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Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us. We ask ourselves, Who am I to be brilliant, gorgeous, talented, fabulous? Actually, who are you not to be? You are a child of God. Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you. You are born to make manifest the glory of God that is within you.

—Nelson Mandela

From the Editor...

In this issue we explore the importance of fulfilling our divine destiny. We address the benefits of aligning thinking and behavior with our higher purpose, the role feelings play as a pathway to our deeper interior, and the necessity of engaging in a spiritual practice.

In our interview, (p.58) George Jaidar tells us how to *Live a Life of Fullness* by adopting a deceptively simple spiritual practice. He believes each of us is here to discover and explore our Areté [ar'-i-tay'], the ancient Greek term for our unique, individual fullness or excellence. Areté refers to the excellence or highest expression of anything. The Areté of a race horse is to run swiftly, of angels is to sing heavenly praises, and of a vase is to hold flowers. All of creation has a fullness or excellence to express and ours is to express our individual seed of divinity. The Areté of a human being is to participate in a greater spiritual organism, the transcendent Divine Being. Ours is a unique path to be discovered through exploration and unfoldment. Jaidar believes that each of us is not only a child of God or the Cosmos but also a heir of God, from whom we do not have to earn acceptance, but simply claim our inheritance.

To fulfill our divine destiny we must *Engage in Soul Work*. Angeles Arrien (p.46) points out that our soul work is, quite simply, to find and remove whatever gets in the way of our being who we are. The business of soul is to be in touch with the deepest undercurrents of our lives, so that we have no choice but to act honestly and to speak soulfully. In our culture, we don't have many aids to tracking our souls, for keeping in touch with the things that make us who we are, and for recognizing and eliminating things that deter us. Indigenous cultures have important information to offer us about maintaining soulfulness in our lives however.

Since our time on earth is precious and should be devoted to the most worthwhile undertakings, we should use all opportunities to *Discover The Nature of Our Soul*. Doing so fulfills our destiny. Inayat Khan (p.14) says that the desire for knowledge is born in every soul. We must discern what

is worth knowing and that which is worth knowing is ourselves. Khan believes that our purpose for coming to earth is revealed through the completion of our individualities, for it is in the making of personality that God finishes divine art.

In order to make our personality we must first become conscious. One way we become conscious is to *Become Aware of The Process of Projection*. Powers and Bantle (p.52) define projection as the psychological process by which we overlay our outer reality with our inner dynamics. As a result of projection, what we perceive is not objective reality, but is a reality shaped by our interior forces. What we see and experience is our own internal dynamics, projected onto our environment. Usually we are projecting parts of ourselves which we have not seen, which are unconscious, and for which we have not yet taken responsibility. This insightful discussion inspires consciousness and the desire to do the necessary inner work.

To discover who we truly are we need to *Know Ourselves Deeply*. Fran and Louis Cox (p.34) hold that emotions are one of the ways in which we come to know ourselves and the world. Cutting off or deadening our feelings curtails the flow of information to us dramatically, even more than losing our sense of sight or hearing. No other sense compensates for the insight and wisdom conferred by feelings. Emotions are a vital part of our feedback system with other people and the world around us. They connect us with our history and, in some mystical way we don't understand, with the unknown.

The path to fulfillment requires practice in order to connect deeply with our inner selves, to develop a personality that reflects our holiness, and to be guided by the divine. This issue reinforces and instructs our practice. Now all we have to do is do the *Practice!* Our effort promises wonderful rewards. May we all be steadfast, day by day by day.

Welcome to Lotus.

Mary NurrieStearns

Mary NurrieStearns

Lotus

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EDITOR

MARY NURRIESTEARN

ADVERTISING MANAGER

JACKIE FOUNTAIN

MARKETING MANAGER

JACKI BROOKS-CHRISTIE

MARKETING ASSISTANT

MARY ANN VAVALETTE

CIRCULATION MANAGER

PATRICIA MCCLURE

COPY EDITOR

KATHRYN BURKE

PUBLISHER

RICK NURRIESTEARN

Reflections



From Our Readers

PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION

Being a recent subscriber to *LOTUS* Magazine, I am gratified to find that each of the three issues I have received so far contains topics that seemed to speak to things I am currently dealing with in my own life process.

The issue on creativity and references to "The Artist's Way" was particularly timely for me, for I was at that time experiencing a resurgence of interest in writing, which has been dormant for some time now.

In the "Transformations" section of the Anniversary 1995 issue, I could especially relate to Jacqueline Kramer's story, having been a victim of the Chronic Fatigue Syndrome myself; I have also experienced a life-altering accident, although not as severe, as Linda Clark (Winter 1995 issue).

As I continue in my process of personal transformation, I eagerly await the forth-coming issues and the topics they will cover. Thank you for a great magazine!—*Judy Hayes, Monterey, Maryland.*

BREATH WORK

Thank you for bringing transformational literature into my home. I have lived in the healing way for many years and so benefit from the support. I am writing in response to the article "Breath Work for Releasing Emotions" in the Autumn 1995 issue. During the past year I have experienced several sessions of breath work and found them to be very powerful and healing, freeing up energy and discharging old beliefs about myself and life. I literally feel lighter, brighter, and more optimistic about life. I felt happy, valuable, and involved with life before the breath work sessions so was surprised to feel the qualitative shift as a result of the sessions.

I am writing for two reasons. I want to express appreciation for the article, because I understand more about how breath work works. I also want to add my personal testimonial for a relatively new technique or at least one that is just recently gaining credibility and acceptance. My experience matched what the author of the article described. Breath work is an ef-

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 10

Moksha **

Mount Madonna

Reflections

fective way to release repressed emotions. —*Mary Beth Powers, Chicago, Illinois.*

WARRIOR CODE

First I want to tell you how much I like the addition of color to *LOTUS*. Your magazine is looking good! which makes it inviting to read. In fact, it was the photo that made me pause, then read “Owning Your Victim Self” in the fall, 1995 issue. I realized, once again, how subtle yet powerful certain dynamics are in my personality (and I suspect in others also). So I’ve been practicing the “No Kvetching” rule and am surprised at how frequently I hear myself make excuses and blame someone or something other than myself for my actions. I’m practicing the “Take Responsibility” rule. I like visual clues and taped a copy of the ten Universal Laws of the Warrior Code inside my closet door for an early morning reminder of my power to choose responsibility over blaming. More and more I choose responsibility and when I do I certainly feel more powerful and see more options available to me.

Thanks for supporting my personal growth.—*Jackie Peterson, Los Angeles, California.*

**NOTE FROM
THE EDITOR**

In the Autumn 1995 issue, we omitted the name of the book that was the basis for the interview, “Realizing the Potential of Body, Mind, Heart, and Soul with Integral Transformative Practice.” The book title is “The Life We are Given” by George Leonard and Michael Murphy. We apologize for this omission and for any inconvenience it may have caused for those of you wanting to read it. •

Conscious Notes by INAYAT KHAN

INQUISITIVENESS

There is one thing which belongs to human nature and its origin is in curiosity, the curiosity which gives a desire for knowledge. When this tendency is abused, it develops into inquisitiveness. It is wonderful to think that at the root of all defects is a right tendency. And it is the abuse of it which turns it into a wrong tendency.

When we consider how little time we have to live on this earth, we find that every moment of our life is precious and that it should be given to something which is really worthwhile. When this time is given to inquisitiveness, wanting to know about the affairs of another, one has wasted that time which could have been used for a much better purpose.

Life has so many responsibilities and so many duties. There is so much that one has to correct in oneself; there is so much that one has to undo in what one has done. There is so much to attend to in one's affairs and to make one's life right that it seems as if a person were intoxicated who, leaving all his responsibilities and

duties, occupies his mind and engages his ears in inquisitiveness. Free will

faults of others, then one certainly abuses that free will.

When we consider how little time we have to live on this earth, we find that every moment of our life is precious and that it should be given to something which is really worthwhile. When this time is given to inquisitiveness, wanting to know about the affairs of another, one has wasted that time which could have been used for a much better purpose.

is given to attend to one's own duties, to gain one's own objects, to attend to one's own affairs. And when that free will is used in trying to find out about others, the weakness of others, the lacks of others, the

Sometimes a person is inquisitive because of his interest in the lives of others. But very often a person is inquisitive because it is his illness. He may have no interest in the matter at all, only that he wants to satisfy

himself by hearing and knowing about others. Self-knowledge is the ideal of the philosophers, not the knowledge of the lives of others.

There are two phases in the development of man: one phase when he looks at others, another phase when he looks at himself. When the first phase has ceased and the next phase begun, then one starts his journey to the desired goal. Rumi says, "Trouble not about others, for there is much for you to think about yourself."

