   B I R O S I K

*Music is a soundtrack for our lives: that unforgettable song you heard as a child, the romantic lyric shared with a special someone, a melody which sums up the best about a particular experience; the sound of a wedding march, funeral knell, birthday tune.*

*I literally live for music. I trance dance to shamanic and tribal rhythms and feel my very soul stir and rise to the strains of string sections and angelic choirs. My idea of heaven is an unending audio tape library overflowing with sound designed to whisk my imagination to unimagined heights of ecstasy.*

*Unfortunately, most people do not know how to integrate music effectively into their daily lives; many people don't even know how to listen. It's no one's fault, of course. It's just that in today's been-there-done-that society music is characterized as disposable entertainment, like a paperback or magazine. But It Doesn't Have to be This Way!*

*Music chosen from the heart and enjoyed from the ears to the tips of one's toes can be not only mind soothing but a consciousness expanding tool for inner healing, happiness, and enlightenment.*



## GENTLY RELAXING MUSIC

**How Best to Listen:** Softly, as low as you can make it, but so that the volume is comfortable and you don't have to strain to hear.

This type of music, sometimes with the added relaxing qualities of environmental sounds of nature, should uplift the soul while soothing away stress. It shouldn't actively engage the imagination—enabling one easily to perform other tasks while the music plays, such as study or enjoy a good meal and conversation—but should subtly move you towards a state of inner contentment and outer peace.

The best bets listed below play perfectly during commuter traffic, a long bath, reading a book, or performing a moving meditation like yoga or stretching.

### ***Forest***

*George Winston, Windham Hill*

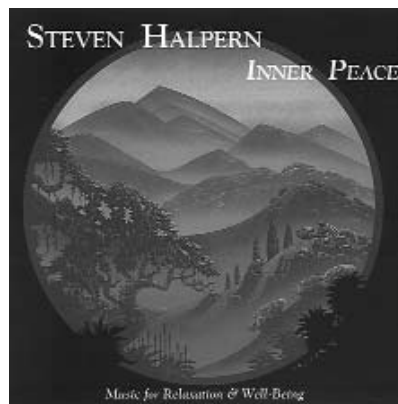
Joining his previous solo piano bestsellers Autumn and December is this sixteen song collection of moody motifs that boasts blissful original compositions as well as artful arrangements of a Japanese lullaby and instrumentals by Andreas Vollenweider, Dominic "The Outer Limits" Frontiere, Mark Isham, and film composer John Barry. No one balances sound and silence like Winston, and his sensitive touch on the ivories reveals soundscapes that stir the emotions with lyrical caresses. These are elegant, yet intimate, melodies for tranquil times.

### ***Woodland***

*Scott Duncan, Still Life Music*

The titular guitar-keyboard duet sets the tone for this sunny release, a lovely journey through a relaxing soundscape filled with peaceful play. Each sonic portrait conveys distinctive imagery through rhythms and

melodies. Soulful and healing vibrations seem to emanate from these eleven deceptively simple instrumentals, easing one into a state of positive well being. This is nice music, pretty music, music that is destined to appeal to all ages and temperaments because it lifts the spirit while the mind is engaged elsewhere. Imagine receiving a backrub by invisible hands while you work... you'll feel the benefit but not the manipulation. Bliss!



### ***Musical Meditations***

*Matt Fink, Dominion Entertainment*

Wherever you are, you're just a moment away from Soothing Streams, Tropical Heaven, Midsummer Storms, and Ocean Dreams, four recordings presented in a lovely gift box that represent the natural way to relax the mind and unwind the body. Containing one hour of environmental relaxation music each, they combine ethereal electronic sounds with sustained synthesizer washes and the sounds of nature. Tropical Heaven offers birdsong, ocean waves, and thick layers of sampled strings, keyboards, and chimes arranged so one can easily imagine swaying palm fronds and a warm equatorial breeze.

### ***Spiritlands***

*John Huling, Novox Music*

On this his seventh release, Huling deepens the experience of his popular Desert Plateau by taking the listener into the soul of red rock country. A variety of Native American flutes, ceremonial drums, pan flutes, and other instruments evoke a powerful presence while whispering winds, distant thunder, and the cry of the coyote enhance the mystic quality of these transformative tunes. A sense of peace and harmony fills the heart of the listener as the music flows; one feels truly connected to the universe, past and present.

### **DEEPLY RELAXING MUSIC: MASSAGE, BODYWORK, MEDITATION, THERAPEUTIC**

**How Best to Listen:** Loud, but not overpowering; find a volume that fills the space within your mind rather than the room. Use lightweight, foam cushioned headphones if possible.

This type of music, often consisting of non-melodic textures and tones, should have an effect on your physical being. Within minutes, you should be able to feel your muscles unknitting and your imagination slipping into reverie. So deeply involving are recordings of this type, that they often bear a warning not to listen to the music while driving or operating heavy machinery! The best bets listed below are wonderful soundtracks for solitary or therapeutic pursuits like meditation, massage, or other types of healing bodywork methods. Don't be surprised if you relax so completely that you fall asleep!

### ***Inner Peace***

*Steven Halpern, Sound Rx*

This long-awaited follow up to the therapeutic and popular Higher Ground embodies elements of ancient, ambient, Celtic, and contem-

M C C L E L L A N D M U S I C

Mt Madonna  
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porary instrumental styles while soothing the listener into a deep state of tranquility. With over two million records sold as a testament to his prowess in eliciting the “relaxation response,” Halpern’s latest marks a new milestone in career achievement. The free, floaty nature of the electric piano/keyboard tracks helps to relieve tension by de-focusing the mind and leading the body towards gently repose. Hear the master at his best!

*Massage*

*Chris Martin, CK Productions*

Research into music-induced relaxation states serves as the basis for this tape which is a blend of acoustic and synthesized instruments that soothe the listener towards a slow breathing rate to attain a state suitable for almost any kind of bodywork or healing therapy. Side A is a thirty-minute piece with a consistent bass drone designed to ease hyperactive imaginations and reduce physical tension. Side B offers versions of Satie’s famed “Gymnopédies,” interspersed with Martin’s own keyboard instrumentals to establish a calming ambiance in almost any environment. Aptly named and recommended, particularly to therapists.

*Amazon Song*

*Rusty Crutcher, Emerald Green*

Utterly relaxing sonic textures—in some cases just a single sustained note—and mellow melodies flow through the quiet harmonies of Amazon jungle wildlife. Recorded digitally in Peru’s Tambopata Preserve, the birds, insects, and foliage sound crisp and near... you can even hear droplets of condensation falling to the leaf littered forest floor! The stillness merges with the mesmerizing, meandering music on two, twenty-plus minute passages

that make for uninterrupted listening perfectly timed for daytime reverie or healing therapy. This contemplative soundscape is an interlude most welcome after a hectic day!

***Planetary Chronicles Volume II***

*Jonn Serrie, Miramar*

One of the finest architects of space music, Serrie has sound-sculpted a follow-up to his best-selling masterwork and set new standards of achievement in ambient sound. Characterized as much by its silences as by its tones, this atmospheric music serves as travelogue through an infinite landscape. The visionary scenes are desolate and hauntingly beautiful. No one does mind-trippin' music better than Serrie. No relaxation music library is complete without this calming album.

***Tranquility***

*David Sun, New World*

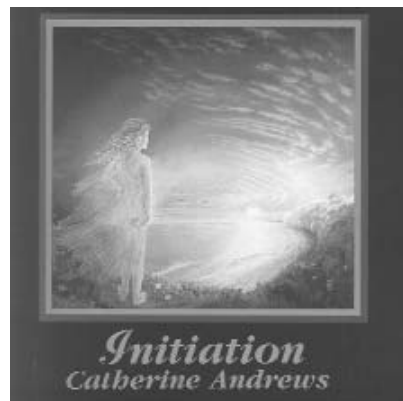
A gentle stream of soothing, sweet sounds that float upon one's consciousness, this reflective recording offers two side-long instrumentals that maintain their peaceful tempo throughout. These keyboard compositions have a dream-like quality, a purity that contains many healing elements. In fact, Sun's music is used by over 7,000 massage therapists, counselors, and health professionals in Europe alone! Excellent for meditation, sleep, and relaxation, this is some of the most restful music ever recorded.

***Terra Australis***

*Various, Rising Star*

Music in harmony with nature suitable for massage, meditation, and healing, this collection presents ambient music and soundscapes from eight Australian artists. Part of a series dedicated to evoking peace

and tranquility, the release begins at "Uluru," the site of the largest naturally occurring stone monolith in the world. Its spiritual significance to the Aborigines is conveyed through Alex Svencis' synthesizer textures and sustained string chords supported by didgeridoo drone. Jaro Kova's electronic duet with the avian "Nocturnal Chorale & Harmonies of the Spheres" captures the timeless qualities of this vast, ancient continent through moody, magical textures.



**SPIRITUALLY UPLIFTING MUSIC**

**How Best to Listen:** Normal volume, enabling one to hear the lyrics clearly and become imbued with the embrace of voices and instruments.

This type of empowering music, often with a single human vocal or choir, reaches through the heart and penetrates to the depths of one's soul. It helps renew one's faith or celebrate spirituality. Whether Wiccan, Christian, Jewish, or goddess oriented, the combination of instruments supports one's search for solace, understanding, and joy. Reverence, thankfulness, and appreciation all figure largely in the themes of the best bets below. Encouraging the spiritual in all of us, this music can be enjoyed any time

that an important life marker or need arises.

***Ouroboros: Seasons of Life***

*Kay Gardner's Oratorio, Ladyslipper*

A chorale of over 150 women celebrate the stages of female life from birth to death—backed by full orchestra and aided by solo and chant text—on this rich and multi-textured work that is destined to stand as a masterwork of feminine vision and creativity. Through eight movements corresponding to the Celtic calendar, Gardner embraces women's spirituality and mythic figures from Persephone to the Corn Mother, from Astarte to the Crone. Complete lyrics are enclosed. Simply breath-taking in scope and delivery!

***Ave Maria***

*The Benedictine Sisters, Invincible*

Profoundly moving, this collection of fifteen spiritual Gregorian chants is paired with soothing waterfall sounds for what must be one of the most relaxing chant recordings ever! The sweet voiced sisters soar above ethereal arrangements sung in Latin (though the luxuriously printed CD insert provides English translations). The blending of their voices is sublime! While chants combined with disco beats have recently become a nation-sweeping fad, it's nice to know that one can find the traditional arrangements that have made this type of liturgical voice-music inspirational for centuries.

***Initiation***

*Catherine Andrews & Denis Haines, Cat Trax*

This four part instrumental piano-synthesizer suite harkens back to the glory days of contemporary music both in scope and delivery. The music is sensitive, visionary, and empowering. Dra-

J E R E M Y P . T A R C H E R

Laura Stamps

matic chord structures convey a classical tone, but spatial textures and wordless soprano vocal embellishments place it outside of all genre boundaries. Just as well, given the titular theme and enclosed note, designed to be read while the music plays. This is music for tapping into the “Soul of Creation, ever new, ever profound in its Wisdom.”

***This Winter's Night***

*Mother Tongue, EarthSpirit*

Evoking the spirit of a celebration in the darkest time of winter, this unusual release presents holiday music from an earth spirituality—pagan perspective! Revelers raise their voices—accompanied by dynamic drumming—to express beautiful songs of seasonal renewal, personal blessing, and global gratefulness. Simple chants like “Gaia, Carry Us Home” become irresistible as they build to a full-choral sound with world beat rhythms, making this album suitable for sharing with friends and family all year long. A must have!

***Contemplations***

*Jeff Beal, Triloka*

Beal's best to date finds the contemporary jazz keyboardist inspired by Thomas Merton's book of spiritual reflections, “New Seeds of Contemplation.” Improvised instrumentals are interspersed with Merton's words to transport the listener into a state of conscious awareness. Akin to working with a mantra, the piano melodies focus one's attention on a laser beam of repetitive cognition, so that the narrative can enhance one's soul journey more intensely. Touches of guitar, bass, and background vocals underscore the potency of the message on this inventive outing.

***Davka***

*Davka, Interworld Music*

The trio merges traditional Jewish melodies with the rhythms of world music and the improvisational spirit of jazz, giving new spice to ancient musical themes. Klezmer-inspired violin lead lines by Daniel Hoffman sizzle over Adam Levenson's perky hand drumming in a demanding dance on "Chutzpani," but throughout this charming release, it is the unique multi-ethnic sounds of cellist Moses Sedler—member of the acclaimed world music ensemble, Ancient Future—that most impress. When he and Hoffman trade solos on "Road To Yehupitzville," the imagination reels through colorful visions.



#### LIGHTLY INVIGORATING

How Best to Listen: Indoors—softly, as low as you can make it, but so that the volume is comfortable and you don't have to strain to hear; in a vehicle—a little louder to combat the negative intrusions of traffic or engine noise.

This type of music, often featuring the patter of hand drums or other percussive instruments, should energize mental and creative processes, bring a smile of contentment, and instigate some mild foot tapping without becoming distracting; it should give you a little lift and make your day brighter. As you

listen sub-consciously while performing other tasks, the melodies should make your chores be accomplished quicker and more easily. You may find that small tensions or headaches also disappear.

The best bets listed below are perfect for play during office hours, in a retail shop or when paying bills, figuring taxes, driving stretches of open road, and riding on a bus or plane.

#### *Acoustic Planet*

*Craig Chaquico, Higher Octave*

The smooth strumming guitar whiz's latest album is brimming with melodic six-string confections. Guitar ballads like "Winterflame" and the title track are highlighted by sighing slidework, perfectly articulated lead lines and sensuous rhythms. But the people's choice must be the light and jazzy all instrumental version of "Find Your Way Back," a huge pop hit several years ago for Chaquico and former bandmates, Jefferson Starship. Unabashedly upbeat, its feel good vibes are infectious!

#### *The Road to Return*

*Michael Hedges, Windham Hill*

On his first album in four years, guitarist Hedges advances his talents as warm throated singer-songwriter as well as ground breaking six-string maestro. In addition to his untraditional string pulling techniques and unusual tonal palette, Hedges demonstrates lyric sensitivity on these ten tasty tunes. Set to softly arranged music, words from the titular track make major impact: "I'm on this road to return, accelerating with all my force, I hit the mirror of changing course, and the destination is at the source." Good, up front entertainment with a dash of personal insight.

### ***Honorable Sky***

*Peter Kater and R.Carlos Nakai,  
Silverwave*

A follow-up to their award-winning *Migration*, this recording is an exploration of male intimacy and emotion in contemporary society. Featuring bravura performances by Paul McCandless on oboe—penny-whistle, cellist David Darling, and saxophonist Mark Miller, the entire album hums with soulfulness realized through improvisation and intuitive communication. After numerous collaborations, flautist Nakai and keyboardist Kater resonate in sync, but also dig down into the primal masculine soul and create from a place of deep transformation. The result is powerful, healing music.

### ***Spur of the Moment***

*Ira Stein Group, Narada*

This completely improvised mix of ensemble-based structure and solo spontaneity has wit, energy, and flair. Chamber jazz is how the titular pianist dubs his groove, but I'd classify it as an addictive substance! Building from a piano, cello, and sax foundation, Stein's trio intuit melodies that range in mood from sensuality to pastoral playtime. Never a dull moment here, believe me! From the nostalgic "Way Back When" to the romantic "Dominique," the group delivers eleven terrific tunes sure to bring miles of smiles.

### ***The Gathering***

*Bruce Mitchell, Millenia/Oasis*

Keyboardist Mitchell soars on the wings of inspiration on this recording highlighted by the flute accents of Ron Korb. Drawing upon the melodic traditions of Celtic, Jazz, and contemporary instrumental music, the album features acoustic guitar, soprano sax, penny whistle, and percussion ac-

cents. The resulting savory stew is perfect for romantic nights, long drives, or hard days at the office. The first track, "Summer," boasts chimes, a slow sax line and downright pretty ivory arrangements; the title tune is a love song featuring a keyboard-flute duet with emotive guitar/sax ad libs.



### ***The Art of Hukwe Ubi Zawose***

*Hukwe Ubi Zawose, JVC*

The light and liquid sounds of the llimba—a large thumb piano which has 66 keys—permeates these upbeat songs. A former member of the Tanzanian National Dance Troupe, Zawose plays and sings in his native language. The natural, mellifluous character of his baritone underscores the insouciance of his chosen instrument as well as several smaller kalimbas whose tones range from chime-like to dulcet bell resonances. Fresh sounding!

#### **HIGHLY INVIGORATING**

**How Best to Listen:** Volume is the key here; play it as loud as you dare. Feel the music. Breathe it in. Let it resonate through your body and deep within your soul. Let your feet move, your body sway, let yourself go!

This type of music, often featuring prominent percussion instruments like drums or shakers, should invite your body to dance. When it plays, you can feel a physical transformation taking place, as if every

nerve ending is more finely attuned or every muscle possesses more energy for you to utilize.

Don't ignore this change or attempt to store this new found fuel; to do so might put you on edge or build up a negative charge. Use the energy to accomplish something positive. Do the housework, clean out a closet, or wash the car, the dog, the kids. Permit the rhythm to become your passport to celebration; dance for joy, for anger, for release, or for triumph by yourself or with others. The best bets listed below beg for movement, for involvement, for abandonment of inhibitions. Suspend your shyness and boogie!

### ***Nomad***

*Nomad, Australia Music Intl.*

A sensational songline in celebration of Mother Nature, this joyful journey from Australia to Africa to the Americas features foot stompin' rhythms and earth flute with "creatures" (including vocal chants), but the stand out star is the didgeridoo which serves as guiding force and musical representation of the lines themselves. Melbourne resident Nomad (Adam Plack) here joins forces with Taos Pueblo member Robert Mirabal and Senegalese Dogon tribal descendant Mor Thiam to craft an musical walkabout fueled by faith and hope for global communication and understanding. This intense trance dance experience is not to be missed!

### ***Trance Planet Volume 1***

*Various, Triloka*

Compiled by pioneering world music radio producer, KCRW's Tom Schnabel, this recording is an audio tool that helps one establish a sense of community by tapping into the Earth's vital pulse and ascend into an altered state of con-

sciousness. All fourteen tracks bypass the ears to speak to the heart with utter conviction, espousing a philosophy that celebrates unity through diversity, peace and global love. And it's good to dance to as well! Musical maestros Ali Akbar Khan and Zakir Hussain are joined by popular pagan drum-choral group Mother Tongue, the Tahitian Choir, and many other notable performers. This is quality!

***Dance upon the Shore***

*Maggie Sansone, Maggie's Music*

Walking the tightrope between ancient Celtic cadences and progressive world beat sounds, Sansone easily fuses the best of past and present musical styles into an adventure that is as lovely as it is stirring. Backed by sax, clarinet, guitar, flutes, fretless bass, and congas, Sansone's hammered dulcimer performs a colorful, modern dance that showcases better-than-ever technical craftsmanship and artistic vision. Traditional tunes are given a new lease on life! One of the best all-acoustic instrumental recordings available today.

***Whirling***

*Omar Faruk Tekbilek, Celestial Harmonies*

One of the foremost Middle Eastern multi-instrumentalists, Tekbilek follows the critically acclaimed success of his Brian Keane collaboration "Suleyman the Magnificent" with a solo debut that draws brilliantly from a traditional Sufi motif. The high pitched whine of double reed instruments, guitar-like rhythms and ever-present patter of hand drums add frills to this sinuous, irresistible movement music. Flute solos flutter above deep resonant drones, alternating with the exotic tones of plucked strings that fill the heart with dreams of romance. •

A U S T R A L I A N M U S I C

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# The Path of Bliss





## H E N E R Y J A M E S B O R Y S

*Henry James Borys leads relationship and personal growth seminars throughout the country. He is the author of "The Way of Marriage." From the book "The Sacred Fire" by Henry James Borys. Copyright 1994 by Henry James Borys. Printed by arrangement with Harper San Francisco, a division of Harper Collins.*

**O** *f all the shared experiences the path of love can bring, perhaps none is more mysteriously, exquisitely beautiful and fulfilling than sexual union. Making love can spark the most tender feelings of appreciation, intimacy, and bonding. Most couples looking back on their relationship would find that many of their highest and deepest experiences together have taken place during lovemaking.*

This is a great paradox: Love is more than sex, yet the passion, vitality, and creative feeling in a relationship arise from the chemistry between the sexes. We are sexual beings; to be human is to be either "man" or "woman." Just as the mystery of human life and growth is contained within the DNA of the sperm and ovum, the mystery of realizing the promise of the heart is in large part contained within our sexuality.

This is not to say however that the secret to a fulfilling relationship lies simply in basking in the joys of uninhibited sexual pleasure. I have counseled couples who maintained they had a great sex life, yet suffered a miserable relationship. As with every other aspect of an intimate relationship, to be fulfilled, our sexuality must gradually be recreated by love.