Besides this, it is a sign of great respect to the aged, and to those one wishes to respect, to show no tendency of knowing more than one is allowed to know. Even in such close relationships as parents and children, when they respect the privacy of one another they certainly show a great virtue. To want to know about another is very often a lack of trust. The one who trusts does not need to unveil, does not need to uncover what is covered. He who wishes to unveil something wishes to discover it. If there is anything that should first be discovered, it is the self.

The time that one



TONY STONZ/ORB ADAMSKI PEEK

spends in discovering others, their lives, their faults, their weakness, one could have just as well spent in discovering one's soul. The desire to know is born in the soul only; man should discern what he must do and what is worth knowing. There are many things not worth troubling about. When one devotes one's time and thought to trying to know what one need not know, one loses that opportunity which life offers to discover the nature and secret of the soul in which lies the fulfillment of the purpose of life.

GENEROSITY

The spirit of generosity in nature builds a path to God; for generosity is outgoing, is spontaneous. Its nature is to make its way toward a wide horizon. Generosity, therefore, may be called charity of heart. It is not necessary that the spirit of generosity must always be shown by the spending of money. In every little thing one can show it.

Generosity is an attitude which one shows in every little action that he does toward people with whom he comes in contact in his everyday life. One can show generosity by a smile, by a kind

glance, by a warm handshake, by patting the younger soul with a pat of encouragement, with a pat showing appreciation, with that pat which expresses affection. One can show generosity in accommodating one's fellow man, in welcoming one's fellow man, in bidding farewell to one's friend; in thought, word, and deed, in every manner and form, one can show that generous spirit which is the sign of the *Wali*, the godly.

The Bible speaks of generosity by the word "charity." But if I were to give an interpretation of the word "generosity," I would call it no-

bility. No rank, position, or power can prove one noble. Truly noble is he who is generous of heart. What is generosity? It is nobility; it is expansion of the heart. As the heart expands, so the horizon becomes wide, and one finds greater and greater scope in which to build the kingdom of God.

Depression, despair, and all manner of sorrow and sadness come from the lack of generosity. Where does jealousy come from? Where does aching of the heart come from? Where does envy come from? It all comes from the lack of generosity.

Conscious Notes

Man may not have one single coin to his name, and yet he can be generous, he can be noble, if only he has a large heart, a friendly feeling. The life in the world offers every opportunity to

man, whatever be his position in life, to show if he has any spirit of generosity.

The changeableness and falsehood of human nature, besides the inconsideration and thoughtless-

ness that come out of those he meets through life, and furthermore the selfishness and grabbing and grafting spirit that disturbs and troubles his soul—this situation itself is a test and trial through which every soul has to pass in the midst of the worldly life.

If through this test and trial one holds fast to his principle of charity and treads along toward his destination, not allowing the influences that come from the four corners of the world to keep him back from his journey to the goal, he in the end becomes the king of life—even if at the end of his destination there is not one single earthly coin left to his name. It is not this earthly wealth that makes man rich. Riches come by discovering that gold-mine which is

Movement

Stars Edge / color

I have placed this ad to the left to align with the ad on top

hidden in the human heart, out of which rises the spirit of generosity.

Someone asked the Prophet whose virtue was greatest: the pious one who prays continually, the traveler who travels to make a holy pilgrimage, the one who fasts for nights and days, or the one who learns the scripture by heart. "None of them," said the Prophet, "is so great as the soul who shows through life charity of heart."

THE ART OF PERSONALITY

It is one thing to be man and it is another thing to be a person. Man becomes a person by making a personality, by completing the individuality in which is hidden the purpose of man's coming on earth. Angels were made to sing the praise of the Lord; jinns to imagine, to dream, to meditate; but man is created to show humanity in his character. It is this which makes him a person.

There are many things difficult in life, but the most difficult of all things is to learn and to know and to practice the art of personality. Nature, people say, is created by God, and art by man. But really speaking, in the making of personality it is God who finishes his divine art. It is not what Christ taught which made his devotees love him. They dispute over those things in vain. It is what he himself was; it is that which is loved and admired by his devotees. When Jesus Christ said to the fishermen, "Come here, I will teach you to be fishers of men," what does it mean? It means that I will teach you the art of personality which will become as a net in this life's sea—for every heart, whatever be its grade of evolution,

will be attracted by the beauty of the art of personality.

What is mankind seeking in another person? What does one expect in one's friend? He wants him to be rich, of a high position, of great power, of wonderful qualifications, or to have wide influence; but beyond and above all, he expects from his friend the human qualities—that is, the art of per-

sonality. If one's friend lacks the art of personality, all the above said things are of but little use and value to him. There is a question: how are we to learn the art of personality? We learn it by our love of art, by our love of beauty in all its various aspects. The artist learns his art by his admiration of beauty. When a person gets an insight into beauty, then he learns

Atlantic

Conscious Notes

the art of arts, which is the art of personality. Man may have a thousand qualifications or rank or position, man may possess all the goods of the earth, but if he lacks the art of personality he indeed is poor. It is by this art that man shows that nobleness which belongs to the kingdom of God.

The art of personality is not a qualification. It is the purpose for

which man was created, and it leads man to that purpose in the fulfillment of which is his entire satisfaction. By this art, man not only satisfies himself but he pleases God.

This phantom play on the earth is produced for the pleasure of that king of the universe whom the Hindus have called Indra, before whom Gandharvas sang

and Upsaras danced. The interpretation of this story is that every soul's purpose is to dance at the court of Indra. It is to learn to dance perfectly at the court of Indra, which is, really speaking, the art of personality. The one who says, "But how can I dance? I do not know how to dance," defeats his purpose. For no soul is created to stand aside and look on. Every soul is created to dance at the court of Indra. The soul who refuses certainly shows its ignorance of the great purpose for which this whole play is produced on the earth.

GENTLENESS

Every impulse has its influence upon the word and upon the action; and therefore naturally every impulse exerts its full power through words and deeds, unless it is checked. There are two types of persons: those who have acquired the power of checking their word and action when it would exert its full power and express itself with abruptness; the other kind of persons are those who mechanically allow this natural course of impulse to show itself in their word and deed, without giving any thought to it. The former therefore is gentle, and the latter is man.

Gentleness is the principal thing in the art of personality. One can see how gentleness works as the principal thing in every art: in painting, in drawing, in line and color; it is gentleness which appeals the most to the soul. The same we shall see in music. A musician may be qualified enough to play rapidly and may know all the technique, but what produces beauty is his gentle touch.

It is gentleness mainly which is

Center For Spiritual Awareness

* *

all refinement. But where does it come from? It comes from consideration, and it is practiced by self-control. There is a saying in the East, "The weaker the person, the more ready to be angry." The reason is that this person has no control over his nerves. It is often lack of control over oneself which is the cause of a lack of gentleness. No doubt, one learns gentleness by consideration. One must learn to think before saying or doing. Besides, while saying or doing one must not forget the idea of beauty; one must know that it is not enough to say or do, but it is necessary to say or do everything beautifully.

It is the development of the nations and races which is expressed in gentleness; also it is the advancement of the soul's evolution which expresses itself in gentleness. Nations and races, as well as individuals, will show backwardness in their evolution if they show a lack of gentleness.

At this time of the world's condition it seems that the art of personality has been much neglected. Man is intoxicated with the life of avarice. And then the competitive spirit that exists, helped by the commercialism of the day, keeps man busy in acquiring the needs of his everyday life. The beauty which is the need of the soul is lost to view. Man's interest in all things of life—science, art, philosophy—remains unfinished in the absence of the art of personality. How rightly this distinction has been made in the English language: man and gentleman.

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Hendricks

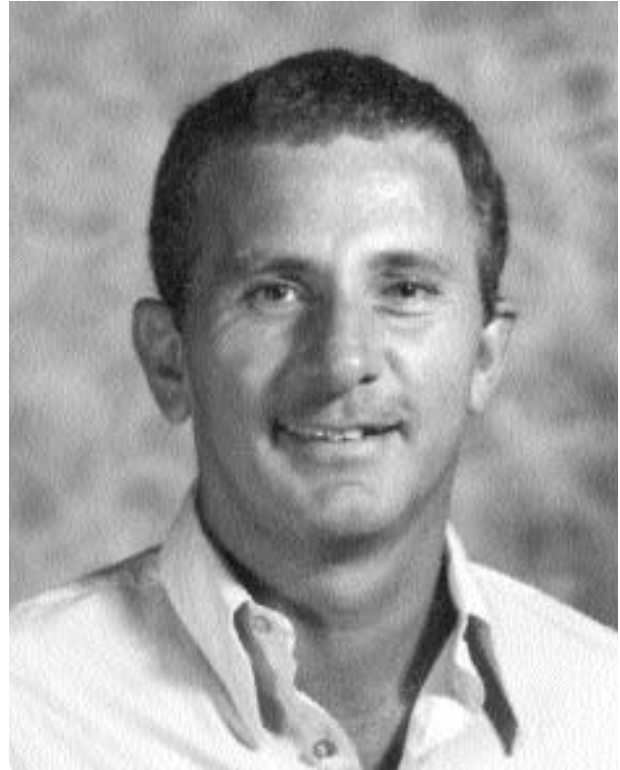
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Taking Care of My Own Needs

J A Y J O H N S O N

I have called upon prayer and meditation many times over the last few years for assistance and guidance for others in my life who were experiencing physical, emotional, financial, and spiritual crises. For months I had been there for friends and a family member suffering from life-threatening illnesses. My long term companion, my sponsor in Alcoholics Anonymous, and my barber—all three had heart attacks on the same day. Bi-pass surgeries and extended hospital stays followed. During the same time period I received an emergency call that my mother was spitting up blood from a bleeding ulcer.

Most recently, however, it was I who needed help. Following these several months of great stress, I began to experience chest and back pains, numbness in my arms, and two near fainting spells at my job. I called my doctor from work. His nurse reminded me of an appointment scheduled for the following day. I had arranged a series of tests weeks ago which I had forgotten all about. As I was leaving work to go home, a colleague, who happened to be a healer, approached me. She led me into a quiet office and, after resting her hands on my shoulders for a few minutes, stated that



she sensed nothing wrong. She told me to go home, sit or lie down, then to become still and “let it go.” She said, “You have the power to manifest these symptoms in your life. You have the power, with God’s help, to let them go as well. And, it’s okay to cry. It’s okay to express your anger.”

When I arrived home I had barely closed my front door when the phone rang. A friend was calling to retell the details and heartbreak of a series of prior broken romances. At first, in my usual manner, I listened attentively but found myself becoming more and more agitated. He was not interested in hearing of my anxieties about my own health. At last I interrupted, stating bluntly that I had to go and hung up the phone.

I moved to my recliner and breathed deeply, visualizing a white sparkling light entering the top of my head, filtering down through my body, and exiting through my feet and hands. At the same time, I pictured the interior of my coronary arteries, open and carrying a rich supply of blood with each healthy beat of my heart. As I relaxed, I slipped quickly into a deep meditation. Almost immediately I was filled with such anger that I shook in my seat. Tears flowed down my

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 22

Transformations

face and with an audible “Whoosh,” a great negative energy was released through my feet and was gone.

I fell into a deep sleep and dreamed of being chased by men with knives. I was then led down the street by a man in a long black cape. He took me to a beautiful “safe” house of crystal clarity. A lucid dream, I knew I was at home in my

chair sleeping. But at the same time, my awareness of the details around me was remarkable. I could feel the textures of the upholstered furniture and the warm sun shining on my arm through an open window. I could smell coffee brewing in another part of this dream house and could hear the birds in the trees just outside in the lush green garden.

After spending what seemed to

be hours examining this beautiful setting, I knew in my dream state that everything was going to be okay. I awoke in my chair and knew that something quite remarkable had happened.

I went to my tests the next morning and passed with flying colors. The symptoms had disappeared completely. My doctor, quite amazed, stated that he could see no signs of my heart attack three years ago and certainly no new damage. Blood levels were all perfect. “Not just acceptable,” he said to me, “but remarkable for your history. Whatever you’re doing, just keep doing it.” With that he left the examining room as I remained a few moments with my tears of gratitude and thanked God for “my miracle.”

When I left the doctor’s office, I stopped at a restaurant for lunch. The memory of the dream was still fresh in my mind and emotions. I took special notice of the texture of the wood counter and plastic stools, the smells of cooking, and especially the face of my waitress. Although I had never met her before in my life, she smiled at me like an old friend. As she took my order, the thought occurred to me that perhaps I was still home sleeping in my recliner and this was all a dream. And perhaps the waitress is also home asleep and this is all her dream, as well.

It is now a month since this extraordinary experience and the symptoms have never returned. Some people I have told prefer to dismiss the result of stress and anxiety. They believe there was nothing wrong in the first place. Others simply smile knowingly as if to say, “Of course! If prayer and meditation work for others, why shouldn’t it work for you?” I know that I have changed and am grateful to have been given the opportunity to put theory into practice.

Journey Into

I still have many opportunities to help others and to be there just to listen when a friend needs to talk. But, I now realize that must care for myself as well. I am reminded of a pre-flight announcement on all airlines which goes, "In the event of sudden loss of cabin pressure, oxygen masks will drop down from the ceiling in front of you. Grab the nearest one and

place over your nose and face and breathe normally." And the announcement continued, "If you are traveling with a child, place the mask on your face first!" I always thought, "How selfish to think of myself before the child." But now it is obvious to me that if I do not take care of my own needs first, I may not be there to assist others in need. •

Builders

Hay House

Gifts for a Lifetime

ANNE WALLACE SHARP

There are children raised in sorrow..." Those words from John Denver's song, "I Want to Live," took on a whole new meaning for me as memories of childhood physical, emotional, and sexual abuse began to surface a few years ago. Those few words brought tears to my eyes, but the lines that I clung to—held onto and kept as my own were, "I want to live, I want to grow, I want to see, I want to know, I want to share what I can give, I want to be, I want to live."

Those powerful words echoed in my mind. There were times when I shouted those words and times when I whispered them reverently. Those words accompanied me on my journey into the past, on my journey through the pain of terrifying memories, on my journey of discovery and truth. "I want to live!" I screamed and I committed myself to growing, seeing, knowing, sharing, being—and yes, living.

What I found, as I journeyed back, stunned me—terrified me! My father, my hero figure larger than life—had betrayed me—had, in fact, sexually abused me for years. My earliest memory of abuse was as a



five year old, but it had not stopped there—had, much to my shock and dismay, continued throughout my childhood into my teen years. And my mother? She had ignored my cries for help, condoned, by her inaction, his behavior and at times actually blamed me for what was happening.

As I worked through my feelings of fear, sadness, guilt, shame, and anger, I recoiled from the memories, from the pain, from the humiliation, and from the vulnerability I had felt as a child, and still felt at times.

One question, among many, haunted me. *How had I survived?* The fact that I had survived at all filled me with a sense of wonder and amazement. What tools, what gifts, what strengths did I possess that enabled me to endure all the hardships and abuse of my childhood?

It wasn't until recently that I could look back on my childhood and find any gifts, much less any strengths. For months, all I could feel, all I was aware of was how small and vulnerable I was as a child. How helpless. How frightened. But I had survived. Despite the terror and the abuse, I had survived. How was that possible?

No one rescued me, no understanding teacher, no loving relative. No one had been there to recognize or stop the abuse, no one knew the horrible secret that our family held so closely guarded—so well protected.

So how did I survive?

As I reflected on this question, I realized there is no single answer, but rather a series of things, of strengths and gifts, places, and people that enabled me to endure.

The first is that God blessed me with a good intellect and I used it to my advantage. I loved school. At school, I was somebody—a good student, an honor student. I was always striving for more knowledge. Knowledge for me opened the doors to other worlds.

Mathematics was one of my favorite subjects. I loved working with figures and later, with equations, geometry, algebra, and the rest. In math, I found a logic and a rationale that was missing in my everyday life. Math gave me an avenue where things made sense. At home, chaos and confusion reigned. Home was a place of unreality, illogical behavior, and more questions than answers. In math, I found concrete ways to solve problems—a logical, scientific approach to the questions presented. One plus one, in math, always equaled two. Not in my house it didn't. Often one plus one didn't equal anything at all and certainly never the same answer twice.

I also found solace and safety in nature. The woods became my sanctuary and my playground. Walking through the streams,

rolling down the hills, playing in the leaves, hiding, running *free*, I could escape from the reality—and the fear—that lived at my house. I stayed outside until the last possible ray of sunlight vanished. I walked barefoot through the grass, ran through the sprinkler, rode my bicycle for hours, and lay on hills watching the clouds. I collected rocks, caught lightning bugs, and explored every nook and cranny of the outdoors. This was *my world*—a world that my parents could not enter or destroy.

Another refuge for me was the library and the world of books. I can still remember the smell of new books. Oh, what a sweet aroma that was! I found a home among the bookshelves in the local library and spent hours browsing and reading, safely cocooned in a wonderland of books. Reading opened up new and fascinating worlds—worlds where life *did* have a happy ending; worlds where families loved, respected and cared for each other; exotic, mysterious worlds; faraway places; fairy tale lands full of heroes and heroines where the damsel in distress was *always* rescued. Books became my salvation. I spent hours reading, no, consuming everything I could find. By the age of eleven, I was reading adult best sellers and by twelve belonged to the Doubleday Book Club. I watched the mailbox daily for the coveted delivery of my sacred books. I not only read, I lived the story. My mind would transport me into whatever setting I was reading about. I walked the fields of Tara with Scarlet O'Hara. I

Sacred Circle

romped with Lassie and Black Beauty, rafted the Mississippi with Tom Sawyer and Huck Finn and traveled the world and beyond with scores of fictional characters.