When we first fall in love, sex may possess an almost magical power to unite us in heart, mind, body, and soul. Passion, attraction, appreciation, sexual desire—all at a

peak—combine to create a fresh, blissfully fulfilling sexual experience. At no other time do we so deliciously feel the relationship between our body and our feelings. To open our bodies to each other is to open our hearts to each other in the most exquisite, delicate, sensuous vulnerability, and love. The power and beauty of this experience not only fulfill sexual desire, but even our hearts' deepest longings for union.

Yet for every couple, this graced state eventually changes. As we live through the challenges of intimacy, the trials of differing attitudes, expectations, and ways of doing things, the fresh bloom of romance fades and a subtle and gradual transition in the sexual relationship begins.

At first, we may hardly notice this transition. Even though the magic of romance fades in other areas of the relationship, for most of us, the sex drive continues; and for many, the sheer pleasure and physical intimacy of sex is enough

to keep the magic alive in the bedroom. Yet this in itself hints at the change that takes place. Sex becomes more a fulfilling of sexual desire than the fulfilling of our hearts' longing for a union of love. Instead of opening ourselves to each other, we are doing something together.

In a brief or casual relationship, sex as recreation may bring all the fulfillment we could possibly want. Even in a long-term committed relationship, such sex may satisfy for months or even years; but, gradually the glow will wear off. Maybe we begin to feel that our partner does not love us "for ourselves," or maybe we feel just some vague sense of being let down after sex; maybe we would like to feel more tenderness during sex, or more caring and intimacy outside the bedroom. In a long-term relationship, we need to feel more than sexual pleasure. We need to feel the mysterious, fulfilling richness of our hearts opening and touching.

To the extent sex becomes recreational, it cannot fulfill that desire. Since the end of recreational sex—physical pleasure—is already known, we become to each other a means instead of an end. Sex becomes subtly impersonal. We have sex; we may even have what some might think of as great sex, and yet a lack of intimacy creeps in. We do not feel the wonderful closeness and richness of feeling that sex once stimulated.

Many couples wistfully recall the passion and romance of sex in the

early days of their relationship and attempt to recapture that passion. Rather than advance on the path of love, they put all their energies into regressing. They may explore new positions, spice up foreplay, and experiment with new forms of stimulation. This often revitalizes a relationship for a while—just as taking up an exciting new sport together might—but in time this new sport too will fail to satisfy.

Our bodies are not separate from our feelings. To unite our bodies without uniting in our hearts with an equal intimacy violates the wholeness of our being. If it's recreation we're after, we would be better off taking up skiing. As Fulton Sheen put it, "The separation of soul and body is death. Those who separate sex and spirit are rehearsing for death."

We can communicate more; but, if we do not communicate with more love, it will not improve our relationship. We may give more; but, if we do so without feeling, it will fail to bring us closer. We may improve the mechanics of sex, and not improve the relationship at all. In recreational sex no matter how stimulating, we are not loving each other; we love our own desire through each other.

A couple of years ago at a rela-

tionship workshop I offered, a man in his mid-thirties approached me for advice. He described how the sexual attraction he had once felt for



his wife had seemingly vanished. For years they had a great sex life; now, she was just the same old familiar face. In fact, he saw only her flaws. He was at a loss to explain this turn-off, for everything else in their relationship seemed fine. He was also concerned that he was feeling strong attraction to other women.

Swings in attraction and a roaming eye are common hazards of recreational sex. From turn-on to

turn-off; from tantalizing, seductive beauty to familiarity. In recreational sex we don't love each other as we really are; we see only a reflection of our own desire. This may be flattering in the heat of sexual passion—to feel that one is tantalizing and seductive—but it can backfire once our desire is spent, when our partner loses interest.

Reality is different in different states of feeling. To see each other as we are and to feel fulfilled within our relationship, we must see with the eyes of love. We must fully receive each other, and this is as true of receiving each other's bodies as it is of receiving each other's personalities. Within a person's eyes, skin, lips, breasts, arms, chest, breathes character, uniqueness, and beauty as a person. This subtle beauty, which is a reflection of the beauty of the whole person, can be appreciated accurately only by the serene subjectivity of mature love. Then even our partner's physical imperfections will seem to hold their own beauty, in that they are part of the person we love.

Following recreational sex, our interest may wane, for our attraction was based on desire that has now been satisfied. Following loving sex, we still feel our appreciation and attraction, for in loving

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sex we embrace the inexhaustible beauty, depths, and mystery of each other's personality. Sexual desire thus becomes a catalyst for enlivening a richness of feeling that is blissfully fulfilling in each and every moment. The secret of finding sexual fulfillment is to find the fulfillment of love in sex.

TRANSFORMING DESIRE  
INTO LOVE

Loving sex may sound good, but what do we do when, despite our good intentions, all we really crave is some good old sexual satisfaction? The human sex drive does not always cooperate with our intentions to be sensitive, tender, caring, or even "normal." The path of love holds many challenges and not the least of these is to discover how passion can deepen our love.

The maturing of our ability to love involves an almost infinite number of minute steps: of inner healing, of gaining insight and self-knowledge, of opening to our feelings and to the feelings of others, of growing in selflessness and inner freedom. We must take each step as it arises organically. If we strain, if we attempt forcibly to skip a step, we will leave some corner of ourselves in the shadows of unconsciousness. It is sure to come back to haunt us by undermining our ability to feel, give, and receive love. The first requirement for growth is to be where we are: located in our true feelings, desires, and needs. When we are aligned with ourselves, with our own nature, then our nature can evolve.

Yet there is one qualifier to this requirement. In being where we are, we must be *in the totality* of where

The first requirement for growth is to be where we are: located in our true feelings, desires, and needs. When we are aligned with ourselves, with our own nature, then our nature can evolve.

we are. We need not repress feelings, needs, and desires; but, to heal and grow, we do need to experience these within their underlying context.

For instance, when I am in conflict, communicating is unlikely to create communion unless I connect with the feelings underlying my immediate reactions. I need to open to the pain, insecurity, and love that underlie my anger. When I do that, even bitter conflict can lead to a rich connection with my partner. How much more potential for a rich communion of feeling must exist within sexual desire! Yet unless we connect with all the layers of our feelings, even sex will not guarantee intimacy.

When amorous, I am primarily aware of my desire for sex. If I

simply act on that desire—approach my partner, show affection, engage in foreplay, have sex—I pursue what to some degree is an impersonal, recreational approach to sex. I use my partner to fulfill my desire. In the process, we may also experience a connection in our hearts, but by no means is this guaranteed. That is not even my primary intention. My primary intention is to fulfill myself sexually.

There are however many other feelings that form the hidden context of my sexual desire. Connecting with these is the key to conscious, loving sex. It is the key to using sexual passion to accelerate the growth and maturing of our ability to love, to becoming more whole.

If instead of engaging my partner without a thought as to what I am feeling, I were to pause and be quiet and mindful of myself for a moment, I might first discover within my passion my desire for love, companionship, and closeness. This desire exists within every heart. If I consciously connect with this desire, act to fulfill this desire, then I vastly increase the probability that we will experience the fulfillment of love in sex.

In exploring beneath my sexual desire, I may also become aware of other feelings: residual tension from the day, wanting to escape from some outside pressure or stress, wanting to forget some uneasy inner feeling, say of sadness or insecurity. Jumping into recreational sex, I may feel relief from inner or outer stress in my life or I may not. I may temporarily escape from my concerns, only later to spend a restless night tossing and turning with

TURN TO PAGE 93



# Emerging

L O U I S E H A R T

*One spring morning, Zorba the Greek discovered a cocoon just as the butterfly was making a hole and trying to get out. Impatient with the slowness of the event, he breathed on it to give it some warmth. Then, faster than life, a miracle happened. The butterfly emerged! ¶ With a trembling body, the creature tried to unfold its crumpled wings. Again Zorba breathed on it to warm it. To his horror he realized that, in trying to help, he had forced the metamorphosis before its time. The butterfly struggled desperately for a few moments, then died in the palm of his hand. Although Zorba had meant to help the butterfly, his good intentions brought its doom.*

Louise Hart is a community psychologist who has raised two sons and a daughter. She is the author of *"The Winning Family"* and is a leading educator in the area of self-esteem.



“I do believe,” he said, “that little body is the greatest weight I have on my conscience. For I realize today that it is a mortal sin to violate the greatest laws of nature. We should not hurry, we should not be impatient, but we should confidently obey the eternal rhythm.”

Sometimes it's hard to be patient with the timetable of life. We too may be tempted to find a bypass or a shortcut. Growth and development however for bumblebees, butterflies, and humans alike have their own timetable. We can stimulate and enhance growth, but we cannot force it.

## Our primary responsibility, our destiny is to stand up and say and be who we are!

When we observe and study nature, we learn a great deal about process. Seeds may lie dormant for a long time until the sun shines, the rain falls, or a rock is moved out of the way. When conditions are right, seeds grow, blossom, and bear fruit. Like lilies and wildflowers, we too bloom in our own time, in our own way. When will it happen? Will it happen all at once?

How does a daffodil or a rose know that it's time to blossom? When does the butterfly know it's time to emerge, to take that final step and complete its transformation? How do we know when it's time for us? What message or messenger will signal the metamorphosis?

Gradually or suddenly, there comes a new uneasiness and the cocoon walls that have kept us safe for so long begin to chafe ever so slightly. A hole appears in the hard shell of our cocoon, and a stream of light enters the dark sanctuary. Then there is a difference in the air. The climate is warmer. The smells of a new, yet familiar, world and the songs of the birds stir a desire to join in. A surge of excitement pulses through our veins with the promise of new life. The moment of birth, of new beginnings has finally arrived.

Perched on that threshold however we can undermine the metamorphosis in a variety of ways. We can try

to force the process, as Zorba did. Or we can try to resist it—like the caterpillar who looked up at a butterfly and said, “You'll never get me up in one of those things!” Instead of letting go, trusting, and transforming, we can get in our own way, trip ourselves up, and sabotage our growth. “That's the way I am, always have been, always will be.” We can convince ourselves that we're just caterpillars with no potential greater than munching and getting fat. We can continue the discouraging and disempowering opinions, judgments, and beliefs—emphatically displaying the evidence we've collected and held on to over the years to prove that we're right. We can cling to the habitual, insecure thoughts and behaviors that create fear, stress, and anxiety and which hold us back. And we can anesthetize ourselves through denial, distraction, and drugs, and ignore the stirrings to live more fully.

On the other hand when we feel the quickening, we can say “Yes!” to the invitation. And, like the butterfly in order to fly we shed that which has weighed heavily on our hearts and souls. We can take ourselves more lightly.

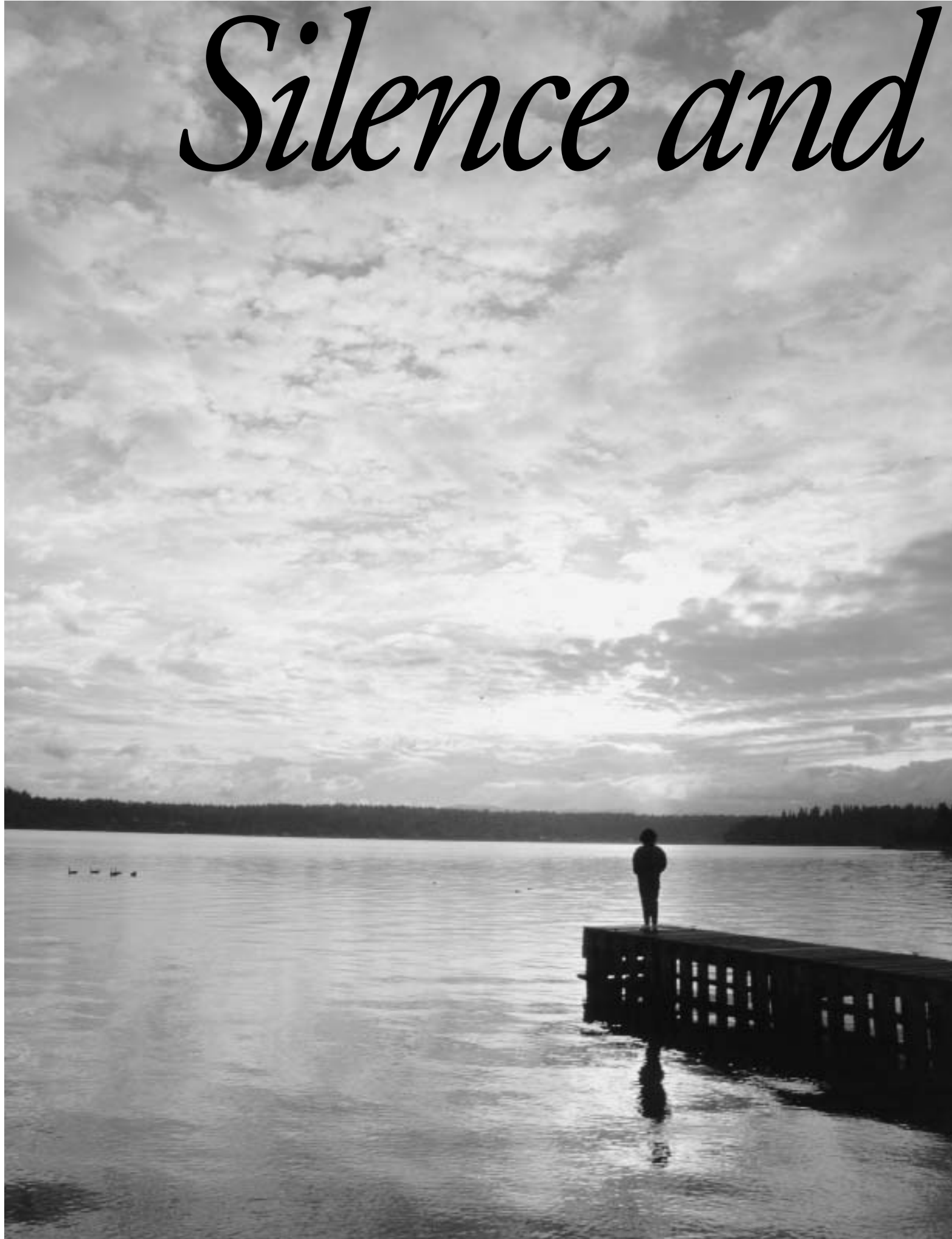
It may take days. It may take months. It may take years before a human butterfly is ready to emerge. Do it at your own pace. Be aware that this transition period can be the hardest and most vulnerable time in your life. Be gentle with yourself. Keep in good company, letting no one call you out too soon, letting no one hold you back. Your long history as a caterpillar has been preparing you to become one tremendously beautiful butterfly.

If a creepy, crawling caterpillar can become a fabulous butterfly with gossamer wings, anything is possible for us! With our minds, intuition, hearts, and free will, we can do almost anything. We can transcend our old selves and see the world with new eyes. We can achieve the miraculous.

“Our primary responsibility, our destiny is to stand up and say and be who we are! There are no models, no blueprints. No one can show us. We are commissioned to this creativity by the universe. This is our greatest contribution to this, our moment in the unfolding story—to be who we are fully.”•

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# *Silence and*



# Sacred Spaces

BARBARA DE ANGELIS

**I**t is often in silence and solitude that you will find your most meaningful real moments. Silence nourishes the soul and heals the heart. It creates an insulated space between you and the noisy, demanding world you live in, a womb of stillness in which you can be reborn over and over again. Silence has a regenerative power of its own. It is always sacred. It always returns you home.

Solitude is very necessary for silences which go deep. You must make time to be alone. Aloneness is not the same as loneliness. The word alone is derived from the Middle English phrase “all one.” When you are alone, you are not simply away from others, but you are with yourself; you are all one; you are at one with your own essence; you come back to wholeness with yourself. In this way, you are not aware of the lack of the people from whom you’ve temporarily retreated—you are aware of the fullness of your ownself. And it is in your all oneness that you can listen to your own inner voices, invite direction from your own guides, and recapture your own dreams.

The ancients knew the value of the solitary journey, the silent vigil by a fire, the vision quest. But we live in a time when technology has stolen our silence and solitude. It is increasingly difficult to find a truly quiet place. Even mountain stillness or desert tranquillity is regularly disturbed by the roar of jet planes overhead and the rumble of passing cars with radios blasting. It is hard to be completely alone with over five billion of us living on one planet.

Most of us have very little silence in our lives. Try recalling the last experience you had, excluding your sleep time, of being in silence for an hour or more. You wake up to your clock radio blaring, you watch television while you dress and eat, you

drive to work listening to the morning talk show, you eat lunch in a noisy restaurant, and so the day goes. We get so used to the lack of silence that we become uncomfortable when faced with it. I have a friend who lives in New York City and travels quite frequently. He never leaves home without one item—his “noise machine,” a device that emits a constant background noise that people play in order to sleep. Whenever he stays at my house, which is in the mountains outside of Los Angeles, he complains that “it’s too quiet here—silence gives me the creeps.” Then he plugs in his little machine and as he listens to the “noise,” he falls easily asleep.

My friend’s “creeps” come from the discomfort he experiences when the silence removes all of his distractions, draws his attention inward, and forces him to be with himself.

SILENCE AND SOLITUDE ARE CONFRONTATIONAL. THEY INSTANTLY PLUNGE US INTO TRUTH, AND IT IS FOR THIS REASON THAT THEY ARE SO ESSENTIAL TO THE HEALTH OF OUR SPIRIT.

Silence allows you to pay attention to everything, to watch the flow

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of mental garbage that goes through your mind. It's like sitting for a while on a river bank and watching debris float by on the river. When you choose to be solitary and silent, you witness the thoughts, reactions, and emotions that have been interfering with your ability to make clear decisions, or to discover the answers to problems, or get to know what your true feelings are. You can observe all of this emotional debris, notice what isn't serving you or is actually causing pain and turmoil in your life, and decide what you want to throw out and what you want to keep.

Imagine that you are hanging pictures in your living room. You become so absorbed in your task that you don't take time to stop, stand back, and notice if the pictures are hung correctly. You just keep banging those nails into the wall. Taking times for silence means standing back far enough so you can determine if the pictures in your life are crooked or straight. *Silence will help you see clearly, sometimes for the first time, exactly what is out of balance in your life.*

GOING IN MAKES COMING OUT MUCH MORE POWERFUL.

When you make the time for the apparent nondoing of silence and solitude, your doing will become much more effective and meaningful. Great sages, shamans, saints,

and warriors have always known this. They retreated into silence before undertaking a journey, a battle, a ceremony, a quest. They took their solitude on hilltops under



the full moon, in hidden groves deep in the forest, in sweat lodges, in chapels. There, they would empty themselves of their limitations and burdens, and open to the sacred mystery of the void. They would be transported beyond the constraints of time and space. They would be embraced by the life-giving power that is the Source of all creation. And then, they would emerge to perform their earthly re-

sponsibilities, infused with power and vision that can only be acquired from contact with the Unbounded.

In my own life, it is the silences that have formed the foundation for the creations and contributions I am most proud of. When I was in my twenties, I spent months in Europe on meditation courses with other meditation teachers. We would often practice days, and even weeks, of silence along with our regular meditations. For weeks at a time, I wouldn't utter a sound nor would I hear one—no conversations, no greetings, no jokes. Just silence. The deeper I went into silence, the more profound my spiritual experiences became.

Looking back, I know that these were some of the most powerful and transformational moments of my life, preparing me for the work I was to do in the years to come. My husband teases me and says, "Yes, but once you came out of silence, you started talking and haven't stopped since!" In some ways he is correct. I went so deep within myself, like pulling an arrow back on the bow, that I often feel I am still flying through the air in the other direction. I do know that without those opportunities to travel deeply inward, I would never have been able to come out into the world with such determination and focus, and I wouldn't have known

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how to listen to the forces that have guided me.

“The more you talk about It, the more you think about It, the further from It you go. Stop talking, stop thinking, and there is nothing you will not understand...”

—Sengstan

The power of silence lies in its emptiness. Silence is a receptive space. It creates a sacred void, an opening through which you can receive: truth, perspective, strength, healing, revelation. In silence, you transcend words and contact the wordless. You transcend form and contact the formless. You fill up with a peaceful knowing.

Silence is not the same as prayer. Prayer is a way of directing your feelings and thoughts, focusing them and sending them toward a source. Silence is listening, receiving, being. One is trying to reach the source or communicate with it; the other, silence, is allowing yourself to hear the source within yourself, to become one with it. Prayer is directed outward. Silence is directed inward. *In prayer, you are the sender but in silence, you are the receiver.*

I believe that God, Goddess, Cosmic Intelligence, The Higher Power, or whatever force you believe in is there to be called upon, thanked, and appreciated. *But I also believe that communication with Spirit is like a two-way radio, that you can receive messages as well as send them out. If you aren't feeling as connected as you'd like to Spirit, and you've been praying in the traditional way as hard as you can, perhaps you need to pray less and listen more. Maybe God's been waiting for a chance to talk to you, but hasn't been able to get in a word edge-wise!*

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#### LEARNING TO LISTEN TO SILENCE

Navigating through silence is like navigating the ocean—it is a skill. It takes practice, and the more you practice, the better you get. *The first step is to quiet your mind, to leave behind your usual thought processes.* That's like getting into a boat that takes you away from the shore and out to sea. Just as there are many kinds of boats, there are many methods for quieting the mind. You can use any one of a variety of meditation techniques and breathing exercises. Take the time to find one that works for you. After all if you don't like your boat, you won't want to go out sailing very often.