Sports gave me a safe outlet for expressing many of my feelings. I was the world's biggest tomboy and could play with, and beat,

most of the boys my age. I could pound the baseball to all fields and run with free abandon, sliding safely into second base—victorious. If there were no one to play with, I would spend endless hours throwing the ball against the side of our house. Fastball after fastball. The sound of the ball hitting the

wall and then zinging into my glove was hypnotic. This solitary action, I realize now, was a form of meditation where I could enter another world, a world of sound and “nothingness.” I didn't have to think; I could just *be*. Tackle football was another favorite. I could pass with amazing accuracy and I loved to tackle. I felt exhilarated by the physical contact. Tennis and golf provided other ways to express feelings. I could smash the ball and, in the process release the anger that churned inside me. I was extremely competitive—cut-throat. I liked to win and needed to win. Fortunately, I usually did.

I found friendship—and a mentor—with a neighbor woman. I can still remember climbing the stairs to her home and finding a place where I felt free to be myself. I have no clear recollection of our conversations, but a feeling of warmth and comfort engulfs me as I climb those stairs today in my memory.

Yet, as important as these other factors were, the real key to my survival lies in one word—*spirit*. I believe I knew, even as a child, that there was part of me that my father could not reach, could not destroy, could not steal. Inside there always flickered a ray of hope that the future would be a time of joy and happiness. Hidden away, deep within myself was a spark of life—my spirit, my soul—safely protected from my father's words and deeds. It took me many years to rekindle that flame, that burning passion and spirit for life but the spark was always there, waiting for me to rediscover it.

I rejoice in these “tools” that

Nataraj

enabled me to survive. They served me well. And I still utilize them but now for a different purpose, not just to survive but to live.

I continue to be a passionate reader of anything and everything. Reading is one of the true loves of my life. Ironically, math no longer holds any appeal for me. I have reached a place in my life where logic doesn't always work. I have moved into the illogical, the creative, the abstract. I enjoy the questioning now as much as I enjoy the answer.

Nature is still *sacred*. I feel a deep connection to the earth, the animals, the water, the trees, the birds. I feel a profound sense of peace when I am outside—whether it be in the woods, at the ocean, or in my own backyard. I am, I think, most aware of God in nature and holy.

I still enjoy sports, but I have “lost” the competitiveness and cut-throat attitude of my childhood and early adulthood. I now enjoy playing for playing's sake. My days of baseball and football are over, but I still enjoy tennis and golf. Golf relaxes me and I feel challenged, not by an opponent but by the course.

I am thankful for these “tools” and for my resiliency. It has taken me many years to feel thankful for any part of my childhood but as I write these words, I realize what joy these “tools” brought me and continue to bring me.

And what of my spirit? It is my spirit that got me through my childhood and it is that same spirit and faith in God and the hope for a brighter future that kept me going during the dark days following my

divorce—the same spirit that kept me plodding ahead as memory after painful memory returned. Even on the darkest days, I maintained a fervent hope that there was a light at the end of this long black tunnel. Some days the best I could manage to do was get out of bed and put one foot in front of the other but I kept going.

I still struggle with the pain, the anger, the sorrow. There are more memories ahead, more healing. My journey continues. But I am living each day, enjoying the special moments of peace and serenity. Treasuring the growth. Delighting in this new life I am discovering. Grateful for the gifts of a lifetime.

I am *living*. I am moving on. “Some of us fall by the wayside and some of us soar to the stars. And some of us sail through our troubles and some have to live with the scars.” Elton John's words in “Circle of Life” seem to fit. I didn't fall by the wayside. And maybe some day *I will* soar to the stars. In the meantime, I can and *will* live with the scars. •

Anderson's

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TONY STONK/KATHI LAMM

Linda Schierse Leonard, Ph.D., is a philosopher who trained as a Jungian analyst and has been in private practice for more than twenty years. She is the author of "The Wounded Woman," "On the Way to the Wedding," "Witness to the Fire," and "Meeting the Madwoman." Her books have been translated into twelve languages. Based in San Francisco, she lectures and gives workshops internationally. From "Creation's Heartbeat: Following the Reindeer Spirit" by Linda Schierse Leonard. Copyright 1995 by Linda Schierse Leonard. Printed with permission of Bantam Books, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc. All rights reserved.

Spirit Animal Guides

L I N D A S C H I E R S E L E O N A R D

When I was a child, I could hardly wait until Saturday mornings when Dolly would appear. Dolly was the old white horse that pulled the milk wagon through Philadelphia's cobbled stone streets. Rushing out to greet her, I would throw my arms around her neck, then stroke her nose and touch her soft velvet mouth gently with my left hand, which held the sugar cube she loved so much. After Dolly nuzzled me, the driver signaled her to continue on their delivery route. Every Saturday I followed Dolly faithfully through the narrow streets and alleys, praising her with pats, apples, and carrots at her stops. When she passed into the district where my mother had forbidden me to go, I followed Dolly with my eyes until I could see her old white back no longer. All the rest of the week, I accompanied her spirit with my heart, always wondering where she went when I could not go with her, hardly able to wait until the next Saturday when I could be with her again.

One Saturday, neither Dolly nor the milk wagon appeared. In tears I asked my mother what had happened. I don't remember what my mother told me, but eventually I learned that Dolly had died. The horse-drawn milk delivery service was canceled and a motorized milk truck took its place. Hard black asphalt replaced the old cobblestone streets and at night electric lights were substituted for the warm golden gas streetlights that had made our bleak neighborhood seem a little friendly.

As a little girl growing up poor in the middle of a big city, Dolly was the only horse I encountered. She became my first actual spirit guide. The ritual

of following the old white mare every Saturday morning sustained me through the week and gave me hope during my traumatic childhood. No matter how frightened I was on the nights my father came home drunk, I felt the spirit of Dolly and called upon her loving energy to help me. Following Dolly was healing to my small child's suffering soul. Walking faithfully behind her gave me solace. When she disappeared, I felt bereft. Finally with the help of books, I found fictional horses and other animals who became my friends, and I learned to follow them in my imagination. Without Dolly or her storybook successors like Flicka, Lassie, Black Beauty, the Yearling, and the Black Stallion, I wonder how I could have survived childhood.

Half a century later in the Siberian wilderness, when I was learning from the Even people that each member of their tribe had a special reindeer that was their personal spirit guide during this earthly life, I remembered Dolly. How lucky I was to have received this rare gift of nature in the midst of a large, impersonal city. As the reindeer are for the Even people, Dolly was the first spirit guide on my young soul's journey.

Following Dolly taught me how important it is to care for an animal friend. From the old mare, I learned about love and death and healing. As she pulled the wagon that brought us milk, the liquid equivalent of a mother's nourishing love, I drank in her loving spirit in much the way that the Even people do when they sip the heavenly liquid that the elder women milk from the holy reindeer doe.

A spirit guide can draw us to and along our spiritual journeys—our process of consciously trying to live a reverent life. Just as we sometimes need guides to point the way on our travels through the

physical world, on any inner journey of transformation we need trailblazers who encourage us to continue on our quest and who give us direction.

While I was writing this chapter and pondering the meaning of spirit guides, I was on a plane flying to Minneapolis to give a lecture. In the row ahead, I noticed a beautiful blond dog sitting on the floor by the aisle seat. For a moment I questioned my perception, but when I looked again, I saw that the golden retriever was a guide dog accompanying a handsome young blind man. The dog licked the man's hand as he fondled the animal's ears. Here was a living example of a spirit guide. Like the traveling blind man, who needed the guide dog in order to negotiate his way safely, so at times all of us need a pathfinder to show us the direction on our life quests.

My mother's real-life animal guide was a huge Saint Bernard dog named Barney, a constant companion who used to go out and find her father on the nights when he failed to come home after a hard night's drinking.

My grandmother, who raised me, told me she had many spirit guides with whom she conversed—the birds, the deer, the foxes, and the squirrels, even snakes and fish, all the animals that roamed around the farmlands where she grew up. Her special animal guide was an owl that nested in an old oak tree and with whom she would consult, especially on moonlit nights.