Once you have your vehicle for traveling away from your everyday landscape, you must learn to become a master at grabbing on to the currents and riding the waves. There are different “waves” or levels of silence.

...There is surface silence, a

quiet, gentle calm that lulls you into a centered space.

...There is deep silence, a powerful swirling rush of love and knowingness that sends your spirit rocking and rolling into new levels of consciousness.

...And there is the tidal wave of silence, an overwhelming force that engulfs you completely, swallowing up your ego and identity, and plunging you into a swirling mass of Light and Bliss, until you become one with it.

*Start wherever you are and let the Silence itself become your guide. It will take you wherever you need to go.*

If you aren't used to going within, you will need to be patient with yourself while you learn how to navigate inner space. It will take you some time to get used to its rhythms and melodies.

Imagine you are walking through the woods with a friend who happens to be carrying a portable tape player that's blasting loud music. You won't be able to hear anything else but the music. If your friend turns the tape off, at first you still won't hear much—your ears need to adjust to the quiet. Soon you will start to notice sounds that were always there, the rustle of leaves in the wind, tiny animals moving through the brush, the creak of massive tree branches. The more time you spend listening, the more you will hear.

It is the same with taking journeys inside yourself. At first, it may seem like nothing is happening, like you are just sitting there breathing or meditating. Soon however you will learn to pick up feelings that are very quiet but were always there beneath the everyday noisiness of the mind.

WHEN YOU AND THE SILENCE  
BECOME FRIENDS, IT WILL

SPEAK TO YOU AS LOUDLY AS ANYTHING YOU COULD EVER HEAR FROM THE OUTER WORLD. SOON YOU WILL NOT BE ABLE TO IGNORE ITS VOICE, WHICH AFTER ALL IS THE VOICE OF YOUR OWN SPIRIT CALLING TO YOU.

Here are a few other very simple ways to experience more silence in your life:

- Drive with your radio turned off. Cars are great moving meditation centers. You can't be bothered and you can't really get up and leave. Some of my greatest revelations have come while driving in my car. For twelve years I gave a weekend seminar once a month in Los Angeles and each Friday night on the way to the workshop, I would drive in total silence, allowing my mind to empty and to tune in to my inner broadcast. I've also taken many wonderful long car trips in silence, especially when I'm traveling out of town. By the time I arrived at my destination, I had received guidance I needed and answers I'd been searching for.

Make your car into a sacred space. When you are alone, try driving silently or listening to gentle music that has no lyrics. Keep your eyes on the road but listen for the sound of your inner voice.

- Sit in silence by firelight or candlelight. Build a fire in your fireplace or simply light some candles, place them close to you on a table or desk where you can see them, and turn out the lights. Make sure the TV and radio are turned off and that you won't be disturbed. Sit and watch the flames. Listen to the logs crackle or watch the wax drip down the side of the candle. Imagine the light illuminating all of the dark or hidden places inside of yourself. Pay attention to what you see. Or if you

The easiest way to make any space a place where you can experience real moments is to bring love to it. Love makes every space sacred and every moment meaningful... While we are immersed in loving, love is all there is. Nothing else exists.

see nothing, just enjoy the simplicity of the moment.

- Take a silent walk with the person you love. This is a way of sharing your silence. Find an enjoyable place to walk, the quieter the better. Hold hands. Feel the rhythm of each other's footsteps, the warmth of their skin touching yours. Pay attention to everything you see and everything you feel. Soon you may notice that your hearts are speaking a silent language with one another.

"Your sacred space is where you can find yourself again and again."

—Joseph Campbell

I believe that each of us needs a sacred space, a symbolic environment which draws our awareness in and focuses it on our true journey. Having your own sacred space will help you experience more real moments in your life. It will call you back to the real moments you have had before and make your pilgrimage within easier.

A sacred space can be a pillow in the corner of your bedroom where you pray or meditate, a shelf or dresser where you place objects that have special meaning, even a wall where you hang reminders of your growth process. It should be someplace you can sit or kneel, or if that's not possible, a place you can stand in front of. It doesn't have to be big—it might only be a six-inch by six-inch section of your night table.

A SPACE IS MADE SACRED BY YOUR INTENTION THAT IT BE SO.

That is it. You do not need fancy statues or the perfect piece of furniture. All you need is whatever you would like to have there, things that will help center you and stir your spirit. Your sacred space might include:

- Photographs of people you love—your mate, children, friends, family, pets.
- Photographs of beloved relatives who have passed on.
- Religious or spiritual symbols that have meaning for you.
- Pictures of your guides and teachers.
- Mementos from your life that remind you of special real moments.
- Your favorite inspirational books, your Bible, prayer book, etc.
- Objects from nature that will remind you of your connection to the Earth: rocks, crystals, flowers, shells, etc.

- Candles.

My sacred space is in my writing room at home. I am looking at it right now. It is on the top of a low cabinet against the window. It contains many of the items I listed and others that are precious to me. It is the place where I pray, where I center myself, where I ask for guidance, where I express gratitude for my blessings. I have my own special, private rituals I perform there, rituals that are designed to help me turn within and remember who I really am and what I am here for. Whenever I feel lost or frightened, whenever I move off center, I come upstairs to my sacred space, kneel or sit before it, and use it to guide me back home to myself.

Even when I'm traveling, I create a little sacred space wherever I am. The first thing I do when I arrive in a hotel room is to take out a few special objects and place them next to my bed. Now the room is mine, now I am at peace.

Some people like to have another sacred space outdoors. If you are fortunate enough to live in an environment where this is possible, your outdoor sacred space might be a special tree behind your house, or a spot by a lake, or a rock overlooking the ocean. You can bring important objects with you on your visits or you can come alone and simply



allow the sanctity of Mother Nature herself to help you return to center.

Don't be in a hurry to create a sacred space where you live if you don't already have one. Just hold the intention of inviting it into your life and then wait for a while. *Let your sacred space tell you where it wants to be.* Slowly it will manifest itself as one object after another finds its way there. Some will be things you've had for a long while. Some will be unexpected gifts. In time, you will construct your own unique rituals and real moments in your sacred space.

THE MORE YOU VISIT YOUR PHYSICAL SACRED SPACE, THE MORE YOU WILL GET INTO

THE HABIT OF CONNECTING WITH YOUR INNER SACRED SPACE, UNTIL SOON YOU WILL CARRY YOUR SACRED SPACE WITH YOU WHEREVER YOU GO.

“Come out of the circle of time  
And into the circle of love.”

—Jalaludin Rumi

The easiest way to make any space a place where you can experience real moments is to bring love to it. *Love makes every space sacred and every moment meaningful.* When you and your partner lie in bed at night and hold each other close, you are in a sacred space. When you are brushing your daughter's hair, you are in a sacred space. When you offer a hug to a

friend who is filled with sadness, you are in a sacred space. Love ushers us into a timeless place of rapture. While we are immersed in loving, love is all there is. Nothing else exists.

*After you read this, close your eyes. Breathe gently and deeply until you have pulled your awareness from the outside in. Navigate past your thoughts and around your feelings. Keep going until you find the Silence. Dive in... go deeper and deeper. Now float in the Silence. Let it permeate every cell of your being. Know it as Peace. Know it as Love. Become the Silence...•*

A black and white silhouette of a man standing on the peak of a mountain. He is holding a rope in his right hand, which extends down the side of the mountain. In his left hand, he holds a coiled rope. The background shows a range of mountains under a clear sky. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a bright glow behind the man's feet.

# Men's Search for Heart Wisdom

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**W**hat would compel men to join a quest? Why would anyone leave the comforts of home to spend a week and a half with a group of strangers in the wilderness, drumming, chanting, fasting, praying for vision? What are these men responding to that would bring them to an experience like this?

If we set reason to the task of following this trail, we'll discover the secondary tracks and conditions of these men's lives—reflections of the real thing. We would learn, for example, that the majority of them are white, middle-class, American males ranging from age sixteen to sixty-nine, with a predominant cluster between ages thirty-five and forty-five. Their tracks reveal many to-be-seekers without a particular religious affiliation, though there are a good number of followers of Judaism and Christianity on this trail as well. About half of the men are currently married, and many of these are fathers. They are self-identified straight men and gay men. They are carpenters, clergymen, computer programmers, and unemployed. They are lawyers and artists, businessmen and teachers, students and nurses, medical doctors and psychotherapists.

These tracks can be fascinating to follow. But if we never lift our eyes from the trail, we'll never find what we're looking for. Over the years I've had the privilege of look-

ing deeply into the eyes of hundreds of men who have found their way into this camp. What I've experienced in these eyes is more of the nature of poetry than of scientific fact. Yet those feeling-toned images convey more information than any of the facts of their lives I have been privy to. What these eyes reveal is a great hunger—a hunger that cannot be eased by bread alone. No matter the size, shape, or history of the man, there is always this great hunger. It calls our attention in different ways, yet it is the one thing that all of the men in this camp share in common.

For some, the hunger is felt as a vague restlessness, a longing for renewed passion, purpose, or meaning in their lives. Some are called by the unsettling discovery that no amount of worldly success truly comforts the gnawing emptiness they feel inside. Others experience the call through provocations from people and events in their lives—the desire to become a parent, the invitation to write a book, the dream of world peace, the possibility of mar-

riage, or other such invitations to manifest more of their self potential. And for many, the call comes through a demanding crisis that wounds deeply—a friend dies; a lover leaves; we lose our job, our health, or our youth. Those gathered here have been called to quest through circumstances that range from gentle tappings to violent rendings. Men often wake up in such circumstances painfully aware of how isolated they are from their heart's wisdom, from other men, and from the living earth. Bringing the pain of this isolation out of hiding is a courageous life-affirming step.

Such times of transition present us with the opportunity for growth. If we stay present to the sunset dissolution of the old certainties, victories, and identities, we may eventually notice the first rays of a larger identity and destiny breaking the horizon. These leading rays of the new story are what we call vision.

But between sunset and sunrise lies the dark wilderness of night. This wilderness will not be conquered, nor will it be saved. It requires a more courageous response: This wilderness asks that we *experience it as it is*. It asks us to open our hearts to the sorrow we find there, to the joy, to the emptiness, to the primal energy and movement, to the dreams, visions, and imperfection—open to all that is there. The world needs a man's heart. It needs a heart that is not afraid of its capacity to suffer pain or bliss, a heart that knows its tenderness not as

weakness but as generative grace. The men who have gathered here have made the choice to follow their wounds and spiritual longing into that wilderness. And risking their former allegiance to isolation, they choose to do so in the company of other men, in communion with the Earth.

Traditional societies enact rites of passage to recognize and honor our many passages into extended identity: from conception to birth, from adolescence to adulthood, from adulthood to elder hood, from elder hood into death, and from the ashes of death into rebirth. These rites also attend the transforming moments of marriage, separation, prophetic vision, or other significant changes in one's relationship to life and community. They exist to ensure that times of great change are celebrated as times of great opportunity. This Men's Quest is a contemporary expression of the pan-cultural need to encourage the process of transformation by celebrating it.

Those who have studied this process closely commonly recognize a threefold rhythm in these rites. At the beginning of our passage, we are involved in the first phase of separation. Here we stand in place acknowledging as honestly as we can the joys and sorrows of where we are here and now. And we work to touch and embody the deepest resonance of our soul's longing; for the soul's longing for wholeness is the most fundamental urge in our lives. All else follows. And so, at the beginning, we engage in a series of ritual enactments designed to strip away the misconceptions and resistance we might have to following this holy longing. These rituals also prepare us for leaving our known world behind;

Leaving home to enter the wilderness is primarily a symbolic act that fosters a deeper leave taking. We're asked to let go of any ideas whatsoever of who we think we are, what we can and cannot do, what is possible, what is right or wrong with the world.

for once free, our longing invariably heads for the hills. It has an insatiable hunger for the wild unknown.

Separation is not really about traveling to a new location. That alone changes nothing except the scenery, for we carry the world inside us. To leave the known world is more a leap of faith into an immediate abyss than a well-planned trek to some distant land. Leaving home to enter the wilderness is primarily a symbolic act that fosters a deeper leave taking. We're asked to let go of any ideas whatsoever of who we think we are, what we can and cannot do, what is possible, what is right or wrong with the

world. This then is the primary focus of our initial days together.

In a few days we will begin the second phase of initiation by entering the threshold world of solitude. For three days and nights, each man will stand alone before the mirror of nature, surrounded by beings that make no demands on him except that he be true to himself. It is in this threshold world that initiation into the next order of living is possible.

Following that, we will move to the third phase of reincorporation. In that phase, we work to reform our being around the virtues and direction that we will have contacted during our visit to the threshold world. We prepare too for the road home to our daily lives.

Separation, initiation, reincorporation—the three phases that help us negotiate the cyclical path from the known world to the threshold world and back again to the new world. Viewed three dimensionally, this path is really a spiral that has height and depth, for we never do return to the same home once we've truly left it.

For centuries these rites have given guidance and meaning to the transitions of human life. Much of contemporary society however tends to focus on instant results rather than on the gradual stages of transformation and growth. As a consequence, there is little continuity of relationship between the individual, the culture, and the planet. And so, when a man undergoes the changes that are a natural part of his life progression, he often does so alone. No confirming hand is laid on his shoulder to support him and guide him into the next phase. Over time he becomes more and more cut off from deep and essential parts of himself and from the

continuum of relationship with the Earth. His becomes a life of “quiet desperation,” as Thoreau aptly described it—quiet, because society accepts the hollow shell he presents to the world; desperate, because his heart struggles alone. There is a shadowy part of culture that wants to keep him there. Quiet and desperate, he will not rock the boat.

Living in such a disempowering context we might be inclined to greet the call for change as cause for tribulation rather than celebration. We will be tempted to treat the pain by finding its cause and fixing it as soon as possible. For a plumbing problem, the “find-and-fix” approach is useful. But for a heart in crisis, such a technique simply confirms the fear that keeps us imprisoned in the old life. And the desperation deepens.

No wonder then that when we hear the call to the Quest, we often ignore it, ridicule it, anesthetize it, or treat it with a fragile fantasy of a perfect life after death. Many are called but few choose to follow the calling.

Not surprisingly then the quest myth is commonly associated with the figure of the *hero*. By hero we don't mean a culturally appointed individual or someone with supernatural talent. The hero is that natural part of all of us who refuses to be satisfied with prefabricated answers to life's questions. And he lives inside each one of us waiting to be given permission to act. The hero's precept was best summed up by the poet Kabir. “If you have not lived through something, it is not true.” The hero is sure of his questions, but not so sure of his answers. The questions he asks are much too precious to bury under a pile of foregone conclusions and superficial answers. For whom

and for what do I live? Where do I find meaning, purpose, and passion in my life? What is my relationship to myself, my people, my world, my God? In short: *Who am I?*

The challenge of the hero, and of each of the men assembled here, is to go beyond merely asking such questions to *living the questions*. Rainer Maria Rilke was quite adamant about this in his mentoring of a young man. “Have patience with all that is unresolved in your heart and try to love the questions themselves... Live the questions now. Perhaps then, someday far in the future, you will gradually... live your way into the answer.”

“The point,” he said, “is to live everything.”

Our Quest then is informed by the questions we are willing to embody and is propelled by our courage to live into the unknown.

Seen from the broadest perspective, all stories of quests and questing contain many interconnected themes. Joseph Campbell identified the common thread that ties all these legends together. That thread, which he called the monomyth, runs as follows:

A hero ventures forth from the world of common day into a world of supernatural wonder: fabulous forces are there encountered and a decisive victory is won; the hero comes back from this mysterious adventure with the power to bestow boons on his fellow man.

In these few lines, Campbell conveyed the essential story of the hero's quest. This story suggests that in our longing to know ourselves and our relationship to God and to the world, we must embark

on a journey. We must take leave of the familiar shores of our known world, with its local customs and beliefs. We must then enter a world of mystery and uncertainty—a world that we perceive as dangerous—and test ourselves against the onslaught of powers that threaten to destroy us. We may be called in spirit to join the Grail knights, whose passion for wholeness led them directly to the pathless forest. We may be invited, like Odysseus or Jonah or Jesus, to journey into the underworld—to die in order to be reborn. Or we may find ourselves like Jason trying to navigate between the treacherous clashing rocks, looking for true passage through the challenging currents of duality. We must understand though that the clashing rocks, underworlds, and pathless forests we meet “out there” are in truth a reflection of unexplored territories of conflict, darkness, and mystery within our own minds and hearts.

Facing such challenges, we quickly learn the limitations of the secular hero who attempts to conquer by force of will alone. For the challenges encountered here can be met only as the hero surrenders in communion with a larger spiritual identity. *On a journey of this sort, every decisive victory is born out of an equally decisive defeat.* And paradox is more often the rule than the exception. Every gift of empowerment on our Quest comes through the full acceptance of our weakness. Every illuminating vision is born out of a “dark night of the soul.” And every endowment of love is regenerated by our dying to the raging abyss of hate. Passing through these cold nights and refining fires encourages the hero to draw on resources he may not know he possesses but that have been

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# Children: Our Guardianship

T A M A R A C K   S O N G

*We are given children to be their caretakers. They are not ours to do with as we choose; they are the sons and daughters of our greater family, of our People, and they are, as we are, children of The Great Mother. Our care of children is on behalf of our People and as a caring arm of The Mother. When our relations with our children reflect that, we are not alone as parents. The Great Mother's nurturing, the Elder's understandings, and our Culture's traditions are there with us. It is to them that we deliver our children, so it is from them that we gather the heart and hand of their caretakership.*

WALTER HODGES/ALLSTOCK



*Tamarack Song founded The Teaching Drum Outdoor School, where others share the skills and awarenesses of Walking the Sun Trail, a library of old books on Native Lifeway (which he respectfully calls "Elders") and half a lifetime spent learning from Traditional Peoples. He still gives the greatest credit to the Rooted and Winged and Furred who have come forth to guide him.*



Children are a gift. They are sent to us as teachers; they are the Old Voices coming to us in new faces. For those of us who walk in the Civilized Way, they bring back to us the things that were squelched when we left our childhood, such as inquisitiveness, forgiveness, honor, and wonderment.

Childhood is the only time Civilized People are allowed to play—to play out their fantasies, to play at being the people they admire and the things and situations that bring them fulfillment and peace. It's O.K. then to listen to voices and speak to things that other people cannot hear or see. They can do and be what their parents won't allow them to do or be when they "grow up."

A journey back to early childhood puts us more in touch with who we really are than anything else we consciously could do. At that time our essential selves were uncluttered and near the surface. Spirit had life and was a constant companion; our eyes were yet clear enough, our throats were yet open enough that they could give sight and voice to the songs within us.



Our Ancestors saw again, touched life again through us. The Life-Energy about us found praise and honor in the clean depth and intensity of our childish ways.

The great Teachers tell us to be as little children. The Birds and the Wind sing us the same message in

the way they live their essential Being. Perhaps peace and happiness come to us when we go back to where we left it. •

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BOTTOM BRUCE FORSTER/ALLSTOCK, TOP PHOTO EDIT TONY FREEMAN

# The Heart of

B Y P E G G Y  
T A B O R  
M I L L I N

“We always hurt the one we love, the one we shouldn’t hurt at all,” crooned Nat “King” Cole. Romantic drivel or true wisdom?

From the thousands of couples who seek counseling and the hundreds of thousands more who seek divorce attorneys, we could assume that the song is right and that pain is an inevitable part of relationship. Yet our whole life is about relationship, beginning when we are still in the womb. Inherent in this mother-child relationship is the unspoken contract that one party will see the other party die. Throughout our relationship experiences, each of us carries this underlying fear of losing the beloved. Still, although our relationships bring with them the inevitability of pain through ultimate separation, must they fill our lives with suffering? Is it possible that through investigating the suffering itself, we can find a path to joy? Is there some way to, as Stephen Levine says, “soften to the immediacy that turns life into an emergency?”