My father, who grew up in the city, often told me how much the relationship between the human heroes and the wolf-dog spirit guides portrayed in Jack London's novels had inspired him to survive

A spirit guide can draw us to and along our spiritual journeys—our process of consciously trying to live a reverent life. Just as we sometimes need guides to point the way on our travels through the physical world...

after his father made him quit school at thirteen to go to work.

Some of us, like my father, find helping guides as we read the pages of a novel, when we listen to a fairy tale, while we watch a film, or in our dreams at night. Animals often appear in literature as symbols of redemption. For instance, in Dostoyevsky's novel, "Crime and Punishment," a spirit guide appears in a dream to the protagonist, Raskolnikov.

Raskolnikov thinks himself superior to ordinary people and above human morality, and he murders an old woman to try to prove it. He chooses this particular woman as his victim because she is reputed to be mean and abusive to others, and he tries to justify killing her by telling himself that he is ridding the world of a bad person. During his attack on the old woman, her sister sees him, and in his fear and confusion, he kills her as well.

Instead of feeling justified and liberated, however, Raskolnikov suffers guilt. He falls sick

for three days, during which he is beset with nightmares. In one dream, he is a young boy of twelve and is with his father. He sees a crowd watching a cart man beat an old nag mercilessly when she can no longer pull the overloaded wagon. Unable to bear this cruelty, Raskolnikov runs to the old mare and, throwing his arms around her neck, screams to the cart man to stop beating her. He awakens from the dream sobbing with love and mercy for the weak and bloody horse. The image of the beaten horse in his dream helps Raskolnikov to recover his human feeling by guiding him to the knowledge that he himself has been like the abusive cart man. In his heart, he sees, he loves and wants to protect



TONY STONE/STALE FORBES

the old mare. Thus, her animal spirit draws him toward transformation from his abstract dehumanized theory of being a superman, above human morality, to compassion for living beings.

Every child wants an animal to love, and just as the cart horse reminded Raskolnikov of his feelings, animals teach us how to love. As reindeer are spiritual pathfinders for *all* of the Even people, so in childhood are animals our spirit guides. As children, our hearts went out to Bambi when the hunters, who wantonly intruded upon the forest, brutally shot to death the fawn's mother. Bambi's survival became the hope of many children. Yet somehow, as adults, many of those very children who loved Bambi now sneer at others' love and concern for animals and dismiss their beloved childhood stories and animal heroes and heroines as

sentimental. In this way, they scorn the qualities of vulnerability and the open heart.

To follow the deer as a spirit guide requires trust and childlike innocence. Young children who grow up in relatively healthy conditions often have the simplicity to open their hearts to healing images. For example, Martin, who attended one of my workshops on the reindeer spirit, related the following experience. When he was four years old, he was taken to the hospital to undergo surgery. He was afraid to leave home and especially to leave his mother. Just before the operation, Martin remembers, he saw in his imagination a beautiful reindeer which comforted him and told him that he would recover and return to his family. Even now, as an adult in mid-life, Martin calls upon this image of the healing reindeer spirit to give him solace and hope whenever he feels troubled. Just as the rein-

deer image helps Martin, who grew up in a healthy home, so learning to love and care for animals can help abused children find comfort and empathy.

The temptation to be cynical about the love for animals, and cynicism's threat to the soul's progress, is made clear by Father Zossima, the spiritual mentor and elder in Dostoyevsky's "The Brothers Karamazov." "Love the animals: God has given them the rudiments of thought and joy untroubled. Do not trouble it, don't harass them, don't deprive them of their happiness, don't work against God's intent. Man, do not pride yourself on superiority to the animals; they are without sin, and you, with your greatness, defile the earth by your appearance on it, and leave the traces of our foulness after you—alas, it is true of almost every one of us!"

The reindeer people—and other indigenous peoples—understand instinctively the truth of Dostoyevsky's maxim: that respect and love for animals yields a humility essential to the soul's journey. Indigenous peoples often directly experience the way reverence for animals can flow naturally from life and be part of human survival, an impulse that the naturalist and conservationist E.O. Wilson calls "biophilia"—the love for other living beings. This view is also expressed by Frank Waters in his novel about Pueblo Native American Indian life, "The Man Who Killed the Deer." "Nothing is simple and alone. We are not separate and alone. The breathing mountains, the living stones, each blade of grass, the clouds, the rain, each star, the beasts, the birds and the invisible spir-

The reindeers' ability to survive the starkest winters and find their way through dangerous wilderness to create new life may help us reclaim a guiding symbol for our existence, one that can help us rediscover and redeem our own enduring instincts.

its of the air—we are all one, indivisible. Nothing that any of us does but affects us all."

My grandmother shared this philosophy with me when I was a little girl. Even faraway "fantasy" creatures like the reindeer carried a spiritual significance to her. I remember sitting on her lap while she read poems and stories like "The Snow Queen," in which a reindeer helps a young heroine, Gerda, journey to a faraway realm to save her friend, then carries the reunited couple back to their home. Tales like this nurtured my imagination and gave me hope during dark times when I felt constricted and menaced. Reindeer seemed like magical wild horses, whose wing like antlers guided them through the heavens to other worlds, exciting realms of freedom, adventure, love, and generosity. They seemed natural extensions of Dolly, the cart horse. In my fantasies, Dolly, too, had secret wings that bore her through the skies at night after she had finished delivering milk.

When Gram told me about the reindeer, as we sat on the back steps of our cramped row house, her eyes would shine. Telling the stories rekindled happy memories of her own adventures with deer and the other animals that she met on her wanderings through the woods near the farm on which she grew up. Feeling her excitement, encircled by her warm arms, and looking into her loving eyes, I was drawn to dream and hope for better times.

Years later, when I left home and traveled west, I settled in a mountain town to write for a daily

newspaper. With my first earnings, I bought a horse, a big, black, shaggy cow pony who became a spirit guide for me in early adulthood and with whom I had many adventures. On weekends, Snooks and I would ride far away, usually into Phantom Canyon, a wild and twisting stretch of land that wound through a narrow, red, rocky gorge cut by a roaring river. After a few hours' ride down the canyon, we would settle in an open grassy meadow by the stream, where Snooks grazed and I leaned against an ancient cottonwood tree, thumbing through my well-worn copy of "Walden" to continue my rambles with Thoreau.

In the Arctic the shamanic peoples, who live according to the rhythms of animals, regard the reindeer as a spiritual messenger who travels between heaven and earth, transporting the shaman to the spirit world where he gathers wisdom to bring back to help heal the community. The reindeer also carry the souls of the dead to the spirit world for rebirth. I wondered whether there was an original spiritual link between reindeer and Christmas imagery.

Our commercial culture sentimentalizes reindeer as Santa's bearers of material objects in our profit-ridden society. Suppose, instead, that Santa were a modern-day shaman and that his reindeer were ridden by the ancient shamans through the heavens, the antlered angels that guided them to find ways of healing and wisdom from the spirit world. When reindeer become shamanic messengers for peace rather than mundane bearers of presents, their image, so magical to children, takes on spiritual significance.

Buried in the artificial cartoon image of Santa and his reindeer lie traces of ancient shamanic beliefs. The winter solstice was observed and celebrated long before Christmas became a holy day, always with colorful gifts to ward off the darkness of winter. Shamans, like our modern Santa, were said to travel through chimneys in their journeys to the other world. Santa, our modern shaman, cares for the reindeer all year long until he journeys with them into our hearts, a spirit guide to keep hope alive for us. The gifts brought by the reindeer—who can survive the ravages of winter—help us

make it through another winter, too; the gifts are spiritual offerings, symbols of transformation for living in harmony with the cosmos. The Christ child can be thought of as a shaman and healer who bridged the human and divine realms. The holy child was born, spirit made flesh, not in the spring—the more usual season for birth in the natural world—but in the middle of winter, a harbinger of peace and our connection with the divine.

Today our artificial view of animals and our subordination of them to ourselves have caused many of us to lose our natural ability to encounter animals in an open way and to partake in the mysteries and the powerful energies that they possess. In a zoo, where cages mentally and physically protect us from animals, we often merely look at the beast without really seeing it. But animals watch us, too. Whoever has trekked freely in nature, unprotected by weapons or other artificial devices, knows the thrill, the threat, the start at suddenly meeting the eyes of an animal. The visual act of returning an animal's look may make us become aware suddenly of ourselves in a physical and mystical sense. We may suddenly recognize a wilderness within our souls that mirrors the wildness of a fellow creature. The tribes of the reindeer people look directly into the eyes of the deer and know that the animal has secrets it can reveal to them, knowledge relevant to their own existence, purpose, and survival. If we allow ourselves to look into the eyes of animals with open minds, we, too, will feel awe before their mystery.

Our own reflection framed within the peaceful eyes of the reindeer can remind us of our intimate, primal connection with and responsibility to all of nature. The reindeers' ability to survive the starkest winters and find their way through dangerous wilderness to create new life may help us reclaim a guiding symbol for our existence, one that can help us rediscover and redeem our own enduring instincts. The reindeer can again become spirit guides for us, images of hope and peace that can inspire us to honor and affirm life and peacefully transform ourselves and our world. •



Learn From Emotions

FRAN COX & LOUIS COX

Be cool! and chill out! are modern bywords not only for youngsters but for grownups who have been trained to shut down the information coming from their senses. Grownups believe that they should be above their emotions, always able to master them. Most people are so afraid of being overwhelmed by their feelings that they go to great lengths to keep them in check. In the process, they often dull or destroy their ability to feel things deeply.

TONY STONIS/TIM BLANCH

Louis Cox, Ph.D., is a leader in the field of individual and organizational psychology who has 30 years of experience consulting with individuals and organizations. Fran Cox, M.A., is an artist with work in galleries and museums in Boston and New York. They have been married 32 years and live in New York.



Good grownups are very cool all the time. Look at our almost universal cultural admiration for the British, those inventors of the “stiff upper lip”! Complete *sang-froid*—literally “cold blood”—is the ultimate protection against experiencing the hidden surprises that can boil up at any time in the course of ordinary events. The relevant grownup operating principle or governing idea is *I must manage the moment and not let it surprise me.*

Look at a young child’s emotional responses to the world, and then look at those of the so-called adults around you. Granted, we wouldn’t all want to maintain quite the emotional intensity of two-year-olds—but it does seem that we lose out on a lot of our potential, especially our potential for delight. In the microcosm of evolution in each human being, the ability to feel joy becomes as impaired and faded as the sense of smell has in modern humankind. Our ability now is a mere trace of the sensory capacity we once possessed.

Strong emotions can threaten the image of ourselves we construct so carefully, both for public consumption and for the person we see every morning in the bathroom mirror. It can feel as though strong emotions will render us as powerless

“Emotion is the chief source of all becoming-consciousness. There can be no transforming of darkness into light or of apathy into movement without emotion.”

—Carl Gustav Jung

as we were when we were two-years-old and uninhibited. Many grownups regard emotionality as unnecessarily time-consuming—an annoying digression from rational thought and the real business of life (whatever that is).

Suppressing our emotions allows us to float above potential hurt, humiliation, or pain, but the resulting loss of information can be critical. Not only do we lose out on information, but a lot of the nuances of life—and the beauty—simply can’t thrive in the arctic temperatures of the grownup’s ultra-cool world.

Adults, on the other hand, cultivate an inner sense of calm and stability that does not require giving up either the information or the spice carried by strong feelings. The relevant operating principle for the adult is *I learn from my emotions.*

THE EMOTIONAL BANQUET

When we’re taught to grow up rather than allowed to mature, we respond inwardly to our emotions by ignoring, denying, minimizing, manipulating, intellectualizing, and needing to be “right” about them. Emotions are deeply personal and subjective; they run counter to the grownup’s need to conform to fixed models. On the other hand, adults who have been allowed to mature listen to what their emotions are telling them, trust that information as real, probe and experiment with it, savor it, and share it with others. Emotions are just emotions, but how we react to them internally determines what, if anything, we’re able to learn from them. Our internal relationship to them constitutes the difference between an adult and a grownup response.

The adult is aware of the emotional binds in

which the grownup lives. The grownup is trained to view emotions negatively. At their first appearance, his energy is unconsciously and automatically geared to shutting them down and controlling the fear they cause him. Emotions end up being emergencies, and the grownup begins whatever emergency prevention responses he has learned. Every emotional situation becomes tense, whether or not it is inherently so. The grownup doesn't get to experience the emotion—or learn what it has to teach him—but he suffers the emergency anyway. Denying feelings splits your energy and binds you to a state in which you never know what is really true about yourself or your situation.

A dearth of feeling can impoverish even the richest of lives. We know a successful businessman, who threw a “retirement” party for an aspect of himself he called “the zoner.” For him, that name covered his experience of moving through life with skill and success but very little feeling. “The zoner did everything compulsively and with consummate skill—but I wasn't allowed to be present emotionally to claim any part of the experience. It might as well have been somebody else's life I was living.” Without the richness conferred by deep feeling, life becomes shallow and narrow and meaningless.

Not caring is a way of insulating ourselves against being hurt all over again in the ways in which we were hurt as undefended children. We “feel” our emotions only in safe and approved ways—perhaps we cry at the movies, or get emotionally involved in a book or a television program, or get choked up during tear-jerker commercials, or cry at funerals. But when it comes to experiencing consciously what we feel about the people closest to us while they're living or the miraculous joy of simply being alive and on this planet, we stuff our emotions away and out of sight, even out of mind. To know love is to fear loss. To claim your anger is to explore the prospect of being separate and alone. To know the true joy of being alive is to experience the certainty of death. Most people don't feel strong enough to allow themselves to be so vulnerable. So they swallow their love, fear, anger, and joy, and settle for merely surviving and feeling safe.

This neutral ground provides a defense against

the freely expressed preferences and personal choices that we've come to associate with punishment and feelings of shame. The emotions that by rights should define our adulthood come to be seen as weak spots in our character that need to be excised.

Some of us have done such an effective grownup job of eliminating and manipulating our emotions that we go through life feeling very little. All that would define our personal uniqueness is buried, and nothing stands out or appears remarkable in the world around us. All children seem the same, all trees look alike, snow is snow, rain is rain; all birthdays and holidays provoke feelings of guilt, inadequacy, and disappointment. Love boils down to sex or obligation. Friendship is fleeting and is largely about using people to get where you want to go. Work becomes a ball-and-chain. So does marriage.

These are the outcomes of the very grownup behavior of repressing our emotions. It's like losing your sense of taste and smell and then chewing your way joylessly through life's banquet. You won't starve to death... but, oh, what you're missing!

The well-trained grownup says, “I will talk only about ideas with you. I will never tell you how I feel about them or how they affect me, nor do I want to know how you feel about anything.” A very successful performing artist we know confided in us, “I was so successful; I made money and had lots of people interested in me and in my work. It wasn't cool to care about anything like that, so while it was happening, I pretended not to notice or be excited. I was very sophisticated and bored with it all. The pendulum has swung the other way now, and I missed all the fun and excitement of that kind of success when I had it.

This same deadening of feeling was described by a neighbor of ours. “My daughter is gone now, moved to the coast. She never calls. I thought it would bother me, but it doesn't. You see, we had a very businesslike relationship. I had very high standards for her, and she was very obedient. I don't know what her favorite colors are or why she had chosen to be a vegetarian. I don't know why she stopped playing basketball when she was twelve, even though she seemed to like it. I never thought



TONY STONIS/PETER CORREZ

to ask. It didn't seem important at the time, and now she says she doesn't remember. Perhaps I taught her to ignore her feelings, too.

The adult can revel in emotions that inspire creativity and positive change, that carry a charge of courage and determination. Without such feelings, even what we chose to do becomes burdensome. Meaning is sapped from our lives when our emotional motivation is killed or crippled. So many grownups experience an absence of meaning in their lives because they don't feel safe enough internally to embrace their own feelings.

Emotions are especially threatening when they become obsessive, occurring over and over again and feeling completely out of control. Rather than listen to such emotions for the information they convey, grownups put all their effort into trying to make the emotions stop. In this situation, emotions assume a power they were never meant to have. An emotion has no need to repeat itself over and over again unless we are ignoring its message. The physical parallel would be getting the cue from your

body that you're hungry but failing to eat or feeling cold but not putting on warmer clothes.

In war, the repetition of fear is a normal reaction. Feeling sad each time you visit a relative in the hospital is a normal reaction. But repetitive, chronic anxiety, depression, rage, shame, or obsessive thoughts are the results of destructive early childhood training and blocked emotional growth (barring a physiological disorder). Under open and safe conditions, emotions emerge within us and prompt us to action and expression. When the emotion is acknowledged, examined for information, and responded to appropriately, its cycle is finished and it goes away.

A MORE EFFECTIVE RELATIONSHIP TO EMOTION

Grownups who have had to shut down emotionally are forced to look outside themselves for cues about how they should feel. They may look to their partner to supply the emotional content of their life or they may surround themselves with authority

figures to whom they can refer all aspects of their lives for answers, judgment, and approval. These are the people who need to stay in destructive family situations rather than leave or who may be the support behind charismatic but corrupt leaders. They also provide fodder for cults. At the extreme, they may be so disconnected and so hurt that they resort to violence against people who see through their defensive shell to the vulnerable person inside. Killing or dying, in such extreme cases, can seem preferable to being exposed to the possibility of feeling one's full burden of pain.