A workshop on relationship added to the Levine’s well-established program of workshops on death and dying is more logical than it might first appear. Stephen states that relationship and illness are our



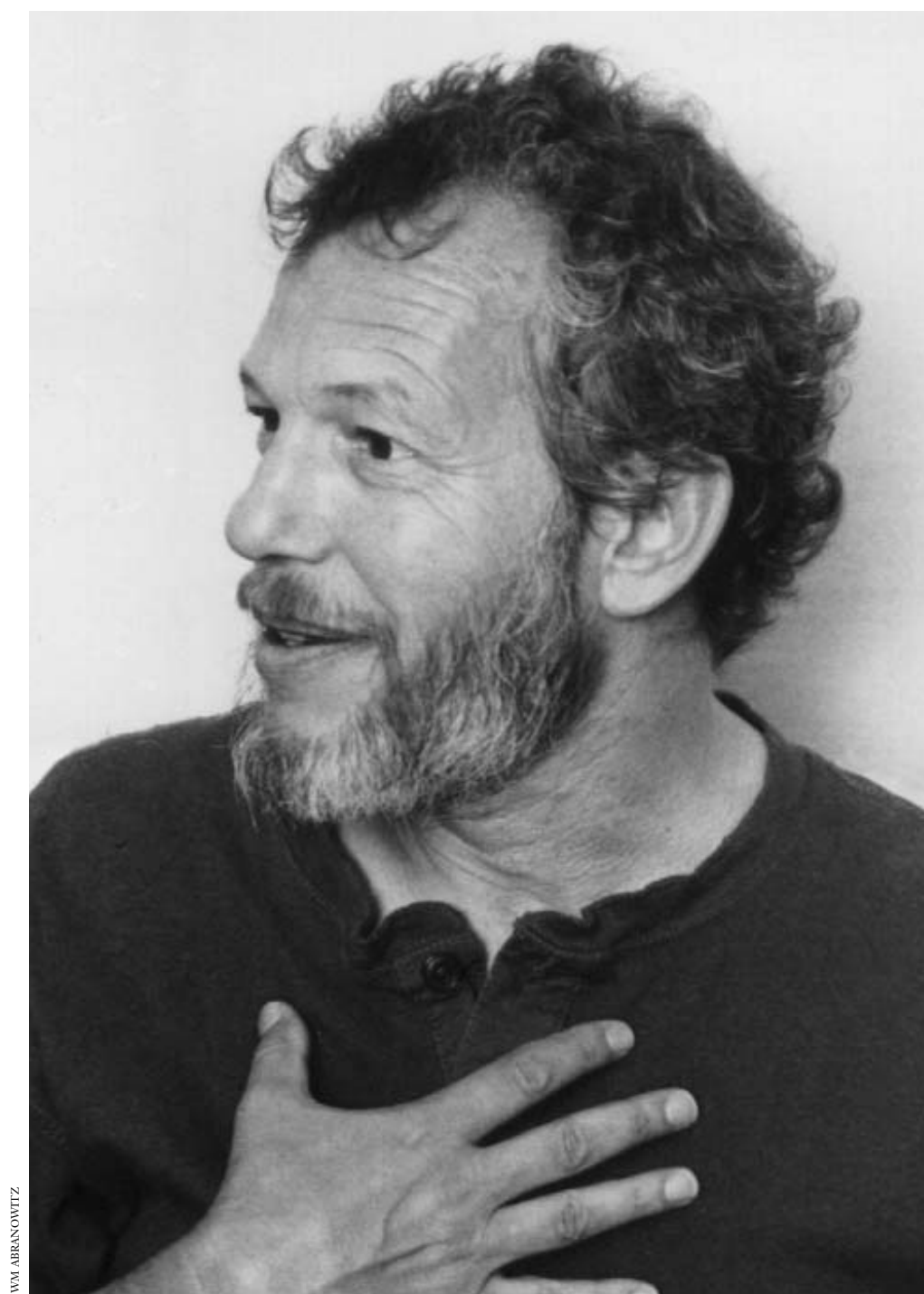
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*Ondrea Levine*

# 'Relationship

most difficult teachers, requiring both mindfulness and heartfulness. To live a healthy life and to die a conscious death require the ability to include others in both our pain and our joy. This is the meaning of an "open heart." The opening of the heart is a psychological as well as a spiritual experience.

The Levines bring a spiritual approach to the psychology of relationship. Their approach is rooted in the mindfulness practice of Buddhism, combined with what the Levines call "heartfulness" practice. From the Levines' point of view, the psychological and the spiritual are the same. Their practice of heartfulness is simply an awareness of the openness of the heart. We cannot experience love without vulnerability; to love we must be willing to "take on another's grief." The spiritual practice of mindfulness involves watching the mind and becoming aware of our thoughts. There is small mind which is the Little Self, our daily egoic chatter that creates obstacles and clouds our perceptions. Then there is Big Mind which is the Higher Self, our connection with the Universal. Finally, there is the state of No Mind in which there is nothing to which we are attached and nothing to which attachment can cling. This is a state of complete Oneness, of Love. This Love is "who we are when we get beneath what we have become," says Stephen.



WM. ABRANOVITZ

*Stephen Levine*

Many practitioners of Eastern spiritual philosophy seek the experience of becoming One, perceiving it as “enlightenment” and as a sign of having “made it.” Stephen suggests that “thinking in terms of enlightenment will imprison you,” but “lightenment” itself is freeing. “Lightenment” allows one to “meet doubt with confidence and fear with exploration”; it is meeting life as it is, in the moment, with the knowledge that there is no other goal. “Don’t settle for becoming One, go for Oneness,” he says. “When you settle for One, everything else is “Other.”

The Levines delineate three key elements in healthy relationships: compassion, commitment, and forgiveness.

#### COMPASSION

Compassion means “shared suffering” and implies both the willingness and awareness to see that all suffering is shared—we are all in the same boat. We can choose to use relationship as our path out of suffering rather than our path to it. Suffering, Stephen states, is a choice, whereas pain is inevitable.

“Letting go of our suffering is the hardest work we will ever do,” Stephen says. “It is bizarre how separate we have become, considering how we long for intimacy.” The most effective though subtle change is made when moving from wanting to change my (or his) behavior to having compassion for my (or his) behavior. Wanting to change is like “trying.” When one “tries” to pick up a glass, nothing happens. Wanting, like trying, has no power, no action; they both imply effort without active effect.

To bring compassion to relationships, we must learn to use the Witness Self, that part of us that is able to observe without judgment.

## Compassion means “shared suffering” and implies both the willingness and awareness to see that all suffering is shared—we are all in the same boat.



Each of us has this Witness; it is like a benevolent eye watching us with total acceptance. Most people are aware of its existence, although few have ever consciously employed it. Learning to use the Witness Self empowers us, allowing us to recognize our own vulnerabilities and patterns without guilt or blame. The first step to compassion is acceptance without judgment. The first person to accept is ourselves. Using the Witness Self has the benefit of giving us distance and objectivity over our own behavior. We are not required to change it, analyze it, or do anything except watch it. As all scientists know, once something is observed, it changes simply as the result of the observation.

Observing the belly is one of the first observations Stephen invites people to make. The belly is the primary opening for healing. “It is the nature of the belly to turn the whole world into itself—all that we take in as food from the outside is converted to the body from the inside,” he wrote in “Healing into Life and Death.” The stomach turns the world into itself, and the world be-

lieves in holding the stomach in, hanging on to the tension as a means of control. In order to heal our hearts, minds, and our bodies, the belly must be soft, and for it to be soft, we must begin to notice when it is tight and hard. The soft belly has room for everything; it allows us to be open to life, to make room for healing. “By letting go into soft belly,” Stephen says, “we open the body and loosen our grasp on the mind to expose the heart of essential healing.” Practicing soft belly is an act of compassion for ourselves.

To practice compassion together, couples are encouraged to do the AHH Breath Meditation exercise. In this exercise, one partner lies down while the other partner sits approximately at her midsection, without bodily contact and each with eyes focused on the rise and fall of the other’s abdomen. The partner lying down breathes naturally, relaxing, with eyes closed. The sitting partner begins to breathe in rhythm with the other, inhaling with the rise of the abdomen, exhaling with the fall. Stay focused and attuned to even subtle changes. When in rhythm, after eight or ten breaths, the sitter makes the sound AHH audibly and clearly with each exhalation. The person lying down need not make the sound. That person is in control and may end the exercise whenever desired. This is important because the exercise may give rise to fears of intimacy, sexual energy, or painful memories. After ten to twenty minutes, the partners switch roles. The exercise should be done without force; its purpose is to demonstrate shared being.

This exercise impacts the relationship immediately. It is difficult to sit with another being, sharing

breath, without joining on a deep spiritual level. Resistance to spending the time, to doing something so intimate as sharing breath, to being totally with this other person, any resistance at all surfaces for observation.

The Levines believe that healthy relationships are co-created, co-committed, and entail surrender. Stephen outlines three of the many levels of relationship. The first is the biochemical level, the immediate attraction between two people. The second level, the “entwined lovers,” occurs as the minds of the two begin to meet. At this stage, the pair begin dealing with each other’s grief at the level of the emotions and the body. And resentment begins to be noticed. “If you don’t have room for resentment,” Stephen says, “you don’t have room for relationship.”

Resentment is frustrated desire. If one tries to repress resentment, there will not be energy to give to the relationship. When resentment is met before it becomes rage, it can be very bonding; it is possible to meet resentment with humor. Many couples attempt to lock away their resentments and merely survive together in a state of “familiar suffering.” “Survival is highly over-rated,” says Stephen, “when you consider what you’re trading off.” We are only happy when our hearts are open, our bellies soft. It is so painful to hold someone out of our heart, to meet ourselves without mercy; yet this can be the survival we accept as our fate.

#### COMMITMENT

“Would you tattoo your loved one’s name on your body?” “Would you marry were it for a hundred incarnations?” This is commitment. When we are committed, we experience that our love for our earthly beloved and our love for a spiritual

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beloved are the same. What keeps us separate from our partner, keeps us separate from God. The Levines are adamant that there can be no commitment without monogamy. Monogamy for them entails a total sexual commitment to one partner; this includes disciplining and confining one’s sexual thoughts and fantasies as well as one’s sexual actions.

To commit to a relationship requires paying attention. “Paying attention,” says Ondrea, “is so powerful that, even if we have no power, we become our own best friend.” “It is possible,” Stephen agrees in response, “that there is no difference between someone paying attention and someone loving you.” Paying attention is an act of loving kindness which brings us to be there for ourselves. When we are present for ourselves, we discover our happiness inside and we can be our own partner. It is in this state that we are the best partner for someone else.

There are practical steps the Levines suggest for supporting the committed relationship.

- Establish a daily meditation practice together. The true reason for a spiritual practice is to extend it into daily life. The time set apart for meditation acknowledges commitment to one another, including the spiritual in one’s life. Extending this consciousness into the daily reality of the relationship through something like the practice of soft belly acknowledges the commitment to honoring the relationship.

- Think in terms of “the” sense of separation, “the” anger, “the” pain instead of “my” or “your” sense of separation, anger, or pain. As partners we can share “the.” Once we focus together on “the,” the separation caused by “my” and “your” disappears.

- Co-create and use responders. Responders are signals or gestures that say “time out” or “stop.” Once the interaction is stopped, make an agreement about what to do next, e.g. set a later time to dialogue.

- Each week, set aside a day for each partner to be the total focus of the other person’s attention. This means that one person truly listens to the other and is willing to take in his pain. It is a deep sharing, not a romantic interlude.

- Begin sharing hidden thoughts with one another. All of us carry unresolved grief about our own hindrances and impurities. It is very freeing to release these thoughts, particularly to our partner.

- Howl together. At the first awareness of anger and resentment, of old patterns replaying, or the need to stop and regroup, howl like a wolf. Most of us are aware of the absurdity of our anger and attacking behaviors but we don’t know how to let it go. Howling allows us to express the absurdity and it gives physical expression that releases

stress. Usually it results in laughter that defuses the entire situation.

- Agree to practice regularly the AHH Breath Meditation discussed above and the Loving Kindness Meditation given below.

- Individually upon awakening each morning, practice the Forgiveness Meditation given below upon.

- Change roles periodically, handing over control. Whichever person usually handles the finances or initiates sex, or makes other important decisions in the relationship, gives the control to the other partner. For instance when dancing, let the woman lead.

During the Loving Kindness Meditation, partners sit opposite one another, breathing from soft bellies, attending to breath. Turn gently within, directing into ourselves feelings of loving kindness as if we were our only child. Our hearts repeated, "May I dwell in the heart. May I be free from suffering. May I be healed. May I be at peace."

As we became attuned to the peace within us, look into each other's eyes. One is the sender and one the receiver. On each in-breath the message, "May you be healed" is sent, and on the out-breath, "May you be at peace." Sit for ten minutes, one sending the gentle wish for the other's happiness and wholeness; the other receiving the wish. Then change roles.

#### FORGIVENESS

The final element essential to relationship is forgiveness. In our desire to protect ourselves, we separate, using resentment as a shield. "Separation doesn't make us safe, it only makes us lonely," says Stephen. Forgiveness heals the separation.

The idea of forgiving those who have most wounded us often

arouses fear. True growth is always accompanied by fear because it brings us to the brink of the unknown, to change. Resistance arises when we are unwilling to take the next step. "Know fear like your best friend," says Ondrea. "Fear doesn't mean you're afraid. It's only 'afraid' if you grasp fear and hang on to it. Watching fear and investigating it is a practice that will set you free." When we acknowledge fear, we turn toward it and it changes. When we are afraid, we are averse to fear and this is truly frightening. We work with the object of fear instead of the fear itself. Rather, we should investigate what is fear, not why are we afraid. The more intimately we know our fear, the more consciously we can soften our bellies around it. "Fearlessness is the capacity to stay open while fear moves through the mind," says Stephen. "Fear is the pain; being afraid is the suffering."

As we work with forgiveness and with fear, we hold mercy for ourselves by beginning only with small steps. A favorite Levine metaphor compares learning to heal ourselves with weight lifting. Weight lifters do not begin training by lifting hundred pound weights; they begin with five pound weights. Having mercy with oneself means allowing oneself to move at one's own pace. Forgiveness cannot be forced; force closes the heart. When we truly forgive someone, we complete the relationship's old business. The relationship no longer has control over our lives; we free ourselves to be ourselves without the constant reliving of the past to weigh us down.

Forgiveness does not condone cruelty, but it can hold the cruel person. We forgive the doer, not

the doing. A frequent fear about forgiveness is that it means we have to allow a cruel person back into our lives or somehow re-expose ourselves to the original pain.

This is not true. When we forgive, we are doing something for ourselves, not the other person. It is an attitude we take, not an act we perform. The forgiveness of another always includes the forgiveness of oneself. For it is with ourselves that we are the most merciless. In the forgiveness meditation, one learns to move from forgiveness of another to forgiveness of oneself. This meditation, Stephen advises, should be done daily. Consistent use of it has been known to shrink tumors and to heal deep and incredible psychological wounds. Practice it facing your partner. Printed here is an abbreviated version of Stephen's meditation which is suitable for daily repetition. It is helpful to record the meditation so that one can focus on the experience.

Begin by centering the mind as in meditation. Become quiet, soften the belly.

Slowly bring into your mind, into your heart, the image of someone for whom you have resentment. Gently allow a picture, a feeling, a sense of that person to gather there. Invite them into your heart for just this moment, noticing any fear or anger or sensation that arises. Soften around whatever arises.

Silently say in your heart, "I forgive you. I forgive you for whatever pain you may have caused me in the past, intentionally or unintentionally, through your words, your thoughts, your actions. However you may have caused me pain in the past, I forgive you."

TURN TO PAGE 95



# What do the Children Say?

What do teenagers think about marriage and family? Here are some thoughts from a group of teenagers who were asked: "What things do you wish your parents would be or do?"

1. Be non-abusive.
2. Be patient.
3. Be understanding.
4. Be caring.
5. Be "up-to-date." (Kids also can't have everything they want!)
6. Don't be too strict.
7. Don't be whimpering.
8. Don't be neglectful.
9. Don't abuse alcohol.
10. Don't use drugs.
11. Don't smoke.
12. If parent does smoke, don't do so around the child.
13. Spend time with the family.
14. Be responsible.
15. Be happy.
16. Be mature before having children.
17. Approach situations prepared.

18. Be financially stable before having children.
19. Be caring about the environment.
20. Be involved with child's education.
21. Teach love, not materialism to children.
22. Teach children about sex; don't leave it to others.
23. Teach children about drug abuse—don't leave it to others.
24. Be more like a friend, less like a rule keeper.
25. If you have children, don't live as if you don't.
26. Give guidance about relationships.
27. Take child education courses before having children.
28. To know I will be taken care of until I'm 18.
29. Be intelligent.
30. If there is a divorce, don't find a new mate just because of the child.

The comments are presented as is. What they all add up to is the need for children to feel they are loved, and have a safe, nurturing place to grow into adulthood. •

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# Integrating Work and Values

L E W I S   A N D R E W S

*St. Augustine was one of the great guiding figures in the history of Christianity. Augustine lived toward the end of the Roman Empire and remains an intriguing figure to contemporary readers because his early ambitions seem so modern. ¶ He was born near Carthage in Northern Africa, and his only goal as a young man was to “make it big” by the standards of the day. Augustine had decided that by the time he was thirty he would have a cushy job in the Roman bureaucracy, would be making plenty of money, would be engaged to a wealthy heiress, and would have at least one mistress on the side.*



# The blind pursuit of ambition without any ethical perspective is as self-destructive as any medical malady.

*Lewis Andrews is a leading figure in the field of psychology that incorporates modern psychiatry with traditional spiritual values to resolve emotional problems.*



**T**he only problem from Augustine's point of view was that he was completely miserable. In fact, there is a very moving passage in his autobiography where he talks about looking out the window of his office at the university and seeing a beggar guzzling cheap wine in the gutter. There was this laughing beggar "with nothing," Augustine thought to himself, while he, who supposedly had everything, was completely miserable.

It was a short time after this reflection when Augustine experienced his famous spiritual conversion in a garden in Milan, and that's where most peoples' interest in his story usually ends. The sinner's become a saint, after all—so it's a happy ending. But I was curious to know what happened to Augustine *after* his conversion. Did this ambitious and energetic man just go off to a monastery and eat vegetables for the rest of his life? Did he really forsake all earthly goals?

What I discovered was that a few months after his conversion, Augustine decided to sail back across the Mediterranean to his native Carthage. He wasn't sure what he was going to do when he got there

but he knew that it was important to temper his goals with a certain kind of integrity.

As soon as he got off the boat, Augustine was recognized as an educated man and was asked to be the acting priest at a local church. This he agreed to do, as long as he could work according to his values. And he became a priest with such enthusiasm that he was soon made a judge... and after that a bishop... and by the end of his life had become known as one of the greatest educators in the whole of the Roman Empire.

And there is another touching passage in his autobiography when toward the end of his life, he talks about the importance of having goals and working hard to achieve them. God, he believed, operates through human labor and the things we build on earth are reflections of a deeper purpose. But Augustine also believed that it was possible for someone to become so narrowly focused on a particular goal—as he himself had done as a younger man—that over time the person completely loses track of his or her real feelings and desires. From Augustine's point of view, it was very important to temper one's goals with certain values, not as a way to stifle one's ambition but *as a way to know what one's true ambitions really are.*

Someone who makes this same point from a very modern perspective is none other than Dr. Goodpaster, the Koch Professor of Ethics at the University of St. Thomas. In his thoughtful writings, as well as in his lectures to graduate students, he made an important distinction be-

tween healthy competitive behavior, which is cultivated and improved through a commitment to values, and what he calls *teleopath*—literally *goal sickness* or the unbalanced pursuit of purpose.

"While not a physical or mental illness like heart disease or manic depression," Dr. Goodpaster says the blind pursuit of ambition without any ethical perspective is as self-destructive as any medical malady. Becoming so obsessed with any goal that we begin to ignore ethical considerations ultimately blunts our sensitivity to our real, deeper desires and makes it likely that even the achievement of our conscious purpose will backfire in unforeseen ways or as in the example of young Augustine, prove strangely unsatisfying.

Regrettably, the line between ethical competition and teleopathy is not always clear... even to people who think of themselves as having good values. This is because all competition requires disciplined effort over long periods of time, and it is always possible to become so caught up in one's work that what begins with the most honorable intentions develops a life of its own, regardless of any moral or ethical consequences. A closer look at many of the great business scandals in recent years reveals the sad pattern of normally honest and even compassionate executives getting caught up and eventually brought down by their own tunnel vision. •

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# Life is a Miracle

T H I C H   N H A T   H A N H

*In Vietnam when I was a young monk, each village temple had a big bell like those in Christian churches in Europe and America. Whenever the bell was invited to sound, all the villagers would stop what they were doing and pause for a few moments to breathe in and out in mindfulness. At Plum Village, the community where I live in France, we do the same. Every time we hear the bell, we go back to ourselves and enjoy our breathing. When we breathe in, we say silently, "Listen, listen," and when we breathe out, we say, "This wonderful sound brings me back to my true home."*

*Thich Nhat Hanh is a Zen master, poet, and peace advocate. He is the author of "Being Peace," "Peace in every Step," and "The Miracle of Mindfulness." He lives in a small community in France, where he teaches, writes, gardens, and works to help refugees worldwide.*



**O**ur true home is in the present moment. To live in the present moment is a miracle. The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now. Peace is all around us—in the world and in nature and within us—in our bodies and our spirits. Once we learn to touch this peace, we will be healed and transformed. It is not a matter of faith; it is a matter of practice. We need only to find ways to bring our body and mind back to the present moment so we can touch what is refreshing, healing, and wondrous.