Emotions are one of the ways in which you come to know yourself and the world. Cutting off or deadening your feelings curtails the flow of information to you even more than losing your sense of sight or hearing—either of which would certainly be a devastating loss, but could still be compensated for. There is no other sense that will compensate for the insight and wisdom conferred by your feelings.

All emotions have extremes, with a broad range of intensity. Their arrivals and departures are unpredictable, and they are mostly outside your conscious control. Adults know that although emotions don't necessarily have to be acted upon, it's essential to acknowledge them—to be able freely to own what you feel, even when your emotions make you feel ashamed or vulnerable. As part of your specialized human equipment, emotions must be cared for and understood in the same way in which you care for and try to understand your body. Your health depends on it.

It's essential to come to know your emotions from the inside. They are a vital part of your feedback system with other people and the world around you. They connect you with your history (which determines so much about the day-to-day course of your life) and, in some mystical way we don't really understand, with the unknown. You can come under their sway, get caught in them, and experience them taking charge of your life. But ignoring them doesn't make them go away. It just makes them go underground, where they are truly out of your control.

We can't stress enough that all your emotions

and feelings have purpose. None of them is without its function. An adult knows and accepts this. Recently, Fran was going to a very important business meeting which had taken a lot of work for her to arrange. "My efforts had centered around pushing through the prohibitions I had about promoting myself. I was halfway over the mountain on my way to the city when I allowed myself to feel the excitement about my success in arranging the meeting. My excitement brought to mind the picture of myself presenting my credentials at the door. At that moment, I realized I had left those credentials on the kitchen table at home. I turned the car around, headed for the documents, and thanked my excitement for saving my day."

STAYING CONNECTED

As grownups, we've been trained to lose contact with our interior reality. This creates a formidable barrier to mining our emotions for the riches they hold. If you've been forced to break off contact with your interior, how are you supposed to explore your emotions for information and meaning?

Ordinary emotional responses are distorted in families with parents who can neither express nor respond to feelings that make them uncomfortable. For example, childhood fears that are ignored or ridiculed by parents often become a source of chronic anxiety for those children when they grow up. If you find it impossible to relate feelings of anxiety to any rational cause in the present, chances are that they have their roots in the past. Fear, anger, and sadness are a natural part of the array of human emotions and may be firmly anchored in the here and now. But chronic anxiety, rage, and depression can develop only over time and are often the result of repressed emotions out of the past. This does nothing to diminish their present power, which for the grownup can be completely overwhelming, coloring every aspect of day-to-day life.

When you know that your identity and worth are safely lodged within yourself, emotions can become a source of enrichment rather than torture. For example, sadness may be a painful emotion to feel but when you know that the feeling itself doesn't constitute an emergency, it can help you understand the meaning of a hurt or the magnitude

of a loss. Even if an emotion sparks an emergency reaction, you can defuse the emergency by exploring its sources and meaning.

Chronic emotions tell you of something in your psyche that needs attention. They are like radio locator beams from hidden unhealed wounds. They will not go away or stop signaling until you come to the rescue. The more you ignore them, the more power they'll have over you.

All that we say about the internal process of discovering and dealing with repetitive emotions and feelings can also be said about the repetitive thoughts, beliefs, bodily reactions, and fantasies that are out of our conscious control and running our lives. Compulsive thoughts (such as, "Maybe I didn't turn off the gas!") can bring some people back to their house countless times or torment them in the office all day long. A belief that plays itself out incessantly—such as "I am not smart"—might color all of someone else's daily interactions. Overpowering exhaustion that automatically surfaces in conflict situations is the same kind of experience interpreted by the body.

The process of becoming conscious of these repetitions, and beginning to see where and how they occur, is the same as that for the emotions. Every person is plagued by internal beasts of one kind or another and is faced with either taming them or being devoured. When Saint-Exupery's Little Prince asks the fox what taming means, the fox replies, "It means to establish ties... One only understands the things that one tames." When the

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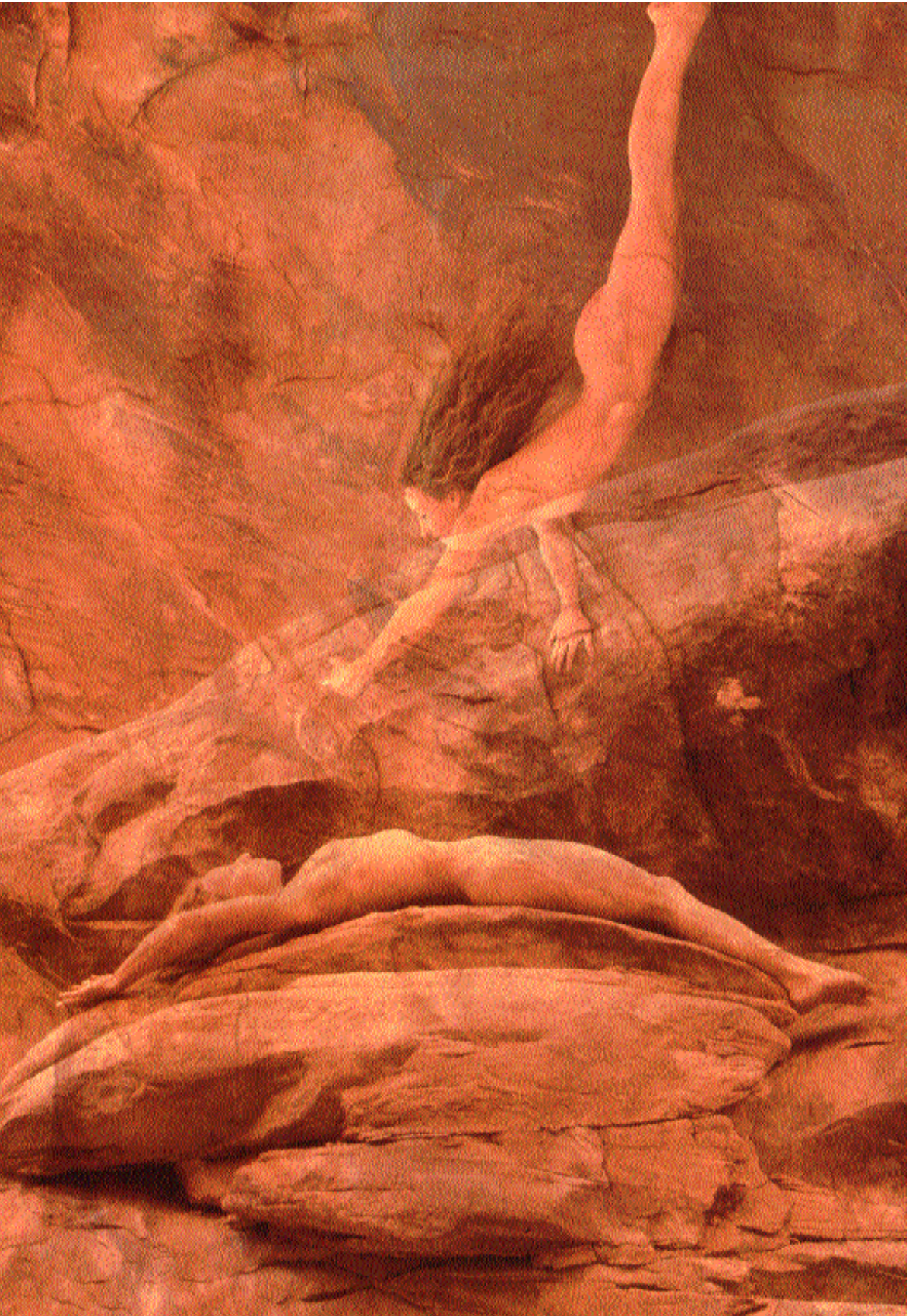
Little Prince asks what he must do to tame the fox, the fox tells him, "You must be very patient. First you will sit down a little distance from me—like that—in the grass. I shall look at you out of the corner of my eye and you will say nothing. Words are a source of misunderstanding. But you will sit a little closer to me every day." When the Prince has tamed the fox, he says, "I have made him my friend and now he is unique in all the world." This is good advice for the best way to tame a frightening emotion that keeps repeating itself. Be patient. Pay attention to its message rather than try to rationalize it away. Make friends with it and let it teach you.

Your personal history colors your every thought and feeling. That's why emotional reactions always have to be examined for any freeloaders from the past. Are you reacting out of the here and now or has your reaction been distorted by leftover business from the past? To be able to distinguish between the two, you need to know, understand, and acknowledge your personal history.

Of course, this is no easy task—and it's really more a process than a task, as there are always deeper levels of understanding and greater subtleties of insight to be achieved. And your past isn't something that stays fixed, either. With every day you live, your past continues to reveal itself in new ways.