Last year in New York City, I rode in a taxi, and I saw that the driver was not at all happy. He was not in the present moment. There was no peace or joy in him, no capacity of being alive while doing the work of driving, and he expressed it in the way he drove. Many of us do the same. We rush about, but we are not at one with what we are doing; we are not at peace. Our body is here, but our mind is somewhere else—in the past or the future, possessed by anger, frustration, hopes, or dreams. We are not really alive; we are like ghosts. If our beautiful child were to come up to

The miracle is not to walk on water. The miracle is to walk on the green Earth in the present moment, to appreciate the peace and beauty that are available now.

us and offer us a smile, we would miss him completely, and he would miss us. What a pity!

In *The Stranger*, Albert Camus described a man who was going to be executed in a few days. Sitting alone in his cell, he noticed a small patch of blue sky through the skylight, and suddenly he felt deeply in touch with life, deeply in the present moment. He vowed to live his remaining days in mindfulness, in full appreciation of each moment, and he did so for several days. Then just three hours before the time of his execution, a priest came into the cell to receive a confession and administer the last rites. But the man wanted only to be alone. He tried many ways to get the priest to leave and when he finally succeeded, he said to himself that that priest lived like a dead man.

He saw that the one who was trying to save him was less alive than he, the one who was about to be executed.

Many of us although alive are not

really alive, because we are not able to touch life in the present moment. We are like dead people, as Camus says. I would like to share with you a few simple exercises we can practice that can help us reunify our body and mind and get back in touch with life in the present moment. The first is called conscious breathing, and human beings like us have been practicing this for more than three thousand years. As we breathe in, we know we are breathing in; and as we breathe out, we know we are breathing out. As we do this, we observe many elements of happiness inside us and around us. We can really enjoy touching our breathing and our being alive.

Life is found only in the present moment. I think we should have a holiday to celebrate this fact. We have holidays for so many important occasions—Christmas, New Year's, Mother's Day, Father's Day, even Earth Day—why not celebrate a day when we can live happily in the present moment all day long. I would like to declare today "Today's Day," a day dedicated to touching the Earth, touching the sky, touching the trees, and touching the peace that is available in the present moment.

Ten years ago, I planted three beautiful Himalayan cedars outside my hermitage and now whenever I walk by one of them, I bow, touch its bark with my cheek, and hug it. As I breathe in and out mindfully, I look up at its branches and beautiful leaves. I receive a lot of peace and sustenance from hugging trees. Touching a tree gives both you and the tree great pleasure. Trees are beautiful, refreshing, and solid. When you want to hug a tree, it will never refuse. You can rely on trees.

I have even taught my students the practice of tree-hugging.

At Plum Village, we have a beautiful linden tree that provides shade and joy to hundreds of people every summer. A few years ago during a big storm, many of its branches were broken off and the tree almost died. When I saw the linden tree after the storm, I wanted to cry. I felt the need to touch it, but I did not get much pleasure from that touching. I saw that the tree was suffering and I resolved to find ways to help it. Fortunately, our friend Scott Mayer is a doctor for trees and he took such good care of the linden tree that now it is even stronger and more beautiful than before. Plum Village would not be the same without that tree. Whenever I can, I touch its bark and feel it deeply.

In the same way that we touch trees, we can touch ourselves and others with compassion. Sometimes when we try to hammer a nail into a piece of wood, instead of pounding the nail, we pound our finger. Right away we put down the hammer and take care of our wounded finger. We do everything possible to help it, giving first aid and also compassion and concern. We may need a doctor or nurse to help, but we also need compassion and joy for the wound to heal quickly. Whenever we have some pain, it is wonderful to touch it with compassion. Even if the pain is inside in our liver, our heart, or our lungs—we can touch it with mindfulness.

Our right hand has touched our left hand many times, but it may not have done so with compassion. Let us practice together. Breathing in and out three times, touch your left hand with your right hand and at the same time, with your compassion. Do you notice that while your

We do not have  
to die to enter  
the Kingdom of  
Heaven. In fact  
we have to be  
fully alive...  
When we take  
one conscious  
breath, aware  
of our eyes,  
our heart, our  
liver, and our  
non-toothache,  
we are  
transported to  
Paradise right  
away...

left hand is receiving comfort and love, your right hand is also receiving comfort and love? This practice is for both parties, not just one. When we see someone suffering, if we touch her with compassion, she will receive our comfort and love, and we will also receive comfort and love. We can do the same when we ourselves are suffering. Touching in this way, everyone benefits.

The best way to touch is with mindfulness. You know it is possible to touch without mindfulness. When you wash your face in the morning you might touch your eyes without being aware that you are touching them. You might be think-

ing about other things. But if you wash your face in mindfulness, aware that you have eyes that can see, that the water comes from distant sources to make washing your face possible, your washing will be much deeper. As you touch your eyes you can say, "Breathing in, I am aware of my eyes. Breathing out, I smile to my eyes."

Our eyes are refreshing, healing, and peaceful elements that are available to us. We pay so much attention to what is wrong, why not notice what is wonderful and refreshing? We rarely take the time to appreciate our eyes. When we touch our eyes with our hands and our mindfulness, we notice that our eyes are precious jewels that are fundamental for our happiness. Those who have lost their sight feel that if they could see as well as we do, they would be in paradise. We only need to open our eyes and we see every kind of form and color—the blue sky, the beautiful hills, the trees, the clouds, the rivers, the children, the butterflies. Just sitting here and enjoying these colors and shapes, we can be extremely happy. Seeing is a miracle, a condition for our happiness yet most of the time we take it for granted. We don't act as if we are in paradise. When we practice breathing in and becoming aware of our eyes, breathing out and smiling to our eyes, we touch real peace and joy.

We can do the same with our heart. "Breathing in, I am aware of my heart. Breathing out, I smile to my heart." If we practice this a few times, we will realize that our heart has been working hard, day and night, for many years to keep us alive. Our heart pumps thousands of gallons of blood every day, without stopping. Even while we sleep, our heart continues its work to

bring us peace and well-being. Our heart is an element of peace and joy, but we don't touch or appreciate it. We only touch the things that make us suffer and because of that, we give our heart a hard time by our worries and strong emotions and by what we eat and drink. Doing



so, we undermine our own peace and joy. When we practice breathing in and becoming aware of our heart, breathing out and smiling to our heart, we become enlightened. We see our heart so clearly. When we smile to our heart, we are massaging it with our compassion. When we know what to eat and what not to eat, what to drink and what not to drink, what worries and despair we should avoid, we will keep our heart safe.

The same practice can be applied to other organs in our body, for instance our liver. "Breathing in, I know that my liver has been working hard to keep me well. Breathing out, I vow not to harm my liver by drinking too much alcohol." This is love meditation. Our eyes are us. Our heart is us. Our liver is us. If we cannot love our own heart and our own liver, how can we love another person? To practice love is, first of all, to practice love directed toward ourselves—taking care of our body, taking care of our heart, taking care of our liver. We are touching ourselves with love and compassion.

When we have a toothache, we know that not having a toothache is a wonderful thing. "Breathing in, I am aware of my non-toothache.

Breathing out, I smile at my non-toothache." We can touch our non toothache with our mindfulness and even with our hands. When we have asthma and can hardly breathe, we realize that breathing freely is a wonderful thing. Even when we have just a stuffed nose, we know that breathing freely is a wonderful thing.

Every day we touch what is wrong and as a result, we are becoming less and less healthy. That is why we have to learn to practice touching what is not wrong—inside us and around us. When we get in touch with our eyes, our heart, our liver, our breathing, and our non-toothache and really enjoy them, we see that the conditions for peace and happiness are already present. When we walk mindfully and touch the Earth with our feet, when we drink tea with friends and touch the tea and our friendship, we get healed and we can bring this healing to society. The more we have suffered in the past, the stronger a healer we can become. We can learn to transform our suffering into the kind of insight that will help our friends and society.

We do not have to die to enter the Kingdom of Heaven. In fact we have to be fully alive. When we

breathe in and out and hug a beautiful tree, we are in Heaven. When we take one conscious breath, aware of our eyes, our heart, our liver, and our non-toothache, we are transported to Paradise right away. Peace is available. We only have to touch it. When we are truly alive,

we can see that the tree is part of Heaven and we are also part of Heaven. The whole universe is conspiring to reveal this to us, but we are so out of touch that we invest our resources in cutting down the trees. If we want to enter Heaven on Earth, we need only one conscious step and one conscious breath. When we touch peace, everything becomes real. We become ourselves, fully alive in the present moment, and the tree, our child, and everything else reveal themselves to us in their full splendor.

"The miracle is to walk on Earth." This statement was made by Zen Master Lin Chi. The miracle is not to walk on thin air or water, but to walk on Earth.

The Earth is so beautiful. We are beautiful also. We can allow ourselves to walk mindfully, touching the Earth, our wonderful mother, with each step. We don't need to wish our friends, "Peace be with you." Peace is already with them. We only need to help them cultivate the habit of touching peace in each moment. •

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# Achieving Lasting Love

AN INTERVIEW WITH  
HUGH AND GAYLE PARTHER  
BY MARY NURRIESTEARN

*Hugh Parther is a minister, therapist and teacher. He is the author of "Notes to Myself," "The Quiet Answer," and "Notes on How to Live in the World, And Still Be Happy." Gayle Parther is co-founder of the Santa Fe Grief Support Group for parents who have had children die. She has been the silent co-author of several of her husband's recent books, and together they conduct workshops for couples.*

*LOTUS: In your new book, "I Will Never Leave You: How Couples Can Achieve the Power of Lasting Love", you discuss the ways marriage has changed over the last twenty five years. What has happened to marriage?*

HUGH: During the 1940's and the 1950's marriage was taken for granted. In the 1960's duty and tradition were questioned and people denied the necessity to stay together. When couples wanted to be together and felt a need for partnership, they looked for reasons, as if relationships had to be justified. Abandonment, disloyalty, and quick divorces swept the country and a new rationale for marriage emerged. Your partner was supposed to fulfill and heal you. The driving question was, "Is my partner meeting my needs?"

The concept of soul mate developed. There was a popular notion that the universe had selected one person for you but wouldn't tell you who it was. You had to read signs and indicators to find this person. People felt they had not found their soul mates on their first or second try. This rationale put a tremendous burden on the act of becoming partners. Psychology embraced this concept and there were authorities with books, tapes, and workshops supporting this way of looking at relationships. The disastrous results show up in stepfamilies, single moms raising kids, and dads who washed their hands of responsibility and left.

*Why didn't the idea of soul mates and a partner who meets your needs work?*

HUGH: The focus on "meeting my needs" is the problem. You can feel that you are with your soul mate, but it has nothing to do with getting needs met. The psychology

As a society we are strangely uncommitted to children. Families break apart and children are lost and abused. This tremendous loss is caused by loss of deep commitment. When we commit, we heal the problems around us.

of our times is selfish. It is focused on "me," a disastrous view of relationships, children, and partnerships.

*What set of values is needed?*

GAYLE: Deep commitment not only to myself, but to the people closest to me, and to children. As a society we are strangely uncommitted to children. Families break apart and children are lost and abused. This tremendous loss is caused by loss of deep commitment. When we commit, we heal the problems around us.

HUGH: Commitment speaks to your heart and your intent. It is the inward acknowledgment that you gave your promise to someone. You said to someone, "I want to walk

with you through life. I want you to be my best friend, my partner. I want us to do this together. This commitment is sacred." It entails commitment of one's integrity. We have a responsibility to our parents, to the siblings we grew up with, and to the children we bring into the world. We also have a commitment to the one we give this promise to. The commitment isn't always to stay under the same roof, to do everything together, or to agree on all things. The commitment is the promise based on your oneness. The commitment is made when two people glimpse their unity and desire to walk together. A bond is formed which cannot be taken lightly.

*You said that in contemporary psychology we have become oriented toward the individual and believe that separation empowers.*

GAYLE: Separation psychology developed because people have been abandoned and hurt and wanted inner strength so they would not be hurt again. That is impossible. If we could achieve that, we would cut off our humanity. Our ability to experience compassion and suffering brings us oneness and unity. Developing this kind of strength has not made people happy. On a school yard the angriest child dominates but is not happy. Separation does not promote unity or healing in the world. It is time to reject the concept because it has not worked.

HUGH: It works temporarily with an addicted individual. Someone who is addicted and is a wandering, lost soul can benefit by building ego boundaries. The temporary effect helps the individual get over the addiction.

*In relationships, as with addictions, we have to deal with our smaller self, our adapted self. You*

*propose that in real marriages, couples do that through devotion, patience, and creativity. They heal each other deeply.*

GAYLE: Not by fulfilling each other's needs, which can be petty, but by a deep acceptance of the other person. The commitment "I will never leave you" is incredibly healing. That is what we all want ultimately.

HUGH: That is what healed me. Gayle made that commitment to me even though I had affairs for almost fifteen years. She stayed by me. I had my reasons for affairs—the philosophy of the times and the training I received as a child. Most people would have left. Gayle was encouraged by her friends to leave and she chose not to. She remembered the love she had for me and what she had seen in me. Eventually it dawned on me that she really did love me and that she was my best friend. I began to see the destructiveness of affairs and when we had our first child, I stopped. I became something that I could not have become otherwise. I became a good father and husband. This day as I sit here, I can say that I am a devoted family man. I would not be if someone on this earth had not said, "Even though you are making mistakes, I believe in you and will not leave you. I will stay with you until you see this error and will help you see it."

*How did you stay when the psychological tide and the advice of friends was to leave?*

GAYLE: The times when Hugh fell in love with someone else were the most painful I have ever been through. I felt many times that I should leave because this is what one should do. One should stand up for one's rights and staying seemed wrong. I didn't want to leave

Most people are not willing to devote the time to relationships that they will to careers, sports, or even exercise. We must devote energy to our relationships and refuse to give up.



though. I really loved Hugh. I could see that his affairs weren't directed at me, they were coming from some pain inside of himself. During those years he wasn't happy most of the time. When people think about staying in situations like this, it seems impossible and sick. If you can come through such a situation, it is like a near death experience and you can begin to see another reality. If you can heal each other in a relationship, you can bring a healing force into the world and that, of course, is an incredible power.

HUGH: Our early work was with battered women and batterers. We saw couples persist even in the face of battering. No one, of course, should keep themselves open to physical harm. We saw women remain devoted to their husbands and even if they had to do it from a distance, continue to work on the relationship. Eventually the batter-

ers healed and they had normal family lives.

GAYLE: We both had the perspective that the woman would leave. Abuse is terrible, and women should leave. We discovered when we worked primarily with the women that they weren't leaving. The statistics haven't really changed but at that time, about ninety-eight percent went back into the relationship. We started working within that reality. It was amazing what was possible. We knew a couple where the man stayed even though the woman was essentially at fault in an accident that killed their little boy. We saw people do extraordinary things and come out the other side with a far greater gift than just having somebody who can "fill their needs" or be a nice companion.

*How do we select our partner?*

GAYLE: All of the couples we have worked with were perfectly balanced. We have never seen a situation in which they were not balanced if they could just see it. We choose a person who is right to heal us then allow something to prevent it. We pit our strengths against each other. Marriage is like puzzle pieces that fit perfectly unless you try to force them where they don't fit.

HUGH: There is an instinct to pick someone who balances you. Marriage is a door to heaven or a door to hell, to misery or to oneness. The new psychology has focused on the door to misery and has declared that this pattern is sick. Our experience is the opposite. People choose someone who is a perfect healing partner, someone who also brings out their worst, which is what is needed. In the beginning they jockey for power and attack the other's weaknesses, rather than seeing the relationship as a whole and recognizing what each



partner does well. Healing comes when they combine strengths. They bring their strengths together and experience oneness and partnership. A real relationship leads to the experience of God. This person we chose, who seems so faulty to us, can lead us into a reality that we didn't dream was possible.

*How do we work through dynamics that cause pain in one another?*

GAYLE: By not leaving and by continuing to work and gain insight. It took Hugh and me a long time. Most people are not willing to devote the time to relationships that they will to careers, sports, or even exercise. We must devote energy to our relationships and refuse to give up. People give up quickly because this generation comes from broken homes. They learned as children how to fail, how to break up. Even though they long for unity, they are more fearful of commitment than they are of breaking up.

Never threaten your partner with divorce and refuse to leave. Obviously if you are in an abusive situation, in which your life or your children's lives are in danger, you must leave and protect yourself and your children. In most relationships, separating is not necessary. Core dynamics surface as you stay together and continue working.

HUGH: We worked with a gay couple recently. One man's core dynamic involved inability to commit. It was obvious this came from his childhood, but that is not important. As an adult, he thought that every one was trying to use him, that no one was devoted to or truly loved him. Although he would initially believe that he was loved, he always convinced himself that he really was not. His partner had difficulty showing commitment. Some

Judgment is the decision to add dislike to insight. Judgment offers nothing useful to a relationship. It locks in place an attitude that becomes difficult to change.

would say he was selfish, but it was deeper than that. He had tremendous resistance to giving the signs of commitment needed by his partner. Where this came from was obvious by exploring his childhood. One person had difficulty seeing commitment and another had difficulty showing commitment. They were perfect healing partners but a set up for misery if they didn't cooperate. One began to show commitment in small ways, and to do so out of love. The other began to stop jumping to conclusions about his partner. He was able to look at behavior as individual acts rather than indications that the person didn't love him. They began to heal.

GAYLE: Instead of going from relationship to relationship asking, "Why do I draw these sick kinds of personalities to me? What is wrong with me?" We need to say, "Wait a minute, this is a person I can heal." With the gay couple, one man had to say, "I am going to stop seeing everything he does as a sign he

doesn't love me." The other man had to say, "I am going to risk and show that I love." It was simple and very healing. It is amazing what a little effort can bring.

*I am quoting from your book, "Any couple who wishes to develop a deep peace between themselves must begin the work of dissolving the walls their separate egos have built. Two steps are needed: to increase awareness of ego activity and to touch one's heart." How do we increase our awareness of our ego activity?*

HUGH: Gayle and I set aside time every day. During difficult periods we had two sessions daily when we discussed some difficulty in our relationship. We took one issue at a time rather than trying to solve all the problems in one effort. We looked at the issue openly and tried to be creative in how we approached it.

*What is ego activity?*

HUGH: Emotions are generated by thought. Thought manufactures emotion. You don't suddenly find yourself angry at your partner. You think first then feel angry. Every individual has one or two main thoughts that cause most of their trouble. Often partners see the other's troublesome thoughts more easily than they see their own. Gayle and I tried to hear each other without feeling criticized or attacked. We were fortunate in that Gayle knew my family and I knew her family. We knew what had happened to each other in childhood and we could see where dynamics had come through our parents.

Gayle would point out, "In this situation this is what you do." I had a particular attitude toward women that Gayle pointed out to me. When we were around the parent who generated this attitude, she

would say, “Did you hear this parent say that? Now do you see where that comes from?”

GAYLE: This is the ammunition we generally use against each other in fights. “You are just like your mother. You...” We attack with this information. Hugh and I advocate a different approach. We use the same insight but in an entirely different way to get beyond the patterns that we grew up with and the unhappy attitudes that we learned.

HUGH: Prime thoughts combine and produce a core dynamic, the central dynamic of the relationship. If people have had a series of relationships, they see a similar core dynamic formed in each relationship and think it is sick. It is not. It is exactly what was needed to heal, but unfortunately the couple chose to use it as ammunition rather than a healing agent.

*With commitment and kindness couples can heal rather than divorce.*

HUGH: When Gayle and I started out, we didn’t know any of this. All we had was a commitment that we would not leave each other and that we would not threaten to leave. Making that decision was a big hurdle for us. We didn’t think we could make progress as long as there was fear that one of us would abandon the other. We started with the commitment to stay with each other and the willingness to make an effort. We came up with a plan for untangling the mess that our relationship had got into.

*What is your definition of forgiveness?*

GAYLE: Many of us remain living proof of the harm we feel that has been done to us. We point out every outrage. Most people are damaged by their childhood. We have to go beyond that and forgive

what happened. Forgiveness allows us to move on. Forgiveness cuts the chains that bind us to the wounds that were inflicted. Anything can be forgiven because forgiveness is an act of the mind and of the heart. Forgiveness is a conscious choice for ourselves to be released from what happened. We have to learn to do that in relationships.

HUGH: It is not an act of kindness to another, someone we don’t think deserves kindness. Forgiveness and releasing are acts of kindness to our own mind, to our inner-state. People think that once they have forgiven, it lasts forever. If they find themselves having an unforgiving thought an hour later, all is lost. Forgiveness takes place in the present. It is a decision to release something that is hurting the mind. It doesn’t entail dishonest reinterpretation of what was done. Someone may have acted cruelly, insensitively, or selfishly; but forgiveness doesn’t reinterpret that. Forgiveness asks the questions, “How long do I want to hold this grudge and what is the grudge doing to me? How is the grudge helping the person who made the mistake?” It isn’t helping them at all. Forgiveness is an act of sanity, a decision to take possession of one’s mind rather than be governed by something that happened in the past.

*In your book you say, “Forgiveness means to forgive or give over, to give back. We give back to our ego those excessive thoughts, and we give back to the person their innocence which we had taken away.”*

HUGH: The innocence isn’t necessarily in the person’s behavior. Innocence is seen in the same way that the innocence of a child is seen. A parent who loves a baby can see purity even when changing the

baby’s diaper. Forgiveness is the willingness to say yes, the person’s ego did do this but they are more than an ego. I will honor what else they are. It looks to a deeper truth about this individual.

GAYLE: The most important key to healing is the knowledge of what forgiveness is and is not. It is our gift as human beings and is a reflection of God’s eternal promise of love, of his belief in us and where we are going.

HUGH: It is not a rejection of insight. It is not that we stop seeing. Forgiveness allows us to see more clearly. We see our partner’s mistakes. Judgment is the decision to add dislike to insight. Judgment adds censure, dislike, grievance, and anger to vision. As soon as this decision is made, the person no longer sees the partner. Vision has stopped, and the partner has become this one thing in the mind. That judgment must be released so that clear seeing can return. Judgment offers nothing useful to a relationship. It locks in place an attitude that becomes difficult to change.

Forgiveness does not mean that you don’t say no to your spouse or step back from the relationship temporarily if you need to. When you step back physically, you must step forward mentally to bless and truly see your partner. When people are sick they go into their bedroom, close the door, and withdraw from the family, but not mentally. We have all visited people in the hospital who are sick, and although they are isolated physically, they have opened their hearts. They are actually mentally closer to us. This can happen in a marriage. You do not withdraw mentally, even if withdrawing physically is dictated.

*That is a rigorous discipline.*

GAYLE: It seems difficult, yet

once you forgive yourself for making a mistake, it becomes easier and brings happiness. Do this for selfish reasons because it is wonderfully freeing to go through a day or an hour without being full of judgment.

HUGH: If we are in a judgmental or an irritable state the tasks we have before us seem difficult. The day grinds and everything is harder. Release that grievance and admit that you are not in a position to judge anyone. Notice that although the world doesn't change, it becomes softer. It is as if we step over problems rather than stumbling or clawing our way through them.

*You recommend that couples make promises to one another. The first one is to promise not to question the other's needs.*

HUGH: The first one is the acknowledgment that we each come with certain ego needs. We don't deny the ego. You have an ego, I have an ego, and we each have certain ego needs. If we don't meet those needs, the ego can revolt and we lose ground. If a need can be released, fine, but many of us have needs that can't yet be released. We don't question those. We each have needs and the partnership handles them. There is no longer your needs and my needs.

GAYLE: Your needs versus my needs.

HUGH: All the needs go into the partnership pot, and the two people help each other meet their needs. Instead of denying or judging the other's needs, you say to yourself, "How can I help them meet this?" Maybe your partner is meeting it in a destructive way and you ask if there is a more creative, gentler way that this need could be met satisfactorily. You don't say they shouldn't have certain needs or that

When we help our partner become more peaceful and happy, we benefit. The instant peace and happiness we feel is evidence that the two of us are actually one, that we are joined. I cannot give to you without giving to myself.

their needs are worse than yours. You say, "We are partners now." As partners we help each other with our problems and accept each other where we are.

*The second one is to promise to seek your peace.*

GAYLE: That is your promise of belief in the soul of your partner. You believe that this person is an innocent child of God and that they are going to walk home to God. This is your commitment that you will believe even when believing becomes difficult.

HUGH: You acknowledge that you want your partner to be peaceful. You don't want to give your partner a hard time.

GAYLE: People accept that they can make someone angry, but don't believe that they can make someone happy. Indeed we can. It is quite simple with a little change of focus.

*The next promise is to put our happiness first.*

GAYLE: There is a belief that if I give in to you, your ego is going to grow and I will lose myself in it. We have seen just the opposite. Understanding each other's ego needs, and being willing to meet them, decreases ego needs because it decreases fear, and often these needs come from fear.

HUGH: When participating in a wedding service, we phrase the promise to put our happiness first as "I promise to put your happiness first." By putting another person's happiness first, you immediately experience a mutual connection, an experience that every couple needs more of. As parents we learn that if we do something that makes our child happy, we feel happy. Sometimes we forget that with a partner and think if I give something to you, you receive the entire benefit. When we help our partner become more peaceful and happy, we benefit. The instant peace and happiness we feel is evidence that the two of us are actually one, that we are joined. I cannot give to you without giving to myself.

*Then, there is the promise of receiving as we give. The final promise is: In helping you awaken, I awaken.*

GAYLE: That is a universal statement of truth. We experience God through each other. We experience God in ourselves, for if we can see God in another person, we affirm it within ourselves. It is an affirmation of all that is true, perfect, and one. In this time of tremendous chaos, we must heal our relationships. If

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# The Challenges of Aging

*In cultures other than our own, past and present, elders were respected as mediators between the realms of the spirit world and everyday life here on earth. Unlike our society, which tends to devalue age, these cultures value elders because they have the wisdom only age can bring, born from surviving the trials of youth, young adulthood, and middle age.*

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**T**his isn't to suggest that having wrestled with the issues of middle age, we can then coast through the next thirty years in a state of bliss.

Our later years have their own tasks or callings. In the last years of life, as Daniel Levinson points out, we have four clear challenges to confront: dealing with loss, coming to terms with ourselves, "generativity," and rediscovering our innocence. It's the reconciliation of these issues that allows people eventually to integrate all the parts of their psyche into a shining whole, to at long last feel as though they are truly living well with the world.

#### THE FIRST CALLING: DEALING WITH LOSS

Of all the challenges in our later years, none is more demanding, or potentially more significant, than the need to learn to manage loss. As we age, we have to reckon with a decline of health and physical vitality. As we retire from work, we must come to terms with the loss of status and power and maybe even wealth—all of which are highly valued by our culture. This is also the time of course when we're most likely to lose friends and relatives to death. No wonder so many people

Of all the challenges in our later years, none is more demanding, or potentially more significant, than the need to learn to manage loss. . . . Mastering the ability to cope with loss in later years may be the key to forging what is commonly referred to as wisdom.

shake their heads and say, "It's hell to grow old." And yet recent research by Juan Pascual-Leone suggests that mastering the ability to cope with loss in later years may be the key to forging what is commonly referred to as wisdom.

A couple of years ago, Jane, an energetic, intelligent woman in her early sixties, had been suffering with a bad back for nearly six months. She'd gone to a trusted doctor for advice but he could find no organic reason for the problem. Finally, she and Kathleen decided to try a Gestalt exercise. In a state of quiet, calm reflection, Jane asked her back

pain directly what it was there for. As is often the case with such explorations, at first Jane found it difficult to focus; whenever she felt close to getting an answer, some kind of mental or emotional distraction would arise. But she stuck with it and by the third attempt, as she was actually encouraging the pain to intensify—to identify itself—she heard a tiny voice from within.

"Get off my back" were the first words Jane picked up on. "Let life flow. Don't take on so many burdens. Take care of me now so I can be strong again." With new resolve, Jane declared out loud her intention to find ways to put what her pain had told her into practice. This kind of verbal declaration of intent, by the way, is a key part of most rituals. Making such an announcement, especially with another person present, is a wonderful way to anchor your resolve.

First Jane joined a local swimming club, working with an instructor to build a low-stress exercise routine to help strengthen her lower back. Next she found a yoga class which seemed to open her not only to new physical experiences but to spiritual ones as well. In time Jane came to treat these weekly yoga sessions as ritual; just the act of dressing for class for example became a kind of "threshold activity" that quieted her and put her into a state of heightened readiness. By the time the actual exercises began, she was fully able to focus on healing, on making a space for that quiet voice within. "The more I began to see yoga as a healing rite," says Jane, "the more powerful the experience became. At first I wore the same exercise clothes I'd had for years. But then one day I went out and bought a new outfit—

a green one—the color of healing. Then on days that I had yoga, I committed to eating only healthy foods—grains, vegetables, yogurt, things like that.”

Over time, the yoga ritual became the spark that would light a larger flame of desire for well-being. Today Jane is almost completely without pain. Even more important, she learned how to turn the anguish of a loss—in this case a loss of health—into the kind of inspiration needed to change her entire life. “Find the courage to walk through the cloud,” she likes to say, “and you *will* uncover the silver lining.”

A somewhat similar situation arose for Ron Horton at a time when he was leading an extremely hectic life as an upper level advertising executive with a small agency in New York. Although he had never experienced any serious health problems, at age fifty-nine Ron suffered a serious heart attack. Lying at home recuperating, still shaken from his brush with death, Ron began to think hard about his priorities. About a month after his return from the hospital, Ron asked his wife if she would drop him off for a week alone at the family cabin in the Berkshires. It was there, he explained to her, in the peace and quiet of nature that he thought he'd be able to sort out his next move. This was very much a ritual for Ron. He was clearly using exclusive time and exclusive space; there was a fresh, hopeful feeling, he says, in the going away from familiar surroundings. Each day at the cabin, Ron rose at dawn to do the walking his doctor had prescribed. Though he did pack in a few food treats, by and large he existed on heart healthy cooking. Each evening he wrote in a journal, trying to clarify his priorities in life. Largely as a

The last decades of life are about “generativity” which refers to the need to be involved with something larger than yourself—to use such qualities as kindness and compassion to help build bridges of hope for future generations.

result of this journaling, Ron reconnected with an old dream he'd had of owning a bookstore, a desire that again seemed to hold special promise and appeal. By the end of the week, he was able to write down several specific steps he could use to build a more balanced and integrated life.

After discussing his plan at length with his family, Ron sat down with his partners at work; happily, they were sympathetic to his need to shed some responsibilities and so worked with him to structure a three-day week. On the evening of the first day he returned to the office, Ron's family threw a

surprise party for him. There were balloons, presents, even a cake. And hanging on the dining room wall was a giant poster made by his family. “*The New You!*” it said with a wonderful caricature of Ron, flexing his muscles in a bright red sweat suit. “It's still a real effort at times not to turn the things that are supposed to add balance to my life—things like exercise—into some kind of competition,” Ron confesses. “But I'm getting there. It takes a long time to change a half-century of habit.”

#### THE SECOND CALLING CONFRONTING THE PERSON IN THE MIRROR

A great many myths speak to our need to come to terms with those parts of ourselves we find particularly difficult to acknowledge, the traits we're not particularly proud of. Psychoanalyst Carl Jung talked about this aspect of life in terms of a person's “shadow side” that which lurks beneath the surface, unseen and untended to. Kathleen had a fifty-five-year-old client named Sue, who works as a lawyer in a large San Francisco law firm. When Sue first came to see Kathleen, she was struggling against an old, fierce commitment to being task oriented. She had always strived hard but as of late that striving had left her feeling less and less in touch with a growing need for healthy relationship. At her worst, Sue would bark orders to her husband or chastise her secretary if the woman wasn't meeting her tough performance standards. “Sometimes I get this horrible flash,” Sue confided. “There I am standing in my well-ordered world, all alone. Alone because no one can stand being close to me.”

One day in her office, Kathleen suggested that Sue do an exercise called the Shadow which can be dif-

difficult at first. This really isn't surprising, considering that most of us have spent a significant portion of our lives trying to ignore or suppress the very thing this exercise is designed to bring forth. After Sue put herself into a relaxed state, Kathleen asked her to let an image of her shadow side begin to emerge. In time she perceived a large, dragon like creature which she then tried to draw as best she could using colored markers. Then she went back into a quiet state and asked this "taskmaster" as she called it what it wanted. Why was it here? How was it protecting her?

It didn't take long for the taskmaster to answer. "If you don't accomplish, you won't be recognized," it said. As she began exploring the source of this advice, Sue came to realize that this was a version of something that her mother used to say to her when she was young. "You can't expect a man to support you," she was told. "You can't trust others to do anything for you. Earn your worth." The positive side to this advice was that it had allowed Sue to lead a life of extraordinary accomplishment. She was able to set goals and then had the discipline to work until she achieved them. But in later life external achievement meant less than it used to; now Sue felt the need to be more empathetic, to learn to be more sensitive and understanding to the people around her.

In the next session, Sue reconnected with her taskmaster, first by spending a few minutes simply looking at her drawing of the dragon and then by reentering a quiet state. This time though she approached the taskmaster with gratitude; in fact, she thanked it out loud for all it had done for her. She then went on to explain to the



taskmaster that the time had come for it to change into something different, that she wanted to transform her drive for success into a commitment to help others. This part of Sue's visualization took a great deal of patience and effort but she continued to work on her own with it several times a week for a couple months. A year later, Sue retired from her job as a lawyer and began spending more and more time with her two grandnieces. Soon thereafter she got the idea to set up a local foster grandparent program which continues to do well today.

These inner explorations are not casual exercises but serious rituals. The fact that Sue came to Kath-

leen's office every week with the express purpose of working on this issue served as a way to thread together her efforts in exclusive time and exclusive space—two key elements of ritual. If you're not working with a therapist, you might consider doing these activities outside your normal environment, perhaps at a friend's house or a hotel, at a campground or a rental cabin.

What symbolic gestures could you use to help transform your shadow into something new, something more appropriate to your life? For example a rope made into a noose, to symbolize how you have been choking your creative side for fear of rejection, could be fashioned

into a hanger for growing a potted plant. A black blindfold, representing an unwillingness to discuss important issues with your significant other, could be bleached white and turned into a talking staff. One woman used a bag of garbage—meant to signify a childhood that had been deadened by abuse—composted it and then used it to grow a small garden. The point of such symbolic action is to communicate to the deeper psyche your desire to transform the angst of a particular problem into the kind of energy needed for new growth. The more people manage to convey desires to their subconscious—which by the way is far more versed in symbolism than in words—the more likely it is that aspiration will one day sprout into reality.

#### THE THIRD CALLING: GENERATIVITY

The last decades of life are about “generativity” which refers to the need to be involved with something larger than yourself—to use such qualities as kindness and compassion to help build bridges of hope for future generations. We see it in the case of Sue, the former career woman who established a foster grandparent program because she wanted to help heal the age divisions in our culture. Other people express their generativity by teaching literacy classes, by becoming mentors for young people going into business, by working on environmental projects, or by volunteering, as Jimmy Carter did to help build affordable housing for the poor.

The real choice in our later years said psychoanalyst Erik Erikson is between being generative and being in despair. We’ve all known people who seem to lose their zest for life as they grow older, who focus on

their aches and pains until they sink into a kind of gloomy despondency. The antidote for such hopelessness is to share something of your higher self with others. What would you like to give to the world? What kind of celebration of life can you offer to those who will follow in the years to come?

#### THE FOURTH CALLING: THE REDISCOVERY OF INNOCENCE

In China when a man reaches the age of retirement, he dons a red vest. This is meant as a badge of honor, an announcement of his high status in the culture. One of the key effects of this ritual garment is a sign that the man has released his need to behave in a socially sanctioned manner. He is emancipated, free to act more in accordance with his heart than his head. It’s a time for living in the land of myth and mystery, a time to build bridges back to the dreams and ideals of his youth.

Another event that has long been considered a catalyst for recapturing the power of the human spirit is menopause. This isn’t to suggest that menopause itself is some kind of lark; indeed, for some women it is a painful, extremely unsettling time. But menopause can be thought of as the event that frees a woman to address other issues considered critical to the culture. Rather than tending to the maintenance tasks of everyday living, she can instead direct her powers to providing a base of wisdom and counsel for the society at large. It is a time for a woman to regain (or in some cases to gain for the first time) the sense that her life is really hers, that she is acting out of her own personhood and not just reacting to the demands of others.

In an attempt to reconnect with the power held not so much in menopause itself but in the years

that follow, women are crafting new versions of an old ceremony known as croning, a way of welcoming the wisdom of later life. The word crone, by the way, which has suffered questionable press for some eight hundred years, is again being placed in a more positive light. The spirit of the crone or wise woman has in fact been known by many names, depending on the culture. The dancing force, the Spider Woman, the mist being, and the wild woman are just a few. No matter what you call her though, her essence remains the same. She is perhaps nowhere better described than by Clarissa Pinkola Estes in her fine book, *Women Who Run with the Wolves*. Writing about the essence of the wild woman, Pinkola Estes says:

She is intuition, she is far-seer, she is deep listener, she is loyal heart. She encourages humans to remain multilingual; fluent in the languages of dreams, passion, and poetry. She whispers from night dreams, she leaves behind on the terrain of a woman’s soul a coarse hair and muddy footprints... She has been lost and half forgotten for a long, long time. She is the source, the light, the night, the dark, and daybreak. She is the smell of good mud and the back leg of the fox. The birds which tell us secrets belong to her. She is the voice that says “This way, this way.”

#### CARRYING RITUALS TO LOVED ONES

As our friends and loved ones get older, of course there is the increased chance that they will need either short-term or extended medical care in hospitals or nursing fa-

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# The Way of Deep Confidence

S T A N T A U B M A N

*Self-doubt doesn't come to us naturally. In earliest childhood, long before we could even imagine that there might be anything wrong with ourselves as we are, we enjoyed a natural sense of "deep confidence," knowing that "who and what we are is exactly who and what we should be... and all that we need to be."*

*Deep confidence is the way of all highly evolved creatures. It is the way in which we are human with the same unintentional elegance that the graceful dolphin brings to being a dolphin. The way we each do as well as we can, like the lion scanning a drought-ravaged plain to find prey for its young. Or the way we must sometimes do the only thing we can do, like the powerful grizzly humbly retreating to its den with the coming of winter. Anyone who can approach life appreciating the way of deep confidence has little room for self-doubt.*

JOSE CARRILLO/PHOTO EDIT

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**W**hen we come into the world, we each enjoy this instinctive sense of trust in our own inherent efficacy and acceptability. We don't second-guess ourselves. We don't look back. Like the dolphin, lion, and grizzly, we simply do what needs to be done as well as we can without forethought of failure.

The infant's reflexive sucking, grasping, and head movements inherently facilitate feeding. He naturally yawns, hiccups, and sneezes in a way that cleanses the respiratory system. His cries, and startle reactions communicate distress to those who are in a position to respond to his needs.

As early as two or three months of age, our smiles and responsiveness serve to deepen a developing social bond with those whose love and attention we depend on. The infant's vocalizations spontaneously parody human speech as the groundwork for verbal communication is established.

Early on we learn to distinguish between caretakers and strangers as we look back and forth between these others and our parents' faces. At the age of nine months, we begin to experience separation anxiety in the absence of our caretaker, but learn to practice—with games such as peekaboo—the notion that even

Deep within each of us lies an archetypal blueprint for overcoming obstacles, solving problems, and creating or obtaining all that we need for a full and satisfying life.



something once out of sight can still return. Then once we have established the security of our bond with a nurturing caretaker, we practice leaving for adventure and coming back for comfort and support.

In the second year of life we naturally accept the notion that each of us is "I" to ourselves and "you" to others. This fundamental fact of human life is something that even our adult caretakers sometimes forget as they treat us as mere extensions of themselves.

The child's sense of integrity tells her to cry. She may be feeling pain, hunger, or even fear. She doesn't think, "I'm feeling afraid, therefore the appropriate thing to do is cry." It's something that spontaneously wells up within, just as the sun naturally emerges from the night sky at daybreak. Can you imagine the astonishment you would feel if the sun didn't arise one

morning? Can you imagine the rage you would feel if you learned that someone had intentionally suppressed it? Or the fear you would feel toward someone who had that kind of power? That's how a child feels when his experience is invalidated.

By the time young children begin to face the limiting demands and expectations of their caretakers, they already have a sense of the natural flow that proceeds from bodily sensation to expression and behavior. They've seen that some sensations naturally lead to tears, others to cooing, still others to activity. Some of those sensations even lead to behavior that may be bothersome to others but entirely pleasurable to the child. So when children are first told to keep their tears to themselves, to sit still when they feel the urge to explore, or to hold something in when they feel like spitting it out, they are bewildered.

The demands and expectations of others—whether they are judgments, criticisms, and manipulations or even caring acts of protection and guidance—seem to violate the boundaries of what had come to feel like the child's own sacred garden of spontaneity and spirit. So at first children may react with astonishment and rage.

When their caretakers can understand and accept the source of this protest—when they also accept the child's reactions as valid and real—children can be quite flexible. They begin to learn about the give-and-take of mutual respect between themselves and others. That can come to feel almost as natural as the spontaneous expressions that led to the confrontation in the first place.

But some caretakers have trouble accepting and understanding the child's need to protest. They re-

spond by trying to convince the children that there is something wrong with them not only for having their spontaneous feelings and behavior, but also for failing to comply and readily accept the caretaker's authority.

#### A WELL-FOUNDED CONFIDENCE

Confidence is only as good as it is genuine. False confidence never helped anybody in the long run. But deep confidence is our natural, biological state, founded on the same rich legacy of essential competence that is shared by all living things.

Deep within each of us lies an archetypal blueprint for overcoming obstacles, solving problems, and creating or obtaining all that we need for a full and satisfying life. It's not that the infant's mind is pre-programmed at birth with all that they need to know in life. But all healthy infants have the inherent ability and motivation to find out what will meet their needs. Carl Rogers refers to this direction-finding ability as "the valuing process." He, and others in humanistic psychology, refer to the motivation to use it as "the actualizing tendency."

*The Valuing Process.* We each come into this world with the ability to probe, test, and practice, as well as to learn from these experiences. Young children are always reaching out. They explore the house, the yard, and neighborhood, not looking for something in particular but to see what's out there. Whatever they find gets scrutinized and manipulated. The people they encounter are closely observed and interrogated. At each encounter, without even thinking about it, the child is discovering "what's in this for me" and "what's in this against me."

When the child touches a hot

It is only when  
you are fully in  
touch with  
yourself, fully  
open to receiving  
yourself as you  
are, that you  
truly and  
*confidently* know  
what you really  
need. It's only  
then that you  
can appreciate  
your inherent  
deep confidence  
in yourself, in  
*all* that you  
really are.

stove he doesn't need to decide not to touch it again. There's an inner wisdom that has been twice warned. Similarly, when the child encounters a person who expresses rejection and hostility, he will not return if he has any sense of available alternatives. Again, the child doesn't analyze the nature of toxic relationships and make a well-reasoned decision to enhance his development by finding instead a warm and empathic person. There's an inner wisdom that knows how to keep it simple. It tells the child "avoid toxic people, seek nurturant people," just

as it tells the child "avoid dank and musty places, seek sunlight."

Even though the world isn't made up simply of hot stoves and people who are solely good or evil, the valuing process is naturally inclined to find its way through. That's why people of integrity all over the world, regardless of their age, level of education, or "psychological sophistication," are able to find meaning and fulfillment in life, and satisfy their needs.

This valuing process isn't an intellectual ability found in a specific part of the brain. It is the sum total of our inherent capacities for accurate perception, self-awareness, insight, intuition, and logical thinking. When permitted to work together in an integrated way, these abilities guide us through a complex world of dangers and opportunities.

The valuing process results from millions of years of evolutionary development. *When freely exercised* it leads to growth, effectiveness, and self-actualization.

*The Actualizing Tendency.* We also come into this world with the motivation to grow, develop, and be all that we can be. This motivation is known as the "actualizing tendency," the drive to do as well as we can to meet our needs.

Without this drive we might not be inclined to use the valuing process. Learning means taking risks, making mistakes, getting hurt once in a while, and even making fools of ourselves every now and then. Growing and developing can also mean loss, as we give up our old familiar ways. But the actualizing tendency drives us forward as if we sense that in the long run, the gains will be well worth the risks.

The valuing process and the actualizing tendency combine to create what I call "the wellspring of

confidence.” Both qualities work closely together, providing a source of deep confidence and a key to overcoming self-doubt.

Deeply confident people are better able than others to place their trust in the wellspring of confidence. They know that it isn't a tool to be managed and manipulated through complex mental gymnastics. It is a personal resource to be accepted and appreciated.

Young infants and children don't intentionally draw upon the wellspring of confidence any more than the dolphin intends to be graceful or the lion needs to decide to hunt as well as it can. They don't feel deeply confident because they choose to feel that way or try to feel that way. Neither can we feel deep confidence now simply by choosing or trying to do so.

But that's okay, because the wellspring of confidence is something that none of us will ever lose. We can only lose our conscious appreciation for it. Those who can learn how they've been cutting themselves off from the wellspring, and are willing to relinquish these self-defeating ways, can come to know again their feeling of deep confidence.

Let's take a look at how deep confidence can change the life of a self-doubting person. Then we'll examine two personal qualities we *can* decide to do something about to restore the benefits of deep confidence in our own lives.

#### REFUSING TO BE YOUR OWN ADVERSARY

Our ability to appreciate the wellspring of confidence results from the combined effects of two important human qualities, self-acceptance and personal integrity.

*Self-acceptance* refers to the willingness to receive and acknowledge



ourselves, *all* that we are at the moment, without censure or judgment. It is an openness to our experiences as they unfold. Self-acceptance means claiming ownership of our perceptions and thoughts, decisions and actions, feelings and desires, regardless of whether they might be seen as good or bad.

Nathaniel Branden characterizes self-acceptance as a “refusal to be in an adversarial relationship with myself.” Instead of trying to squelch or eradicate an internal adversary, a self-accepting person takes satisfaction in knowing the richness of their full range of experience, even when

some of it may be painful or undesirable.

A self-accepting person acknowledges the fact that there's a way in which he wants to make the decisions he makes and take the actions he takes, even when these decisions and actions turn out to be embarrassing or socially unacceptable. Consider the self-accepting attitude expressed by my client Ken Barton.

*I'm ashamed to admit it but I used to blame everyone around me for my life. The fact is that I have a lot of self-doubt, and for me that means fear. I'm afraid of failing, afraid of other people knowing that I'm something less*

KEVIN MORRIS/ALLSTOCK

than perfect, afraid of being abandoned when they find me out.

*That's why I kept Julie at a distance for so long. When I backed off from asking her to marry me, it wasn't really because of the way she had been treating me. And it wasn't because my folks didn't accept her either. It was because I didn't think I could carry it off. I felt so close to her and I knew she was everything I could hope for in a lifemate, but I was trapped. Not so much by my self-doubt but by my fear of acknowledging it.*

*Through our work together I first came to a point where I could admit these things to you... actually to myself. Just being honest with myself, even about a weakness, left me feeling stronger. Then it became easier to reveal my self-doubt to Julie. It was hard at first because it meant revealing that so many of my accusations of her had been defensive and unjust. But the admission opened the door to so much between us. We're closer now than ever.*

Ken came to acknowledge his fears and self-doubts in a way that made it possible for him to change. Through self acceptance he began to feel whole in a way that gave him the courage to do what needed to be done. Ken's self-acceptance led to a sense of personal integrity.

#### UNIFIED WHOLENESS

Personal integrity is a term that has two closely related meanings, both associated with a "unified wholeness." First, there is the fact of our integrity. *Each of us is a whole person.* It cannot be otherwise. Even the man who loses an arm to an amputation is still a whole amputee.

Even the anxiety-ridden, self-doubting person is a whole anxiety-ridden, self-doubting person.

I can imagine myself as different from the whole person I really am. I can project an image of myself as being kinder, more pure and righteous than I really am. I can deny my self-defeating habits, rationalize my desire for creature comforts, and repress my anger at people in authority who tell me what to do. In other words, I can hide my experience from myself and remain unconscious of the whole person I really am. But all that I think, feel, and do is really me. That includes my addictions and my creativity, my self-indulgences and the care I give to others, my anger and my respect for the people I depend on. It includes my interest in reading Le Carre and my interest in reading comic books, my better side and the other side. All of me.

**T**his brings us to the second meaning, the sense of integrity. This is the feeling that Ken Barton talked about, the *sense of wholeness* that results from self-acceptance. It is a satisfying feeling of being unified within, of being all there.

At the completion of her therapeutic process, my client Lisa Hobart expressed this sense of personal integrity.

*It's a funny thing. When I first came here I desperately wanted to overcome my guilt. I actually thought I could become guilt free, almost as if I could have it surgically removed or exorcised. Now I want nothing more than to be able to look inward and see what's going on. I mean guilt is still there, but now it seems like just a part of this rich and varied landscape of my inner life. It*

*doesn't preoccupy me like it used to. If I'm preoccupied with anything now it's my life, my whole life. I've only got one life to live and I really like being there for it.*

When Lisa was preoccupied by guilt she had little conscious awareness of her essential wholeness. She felt overwhelmed by her guilt because she was sure she wasn't supposed to be feeling that way. Managing guilt and eliminating it from her life became an all-consuming obsession and she felt terribly unequal to the task.

Now that Lisa has developed self-acceptance and a sense of integrity, she knows herself more fully. That makes it so much easier to know what she wants and how she feels about the events in her life. It even helps her to understand why she feels guilty when she does. She feels more confident about the way she is living her life because her preoccupation with managing guilt is no longer at odds with her efforts to actualize herself in full.

As a result of their developing sense of self-acceptance and integrity, both Lisa and Ken are people who have come to place their trust in the wellspring of confidence.

It is only when you are fully in touch with yourself, fully open to receiving yourself as you are, that you truly and *confidently* know what you really need. It's only then that you can appreciate your inherent deep confidence in yourself, in *all* that you really are. •

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# A Time to Grieve

C A R O L S T A U D A C H E R

I'M AFRAID TO LET MY FEELINGS GO, TO GRIEVE. I DON'T KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO ME.

*When we suffer any blow, we need to recover, to heal. Grief is the way to healing after a loss. When we are feeling deep, powerful emotions or impulses, it is necessary for us to acknowledge them, knowing they will not harm us. We won't damage ourselves or fall apart if we allow ourselves to feel and act in ways that are dictated by our truest instincts. We cannot constantly hold back, push away, or censor what we really feel. Fearing to grieve gets us nowhere. With grief, the way back is the way through.*

*Even though my feelings are turbulent, and at times consuming, I must not fear them. Grieving my loved one will eventually allow me to heal. By speaking when I need to speak and taking action when I need to, I will be contributing to my own recuperation, the eventual resolution of my painful loss. Such a resolution does not mean I will no longer have a bond with my loved one; it means only that I will have begun to see how my life can move forward.*

AMY ETRAV/PHOTO EDIT

*Carol Staudacher is a grief consultant, lecturer, and author of "Beyond Grief" and "Men and Grief." Copyright 1994 by Carol Staudacher. From "A Time To Grieve" by Carol Staudacher. Reprinted by arrangement with Harper San Francisco, a division of Harper Collins Publishers.*



WHAT IS THIS ALL ABOUT?  
WHY DO I HAVE TO LIVE  
THROUGH THIS?

Sometimes it helps to remind ourselves that the reason we feel grief at a loved one's death is simply because we had the capacity to love. If we never experienced love, then we would have no involvement that would be strong enough or deep enough to cause unpleasant emotions. For that reason we can accept grief as a testimony to our capacity to bond with and care for another. It means we have the ability to gain closeness with another, to feel affectionate, to dedicate part of our emotions and energies to another. It is those same emotions and energies that now cause us pain, that come rushing into the void left by our loved one's death.

My grief is a heavy burden, but it is a burden that serves as proof of a loving relationship. I will remember, as I long for my loved one and experience the many other emotions that make up my grief, that it represents something very important in my life. It attests to my ability to care for and love another.

DON'T EXPECT ME  
TO BE OVER IT.

For most of us, right after the death our tears are on the surface. Then gradually, our emotions seem less raw. We are able to get through a whole day once in a while without feeling ourselves give way to grief. At this point we might worry that



something is wrong with our devotion. We may wonder if fewer eruptions of grief mean that we no longer love, that we no longer care.

This is of course not true. The intensity of our grief is significant when we are working toward resolution of the loss but the duration of our grief is less important. The length of the grieving process does not measure the strength of our love. We do not need to grieve longer because we love more. When our tears have dried up, it does not mean our heart has grown cold. It only means that we have worked our way through the worst of times. The love we have for our loved one is still steadfast in our hearts.

I will not equate the length of my grieving period with the degree of my love. One has nothing to do with the other. I will cry until I no longer need to cry, will grieve until I no longer need to grieve. And through it all, my love will continue unchanged and undiminished.

HOW DO YOU KNOW  
YOU'RE HEALED?

When we hurt ourselves physically, when we scrape or scratch ourselves, we don't expect to look at the abrasion two minutes later and find that it has healed. If we have major surgery, we don't expect

to be wholly recovered within weeks. Similarly, when we have a surgery of the heart and soul, when we lose a loved one, we cannot expect to heal quickly.

But just as the body does repair itself, just as new cells replace damaged cells and skin heals over and we regain the use of our physical selves, so it is with grief. Bit by bit we are being repaired. It may happen so slowly at first we may not recognize it or see evidence of it, but it will happen.

I must trust the process of grief and know that, even though I may not think or feel that I am making any progress, healing is taking place within me. That healing is by degrees and most of the time it is invisible, but as I review and express my reactions to death, I am being repaired. My heart and my mind are becoming accustomed to my loss and I am learning to use my special resources to continue life in a changed way.

I THINK ABOUT  
HOW SHORT LIFE IS.

Our mortality has been made more evident by our loved one's dying. In fact, all lives appear less permanent now. We may find ourselves standing back from the small microcosm of our world and seeing  
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# Book Reviews on Love Relationships



R I C H A R D   H O L M E S

## *Going the Distance: Secrets to Lifelong Love*

*Lonnie Barbach, Ph.D. and David L. Geisinger, Ph.D.*  
*New York: Doubleday, 1991*

The authors of "Going the Distance" offer a perspective that sets their book apart from many of the other relationship books on the market now. Their focus is primarily on prevention. Going back further than marriage, Lonnie Barbach and David Geisinger cast their analytic gaze on mating, "this central part of the human experience" that they think "has virtually been relegated to chance."

They write, "...we wanted to explore in detail the necessary skills for analyzing and resolving difficulties right from the beginning, before either member of the couple has emotionally bailed out."

So they extend most of their investigation to the courtship period, in hopes of making clear their panoply of ideas "for creating a healthy, vital relationship from its inception."

In a large part, Barbach and Geisinger have succeeded in penetrating into the haze that occludes many persons from understanding their "relationship wounds." Their book can be a useful source in motivating others likewise to penetrate into this mental confusion that can make people afraid, insecure, angry, and in extreme instances, violent. The "eternal drama" that many couples play out is the consequence of what the authors call "repetition compulsion," which "refers to the tendency to repeat compulsively, ways of feeling, thinking, and behaving that were experienced earlier in life, usually in the formative years from childhood through adolescence."

Again, the theme of shadowy elements from the past

constricting one's present perceptions is discussed, as it has been by many relationship therapists, especially during the last twenty years when our throwaway culture has insidiously inserted itself into the psychological realm. This emphasis is not beating a dead horse, as some critics seem to think, but is an urgent message that must be transmitted repeatedly in order for its deeper meanings to impact psyches, both individually and collectively.

This emphasis is stated succinctly by the authors "To a greater or lesser extent it is probably true that most of us have a compelling, and mostly unconscious, desire to seek out a partner with whom we can replay parts of our childhood emotional drama." What is worse, though, is that many of these attachments are damaging, hence "not fully worked through" and often clung to simply because they feel familiar.

Barbach and Geisinger illustrate through many real-life examples the dynamics behind repetition compulsion. Here is a representative one: "As an adult Daniel repetitively chose women who needed to be rescued from one unfortunate circumstance or another, thereby trying to complete the rescue of his mother, a task at which he never succeeded during his childhood."

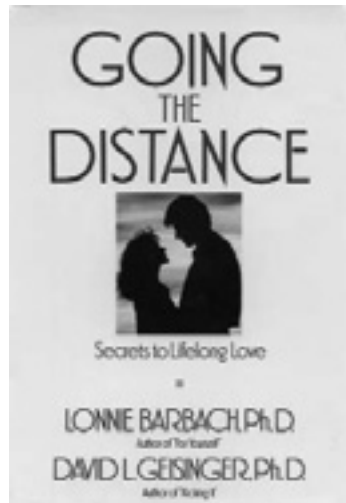
There are "themes and variations," the authors point out, but the "underlying psychological patterns" are similar. "Unfortunately," they continue, "the most painful of our early experiences, ostensibly the ones we should try most assiduously to avoid are often the ones that get re-enacted."

The blunt truth, as they see it, is that "We seem to have an unlimited capacity to pull the wool over our own eyes." On the flip side then, one is entitled to ask if we have—if not unlimited—at least a great capacity to doff the woolly blinders and develop our perceptual acuity.



J E R E M Y P  
T A R C H E R

## Reviews



Their answer is “yes,” though their mostly common-sense advice will lead more to neurosis-free normality than to higher development. In other words, their book can be a catalyst to investigate the “underlying dynamics of your relationship,” hence freeing yourself from the prison of your conditioned mind. They offer the excellent advice seen on a sign, “When searching for faults use a mirror, not a telescope.” So, yes, the authors are well aware that the struggles within a relationship—even the one most common, the power struggle—must be questioned, faced, and understood in the interior realm of one’s psyche, or all the advice in the world will most likely be unheard, not to mention unheeded.

For all their reasonable advice, Barbach and Geisinger are also realists. For instance, in their chapter on “Conflict” they make this observation “Since most conflict is rooted in subjectivism—your separate views of reality—trying to resolve differences by searching for the objective truth can be a colossal waste of time, energy, and good feelings.”

They are reminded of the elephant-in-the-dark story, noting further that “When it comes to

arguments, we are all blind people dealing with an elephant.”

But the authors are by no means pessimistic about the possibilities of relationships achieving some kind of harmony. They know how changes can come about. They recommend that partners hone their skills through expressive language, empathy, honesty, trust, “I” statements, active listening (e.g., validating your partner’s point of view), apology, relinquishing control, humor, letting go (especially of “small issues”), fair division of labor. Of course, one could extend this list, the point being that once partners have de-automatized their thoughts and behaviors, they can set out on a path of what the authors call “conscious courtship.”

Loving partners can go beyond dichotomania (an either/or approach), the authors say, and try a “third way” in which “all decisions should be made from the point of view of the relationship.” This way requires the art of compromise, trade-offs, yielding control, interim or temporary solutions, and “enlightened self-interest.” They also discuss their criteria for commitment chemistry, companionship, trust, respect, acceptance, and shared values.

Possibly the most important advice that they give, though, is that one develop one’s intuition. They write that “having a well-developed, well practiced connection with our intuition is a powerful, primordial way to stay in touch with our deepest, most personal selves.” Even more respectfully, they add, “No way of knowing is perfect, of course, but your intuition offers the best advice that your inner life can provide.”

That is probably their best advice, to listen to your inner self,

but most of the other advice that they give in “Going the Distance” is reasonable and quite likely to change your relationship for the better. As they rightfully say, “A relationship is a long journey.” Their book is a fine source that one can read while traveling, especially in the beginning, when the path is sometimes rocky and the weather stormy.

***Finally Getting It Right: From Addictive Love to the Real Thing***

Howard M. Halpern

New York: Bantam Books, 1994

Whether one can get a relationship right should be questioned by any reader of this book (or books with similar titles). There is also no “finally” to a relationship, meaning that there is no point at which one can say the “real thing” is in place. Nothing can be in place because a



relationship is always on the move—erratic, paradoxical, up, down, tempestuous, blissful, and seldom predictable. Moreover, addictive love is not love, but enslaved and largely unconscious passion for a person, influenced mostly by an unexamined past.

The apparent hairsplitting over the title of this book “Finally Getting It Right” is not meant to denigrate its mostly commonsensical and practical format but to call attention to the need for more care in our choice of words regarding love and relationships.

Howard M. Halpern, a New York psychotherapist for thirty-five years, is obviously not as simplistic with the content of his book as with the title. In fact, the gimmicky title belies the frequent good judgment and occasional profundity of the book. Decades of observing clients in addictive relationships (I prefer the term, “mindlessly habitual relationships”) has led him to formulate a number of strategies that can enable couples to sharpen their perceptual lens and to dissolve what he calls “Attachment Hunger” which is an “addictive element” that is

C H A N G E S M A G A Z I N E

P R E S C O T T  
C O L L E G E

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P A G E 2 5

### *Reviews*

“deep and primitive, something that has its origins very early in the life of each person.”

Halpern joins many other psychotherapists who, it seems, are correct in pointing out that our “deeply imprinted” past—especially as traced to traumatic or quite unsettling incidents or to long-term oppression in the family—is the reason underlying many of the relationships that begin and often end in unconsciousness. If anything else, his references to the “real thing” are indicative of bringing self-awareness to a relationship, as well as a heightened sensitivity to the personality configuration of the other person in the relationship.

Of course, relationship therapists are all bent on enabling couples to end their “love addiction.” Halpern is relentless on this point “Once we understand the necessity of putting the rational and caring adult part of you in charge of your life, it is essential to use *any and every nondestructive technique, approach, exercise, philosophy, or gimmick that you, I, or anyone else can devise to reduce the tyranny of your Attachment Hunger and strengthening the guiding power of your mature judgment.*”

One can’t “just say no” and expect addictive tendencies to dissipate, he writes. And so he recommends, for example, that couples take his Love Relationship Inventory, which contains thirty-five items that can determine to some extent whether a relationship is happy or unhappy, good or bad. As a tool it can be used to pry away delusions about a relationship. While in a relationship, one can also make a “Benefit-Cost Analysis” of the relationship and keep a “Relationship Log.” These tools are also used to chip away at the delusional elements that might be obscuring one’s better judgment.

In fact, no matter what tool or technique or approach one uses, Halpern is always focused on “reducing the power of your Attachment Hunger” by first acknowledging and nurturing the “needy child inside you,” but more importantly, guiding that inner child towards reason. His insight on this point is well worth noting. “Strengthening the power of your judgment will involve your recognizing the terrible damage that the Attachment Hunger has been causing you, understanding the hidden reasons for choosing your self-destructive relationship, and dispelling the delusions you have used to enable yourself to stay in the relationship. (A key delusion to dispel is that because it feels so intense, it must be the real thing. The intensity may only signify that it is a real addiction.)”

One of the distinctions that needs to be made, Halpern advises, is between “being in love” and “being in a love relationship.” For example, he (and others, of course) have observed that “A love relationship requires that both people be available to each other.” On the other hand, “Feelings of being in love may thrive on unavailability.” He discusses other distinctions that should be made.

Halpern has also been keen in perceiving the “signs of addiction.” A classic example (again, noted by others): “You have feelings of emptiness, worthlessness, loneliness, and insecurity that you believe you can remedy only by staying connected with that particular person.”

The “impossible task” that far too many persons try to accomplish in their addictive relationships is best summed up in this statement. “The yearning to repair an old childhood deprivation is often the

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basis of romantic addictions.” Yes, it has been said before, and it should be said again and again until unconscious passions that can be destructive to both self and other are finally eroded by conscious waves of love that have been detoxified and made as pure as possible, given one’s psychological and spiritual capacities.

Simple as it sounds, this involves as Halpern notes well, getting to know one’s self as fully and deeply as possible, to realize that “you are your own continuity.”

He writes, “If you recognize that you are the thread that connects the various beginnings and endings in your past, then you can realize that you will be the thread that will spin forward to connect the events of your future. And you can use all you have learned from seeing the continuity of your history to shape the future differently.”

This evolutionary perspective to Halpern’s psychotherapy can be seen especially in his chapter called “Charting Your Personal Journey,” which requires attention to inner development, relationships, interests, and practical matters. During this journey, for example, one will need to see into the various “levels of motivation” that can cause emotional enslavement to a bad relationship. Also the “hidden reasons for avoiding a good relationship” can be discovered (e.g., “fear of loss of self”).

“Navigating Love’s Paradoxes” is a very important chapter (see *Lotus*, Vol. 4, No. 1, for an excerpt) on perceiving more clearly into the contradictory truths of a relationship. Using good judgment, Halpern points out that partners do not need to be torn asunder by these seeming contradictions. For example, one can pursue “insight and

Steven Nash  
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self-knowledge” as well as “become a more loving person through active and caring involvement in the world.” Reconciling the extremes is possible... and recommended.

Throughout “Getting It Right,” Halpern is making you (a possible partner in an addictive relationship) a beneficiary of much sound advice about how to “see yourself as the main author of your evolving autobiography.”

He does the advising; you do the evolving. And it is possible that your relationship can evolve as well.

#### *Soul Mates: Honoring the Mysteries of Love and Relationship*

Thomas Moore

New York: HarperCollins, 1994

Thomas Moore wastes no time in informing readers, “The only thing as challenging as getting tangled in the underbrush of relationship is trying to write about it.”

But he does write about relationship with a clarity and depth that should allure readers to make a soulful exploration into its many paradoxes and complexities.

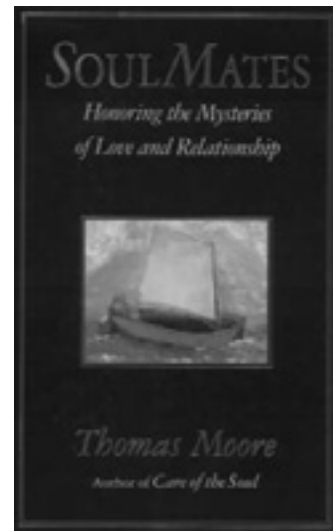
Soul Mates is, as Moore suggests, a “guide for meditation,” not a prescriptive, how-to, therapeutic book for people whose relationships are in some way askew or fallow or less than blissful. Moreover, he doesn’t tell one to shoot for balance in relationship, which he calls a “perfectionist ideal, never to be found in actual life.”

The medieval sources that Moore draws from so heavily inform him that love and relationship are indeed mysterious and should be honored with a vibrantly open mind and heart and a high tolerance for the earthly and fleshly ways of the soul. For such are the

ways of the soul. “It loves attachments of all kinds—to places, ideas, times, historical figures and periods, things, words, sounds, and settings...”

Soul is of the world with a wonderful, sweet vengeance, he seems to be saying; and if people delve deeply into the desires of the soul, their lives can be infused with meaning that derives from imagination, fantasy, dreams, and wishes.

No, it isn’t balance that Moore recommends, but an interplay of dichotomous tensions in life, a living through these tensions by embracing them (e.g., the light and shadow sides of one’s personality). Although



the soul is largely experiential, it is not dissociated from the mind; rather, it is not governed by a mind that is often duped by changing cultural currents.

Moore refers to the “soul’s intelligence” in this way. “From the point of view of the soul, meaningfulness and value rise directly out of experience or from the images and memories that issue modestly and immediately out of ordinary life.

## Reviews

The soul's intelligence may not arrive through rational analysis but through a long period of rumination, and its goal may not be brilliant understanding and unassailable truth but rather a profound insight and abiding wisdom."

Sounds too abstract, one might contend. But anyone who reads this radical (soul is radical, he writes) and, yes, soul-stirring book will possibly discover that soul, as Moore writes about it, is both a challenge and an invitation for people to experience intimacy which means "profoundly interior." When discussed in the context of loving relationships, the word (from the superlative form of the Latin word "inter," meaning "within") can mean that "the 'most within' dimension of ourselves and the other are engaged."

The key to this meaning is just that, being engaged in those interior realms of our psyches that manifest, as Moore has observed time and again in his practice, in unpredictable and sometimes eccentric behaviors. But his advice—if one can say he gives any advice—is to listen intently to these inner voices and try to understand why one might be impelled to behave in certain ways. Soul is a messenger that can be understood, if receptivity to one's "personal mythology" (your own unfolding story told by you to yourself) is continuously aligned with one's deepest desires and attachments.

As mentioned, soul-work is profoundly experiential and interior. Moore states this position beautifully as follows: "A major part of soul-work involves just getting out of the way so that life can go on. We

may hang on fiercely to our own interpretations and programs, as if we knew best what we should do, but care of the soul is more a process of listening and following, not without choice and responsibility, but with an intimate familiarity with the deep roots of our own thoughts and emotions. It recognizes that we all have old stories, guiding voices, raw emotions, and unfathomable natures that make our lives ultimately inexplicable and rich beyond imagining."

Moore is saying that lovers, friends, citizens in a community—anyone living in soulful relationship to something or someone—can live in conscious attunement to all the dynamic tensions of life, regardless of their apparent dark, paradoxical, or contradictory connections. The lessons of the mythical figures of Daphne, Apollo, Aphrodite, Hermes, Artemis, Priapus, and others teach us that the "polycentric" nature of soul can drive us to refine our individuality and enlarge our perceptions.

The open-endedness of soul-work, which Moore discusses with such penetrating insight, might lead one to believe he is countenancing libertinism (e.g., he counsels that the "pathologies of love" must be addressed and faced from a soulful perspective). On the contrary, he recognizes that soul isn't a seeker of perfection but an investigator (if allowed to be reflective) of one's inner and outer life in all its mysterious complexity. Soul-work, in other words, is a relentlessly responsible facing of ourselves, rusty mirror and all.

Our past can become increasingly known to us through such

## SCHOOL FOR ESOTERIC STUDIES

M C C L I N T O C K

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*Lotus 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.*

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soulful means, and the result is not blaming (e.g., struggling parents who reared us imperfectly, even cruelly) but an ongoing transmutation of our perception of our own soul and the souls of others. It is, he writes, an alchemical process for life. "Soul is individual, vernacular, cyclic, eternal, partly concerned with literal life and partly involved in its own inner mysteries, concerned with poetics and nuances instead of explanation, and often raw and in need of an alchemy of refinement."

"Relationship," he reasons, "is not a project, it is a grace," which might "lead us into a profound alchemy of soul that reveals to us many of the pathways and openings that are the geography of our own destiny and potentiality."

"Soul Mates" is that rare kind of book that not only honors the mysteries of love and relationship, but hopefully, as Moore puts it, helps us to discover through relationships "the multitude of ways soul is incarnated in the world."

It tells of a flesh-and-blood alchemy that can direct us towards our deepest spiritual nature; it is a profound reminder that all relationships, whether called secular or spiritual, are sacred at the core. •

### Time to Grieve

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the larger universe of our lives. We look backward at the generations before us and into the future at the generations that will follow us. Each birth, each major life event takes on new meaning.

The perspective of my life has been enlarged. The brevity of all lives has been underscored. I will use what I have learned to enhance the quality of my life as well as the effect it may have on those in the next generation.

FINALLY, ONE DAY, I DIDN'T  
HAVE TO FORCE MYSELF  
ANYMORE.

During the worst of grief it can seem as if every civilized act, every simple function, even every move we make is forced. Great effort is required to get out of bed, to get from home to work, or sometimes even to get from one side of the room to another. But then eventually as we work through our grief, the load that weighed so heavily on us lessens. Tomorrow seems less like an ordeal and more like an opportunity. The dark side of our spirit subsides.

It happens gradually but it does happen. One day we find that less effort is required for the things that once took an enormous amount of exertion. One day we realize that we again are capable of feeling delight, inspiration, and anticipation.

I will trust that my burden will continue to dwindle as the days pass and the heaviness I feel lightens. I will have complete faith that there will come a time when I do not need to push myself with tremendous effort from one place to another or from one task to another. I will feel then that I have achieved a new strength and that I have a mended heart that can propel me through the demands of tomorrow—a heart that can be trusted to "carry my feet." •

R E I K I P L U S

## *Letters to the Editor*

*Continued from page 8*

### **TASTELESS TO ME**

When I first saw *Lotus* magazine, I was most impressed by its quality and tastefulness, not to mention the symbolism of the Lotus flower. In fact, I viewed it as the New Yorker of the New Age magazine scene.

Your summer issue of *Lotus* "Learn from Love" etc. is tasteless to me. The choice of nude photos within and on the cover of the magazine parallels the notion of the typical marketplace philosophy: Sex Sells! Couldn't you have shared the same information without stooping to the standard hard-sell approach of mass marketing.—*Betty Gricus, East Greenwich, Road Island.*

### **BEAUTIFUL PROCLAMATION**

Hooray for your summer issue, "Learn From Love," in all its variety! The more I look at the cover, the more I see the open, beautiful proclamation of our calling to faithful, joyful sexual sharing with that close other person—friend, lover, and partner—in our lives. But the connection of the various articles says something more to me. To rediscover the "healthy, honest, sexuality" that Matthew Fox calls for, you must really take the interior journey of self-discovery and acceptance which is central to the articles by Jongeward, Raffin, and Moore. If you want sexual intimacy with another that goes beyond the simple physical release, then you must be capable of emotional intimacy. If you want to be intimate with another, you must learn first to be intimate with yourself. The interior and exterior journeys come together. To me this is the deep sacramental, spiritual dimension of

our sexual lives that is found by connecting the various articles in this issue.—*George Maboney, Fitchburg, Maryland.*

### **F E E L C O N F L I C T E D**

As is usual, I found many articles in the summer issue to inspire growth. I am disappointed though in the look of the magazine. First, I feel conflicted about the cover. On the one hand, I understand your motivation to choose a typical couple over models. Yet, it seems to me, the fact that you had to explain your choice says, "This doesn't work." I think a cover should speak for itself.

More importantly though is the direction the "look" inside the magazine has taken. In some of your space, inspiration has lost out to advertising. I understand the need to support this venture and yourselves financially and yet, I miss the color photos with stimulating quotes which used to occupy the inside of the front and back covers. There are many publications offering similar articles which are printed in one color on 20 pound paper. I hope you are not headed in the same direction. Please keep the first class look with which you started.—*Jo Ann Freer, New Hartford, New York.* •

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### ***The Path of Bliss***

*Continued from page 33*

them. If I connect with my desire for intimacy and love, open to my partner, feel a connection in our hearts, the result will be much more healing. The intimacy of loving sex is much more nurturing and healing than the isolated gratification of recreational sex.

Loving sex also creates an ideal

atmosphere for healing sexual problems—one of safety, trust, respect, acceptance, and a lack of expectations and demands. Loving sex heals by dissolving the anxiety, insensitivity, and emotional isolation that can accompany recreational sex.

The opportunity to channel passion into a deepened experience of love then begins with the inception of sexual desire, long before we are in bed together. Every amorous impulse can be a reminder to connect, not only with our attraction for each other, but with our appreciation and caring. Every amorous impulse is a reminder of our desire to feel our intimacy. Thus it is a reminder to express our love verbally and non-verbally, to give attention, support, or help, or to simply spend time together. Sexual desire then passes through love. It becomes less driven, for it awakens the fulfillment of love. At the same time, the more attentive and appreciative we are toward each other, the more we feel our attraction. We naturally begin to feel the desire to be as close and intimate as possible; we may feel like we want to climb inside of each other—only this desire is coming from our love.

In this way sexual passion is recreated by love. Our desire is no longer impersonal and purely physical but personal and centered in our hearts. Our desire comes into a more natural perspective within our whole being. This desire for union need not always express itself in making love, but when the chemistry is right for both partners, it will, and the result will be a delicious union of love. •



## *Challenges of Aging*

*Continued from page 70*

cilities. Facing health problems is a difficult proposition; and facing them outside of our normal surroundings, far from the comfort of familiar people, sights, sounds, and smells makes the task all the more unsettling. Whenever possible, carrying rituals, ceremonies, or celebrations to a bedridden loved one is a powerful act. Not only do rituals offer opportunities to reconnect with the values and emotions that bring us joy and comfort, but they reaffirm to an ill person that he or she is still a valued part of the family system—not merely a spectator of life but a participant.

At sixty-five, Martha Sanderling, suffering from cancer, has been in an extended care facility for two months. While most of her immediate family—two sons and their wives, and three grandchildren—live close by and can see her on a regular basis, her absence from the household has been a terrible loss for everyone. “She’s the one who picks the rest of us up when we’re down,” says her daughter-in-law Julie. “She has the kind of faith that moves mountains.” When it came time for Steve and Julie’s ten-month-old baby to be baptized, they decided that Martha, though bedridden, should be a part of the event. “Sharing it after the fact with photos just didn’t seem good enough,” explains Steve. “We wanted her right there in the middle of it.”

Permission was granted by the director of the nursing home for the family’s parish priest to perform the baptism ceremony in Martha’s room. All the members of the immediate family were there as well as several close friends. A floor nurse stood by during the ceremony, in

case Martha required any special medical attention. “Seeing the look in her eyes was worth every bit of effort it took to arrange it,” says Martha’s other son, Jeff. “After the ceremony we placed the baby in her arms and she got this wonderful smile on her face. While the rest of us were standing around talking, I noticed she was looking around the room at each of us, one by one. It was like she was taking stock of all the people she loved.”

A wonderful story is told about the Roman statesman Cato, who lived in the years 234-193 B.C. At age eighty with no prior exposure to other languages, Cato set about the monumental task of becoming fluent in Greek. His friends were incredulous. “How can you embark on such a lengthy course of study at your age?” they asked. “It’s simple,” Cato is said to have replied. “This is the youngest age I have left.”•

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## *Mens Search*

*Continued from page 45*

lying hidden within from the very beginning. He may be gifted with renewed vision, vitality, equanimity, or remembrance—consolation prizes given to those who first give themselves to life as it is.

Transfigured by these courageous acts, the heart then naturally guides the hero back to the world he left behind. We return to share the fruits of our labors for the good of all our people. “A vital person,” Campbell observed, “vitalizes the world.” On this journey whatever you do for yourself, you do for all of us.

All spiritual traditions recognize the urge that flows beneath the everyday doings of our lives—the urge for a pilgrimage that will pierce the veil of illusion of our separateness; a pilgrimage that unites the

disassociated, disowned, and rejected parts of ourselves and our world; a pilgrimage that will carry us Home by way of a path with heart. Perhaps this is the calling that the men in this camp all home in on.

Or perhaps we are responding to nothing less than evolution itself, the impulse that courses through the green-blooded veins of sun-seeking plants, the calling that draws clay up from the Earth to walk with two legs, the spirit that changes sea water into blood.

Whatever its circumstances, whatever its source, the call to the soul’s high adventure has lured us from our separate lives and brings us together in a vessel of brotherhood dedicated to transformation—and invites us now into its simmering midst. •

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## *Success Story*

*Continued from page 15*

Dad was a stable, forthright person. He never criticized, never judged, and took most things in stride. His fear of his illness and death overwhelmed him at times and it forced me to look for answers for myself. My father’s journey to death changed me. My fears of illness, life, death, and the unknown are gone. There are many things I don’t understand, but I now trust in what I can not see, as my father trusted his unknown visitors.

My family and friends tell me how lucky my father was to have such a devoted daughter to take care of him. I never felt he was the lucky one to have me. I am the blessed one. I was given the chance to look at life and death close up and examine the process we all must face, and open my heart to both. •

## *Heart Relationship*

*Continued from page 52*

Open to the possibility of forgiveness so that resentment may pass, so that your heart may be free and your life lighter. I forgive you. It is so painful to hold someone out of your heart. I forgive you.

Allow that being to go on their way touched by the blessing, the possibility of your forgiveness.

**To hurt the one we love—our self, our beloved—is painful. To hang on to the hurt is suffering. To learn to use forgiveness in our most intimate relationships is a blessing.**

Now gently allow into your mind, your heart, the image of someone who holds resentment for you. Invite them into your heart and say, “I ask your forgiveness. I ask to be let back into your heart. Forgive me for whatever I may have done in the past that caused you pain, intentionally or unintentionally, through my words, my actions, even through my thoughts. However I may have hurt or injured you, whatever confusion, whatever fear of mine caused you pain, I ask your forgiveness.”

Allow yourself to be touched by forgiveness, to be forgiven, to be allowed back into their heart. Allow forgiveness to fill your heart. Allow

yourself to be forgiven. If your mind jumps forward with recriminations and judgments against you, just notice how merciless we are to ourselves. Let your heart meet this other heart in forgiveness.

Allow that being to go on their way touched by the blessing of forgiveness.

Now gently allow yourself into your mind, into your heart. It is so painful to hold yourself out of your heart. Say, “I forgive you” to yourself. Use your own first name, say “I forgive you” to yourself.

Whatever hard thoughts arise against yourself from your mind, hold them with softness. Let softness touch your judgments with forgiveness. Allow yourself into your heart, into forgiveness. Let forgiveness fill your body with warmth and care. Bathe yourself in its mercy and kindness. Let yourself be loved. Return yourself to your heart.

May all be touched with the power of forgiveness.

May all beings be free from suffering.

May all beings know the joy of their true nature.

May all beings be free from suffering.

May all beings know peace.

May we heal the world, touching it with forgiveness.

May we heal our hearts and the hearts of those we love.

May all beings be free from suffering.

To hurt the one we love—our self, our beloved—is painful. To hang on to the hurt is suffering. To learn to use forgiveness in our most intimate relationships is such a blessing. How I relate to my beloved is how I relate to The

Beloved. Life has, as Stephen says, a “horrible wonderfulness,” that “in the midst of all this pain, there is still the willingness to love.”•

*For information on upcoming workshops in California and New York, or for a complete list of tapes, send a self addressed stamped envelope to: Levine Workshop, 1615 24th Avenue, San Francisco, CA 94122 or call (415)753-5755.*

*Peggy Tabor Millin is a writer in the field of personal and spiritual growth. She is the author of the book, “Mary’s Way.” She also teaches forgiveness and prayer through experiential sharings. Peggy lives with her husband in Asheville, North Carolina.*

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## *Lasting Love*

*Continued from page 65*

we could heal our relationships, we would heal the world.

HUGH: God is oneness. God is that which joins all living things. In helping you awaken, I awaken because we begin to experience oneness. When a couple sees each other more gently and treats each other more kindly, they experience more fully the presence of God, whatever they wish to call God.

GAYLE: That teaching permeates every religion in the world.

***You clearly see marriage as a spiritual path.***

HUGH: Yes, a profound spiritual path.•

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## *Success Story*

*Continued from page 21*

are what is needed to bring about balance in life. Focusing on one and denying the others throws everything out of sync. I realize now that until my mind, body, and spirit are “tended to,” I cannot truly help others. It’s not the end of my life, it’s the beginning of many blessings!•



TONY FREEMAN/ALLSTOCK

# Covering All The Bases

*A little boy was overheard talking to himself as he strode through his backyard, baseball cap in place and toting ball and bat. "I'm the greatest baseball player in the world," he said proudly. Then he tossed the ball in the air, swung and missed. Undaunted, he picked up the ball, threw it into the air and said to himself, "I'm the greatest player ever!" He swung at the ball again, and again he missed. He paused a moment to examine bat and ball carefully. Then once again he threw the ball into the air and said, "I'm the greatest baseball player who ever lived." He swung the bat hard and again missed the ball.*

*"Wow!" he exclaimed. "What a pitcher!"*•

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