Responses that might have been appropriate for you ten years ago are not necessarily appropriate for you now. You've grown and changed. And yet, when confronted with a situation they found trou-

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SOUL RETRIEVAL FROM THE FORTHCOMING BOOK SOULSCAPES BY SUSAN SLOTTER © 1993

The Essential Feminine

HELEN LUKE

The women's movements of this century have brought many splendid changes and have given to the lives of millions of women a freedom rarely dreamed of a hundred years ago. But as always, such rapid changes bring with them great dangers which can become the roots of evils that remain unrecognized and are therefore projected onto convenient "enemies," such as man. It is therefore vital, if the new freedoms are to become real in our lives, that individual women recognize the necessity of connecting the theories expounded and the emotions aroused in herself with the symbolic life of her feminine psyche. Without this inner work, however things may appear on the surface, the new freedoms may turn to lark and destructive conflicts in her soul.

Where, however, is a woman to look for nourishment for her inner imagery as her new personality struggles for birth? The changes in the way of Eve have come with staggering swiftness, but it seems to me that only recently has the realization broken through that a deeper awareness of the nature of these changes is now essential. If we are to stop the wreckage caused by the disorientation of women, by their loss of identity under the stresses of the new way, then the numinous meaning of the great challenge they face must break through from the unconscious; for no amount of rational analysis can bring healing. Only in this way can the images of the masculine and feminine, which have become more and more dangerously mixed in our society,

be discriminated once more, so that they may come to a new synthesis in both woman and man.

It is important that we attempt to arrive at some degree of clarity about various attitudes and assumptions which are currently prevalent when people talk about woman. Those who assert that the only difference between men and women is biological, and that in every other way they are equal and have the same inborn potentialities, have disastrously missed the point. Equality of value between individuals is an eternal truth, beyond all comparisons, whereas "superior" and "inferior" are relative terms defining abilities or degrees of consciousness. Equality of opportunity for women has indeed to be fought for, but equality of value can never be understood until we have learned to discriminate and accept *difference*. The biological difference between man and woman is never a "nothing but"; it is a fundamental difference, and it does not stop with the body but implies an equally fundamental difference of psychic nature. No matter how consciously we may develop the contrasexual principle within ourselves, no matter how strong our intuition of the ultimate union between the masculine and feminine elements in each individual, as long as we remain in our bodies here in space and time, we are predominantly either male or female, and we forget this at our peril. Disaster awaits a woman who imitates man, but even a woman who aims at becoming half-man, half-woman, and imagines she is thereby achieving archetypal "androgyny" will certainly be inferior on both counts. A woman is born to be essentially and

wholly a woman and the more deeply and consciously she is able to know and live the spirit, the Logos, within her the more surely she will realize this truth. One of the most frightening characteristics of our present *Zeitgeist* is the urge to destroy difference, to reduce everything to a horrible sameness in the cause of “equality.”

Whether a woman is efficient or brilliant in some sphere hitherto deemed masculine or whether she remains in a traditionally feminine role, modern woman must discriminate and relate to the image of the masculine spirit within herself, while at the same time maintaining her roots in her basic feminine nature—that which receives, nourishes, and gives birth on all levels of being through her awareness of the earth and her ability to bring up the water of life from under the earth. All her true creativeness in every aspect of her life, private or public, springs from this.

As we look back on the extremely rapid emergence of women in this century into the masculine world of thought and action, it is not surprising that woman has fallen into increased contempt for her own values. It has surely been a necessary phase but its effects have been devastating not only on woman herself but also on the men around her. For the animus—the unconscious masculinity in a woman—when it takes possession of her femininity, has a terrifying power, charged as it is with the numinosity of the unconscious—and most men in their turn, when faced with this power in their women, either retreat into an inferior passive femininity, seeking to propitiate the power of the animus or else react with brutal aggressive masculinity. Small wonder that women thus possessed, having lost their true roots in nature, are constantly beset by the anxious feeling of being useless, however outwardly successful. The dreams of modern women are full of this basic insecurity.

It is time for woman to turn from this hidden contempt for the feminine values so that she may cease to identify creativity solely with the productions of thought and with achievements in the outer world. It is exceedingly hard for us to realize, in the climate of Western society, that the woman who quietly *responds* with intense interest and love to

people, to ideas, and to things is as deeply and truly creative as one who always seeks to lead, to act, to achieve. The feminine qualities of receptivity, of nurturing in silence and secrecy, are (whether in man or woman) as essential to creation as their masculine opposites and in no way inferior.

But these are all rational thoughts *about* the situation. What of the images without which, as I said at the outset, no change is possible? How is a woman, when she feels the immense fascination of the power of the spirit stirring in her, to welcome it and yet remain true to her womanhood or how is she to rediscover her femininity if she has lost it? How is a man to realize the values of the heart without losing the bright sword of his spirit in the fogs of emotion? There are no intellectual answers.

Only the images by which we live can bring transformation. The future hangs on this quest for the heart of love by both sexes.

Each of us has a well of images within which are the saving reality and from which may be born the individual myth carrying the meaning of a life. That new images are now emerging in the tales and poetry of our time is now beyond doubt. But any truly valid “new myth” cannot be rationally invented. It must be born out of the crucible of our own struggles and suffering as we affirm our new freedom without rejecting the perennial truth of the feminine way.

I take thee... to have and to hold from this day forward, for better or worse, for richer or poorer, in sickness and in health, to love and to cherish, till death us do part... and thereto I plight thee my troth.” There are few lovelier words in the English language. The man who speaks them with all his heart, standing in the holy place, is pledging himself to more than the personal marriage between himself and his beloved. She carries for him in that moment, consciously or unconsciously, the image of all womanhood—of that which nourishes and gives birth, not only to physical children but to all the values of true relatedness and to the tender understanding of the heart. To the woman in her turn, her man is the symbol, however obscurely felt, of the sword of the Spirit—of the clear shining of the Word-in the darkness. So they take this most



BREATH OF LIFE FROM THE FORTHCOMING BOOK SOULSCAPES BY SUSAN SLOTTER © 1993

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solemn vow to love this innermost beauty and cherish it, no matter what the cost, as long as life shall last. Many who have no use for the Church and its rituals will find themselves moved at a wedding as their unconscious responds to the deeply buried image. For the two before the altar are more in that moment than simply the “John” or “Mary” whom we know; they are the symbols of the marriage for which all men yearn in their hearts—the I-Thou meeting, the marriage of Heaven and Earth.

The fact of this commitment in a dimension far beyond their ego consciousness does not, of course, mean that their promise to each other in this world is in any way weakened or devalued. On the contrary, they are now pledged to the daily attempt to live as truly as they are able the meaning of the symbol in all their dealings with each other. Each has chosen a partner with whom to bring forth children, both human and spiritual. There is no hope that they will be able “to love and to cherish” each other unless each is prepared to accept his or her own darkness and weakness and to strive for the “holy marriage” within, thus setting the other free to find his or her individual reality. If there is a continual growth of consciousness through the daily abrasions and delights and through the hard work of maintaining contact with a sense of the symbolic, then indeed they will together grow into maturity of love. Those who do not marry are equally committed to find partners on their way if they are to know love, bringing the symbol to incarnation in all their relationships with others of whatever kind—with their friends, lovers, enemies, or casual acquaintances.

A woman is born to be essentially and wholly a woman and the more deeply and consciously she is able to know and live the spirit, the Logos, within her the more surely she will realize this truth.

Married people however have made a particular choice, and I am not suggesting that they are not bound to stay with that choice in the face of even repeated failure, as long as there is even a small chance that by staying together they may grow into love. If we break vows for any other reason than out of obedience to a more compelling loyalty, then the situation from which we have tried to escape will simply repeat itself in another form. Nevertheless, for thousands of men and women who take the marriage vow in sincerity, the test of daily life through the years makes it plain that the choice they made was conditioned by projections which, as they fade, leave exposed the fact that the two personalities are, or have become, destructive of each other; or perhaps their levels of consciousness are so far apart that their bond is the cause of their drifting further and further away from the true meaning of their vows. These thoughts, of

course, have no validity for those couples who never had any motive in their mating except the satisfaction of their immediate desires and ambitions. For them the vow is in any case devoid of significance and whether they keep it conventionally or not is of no ultimate importance except insofar as children are affected.

Divorce does not always mean that a marriage has been a failure. There are some marriages in which, though both partners have been true to their vows and have grown through the years into a more adult love, a time may yet come when un-lived parts of their personalities are striving to become conscious. A situation may then arise in which it becomes obvious that if they remain together these

two, who basically love and will always love each other, will regress into sterility and bitterness if they do not have the courage to accept the suffering of parting. Their quest for wholeness may then demand that they ignore the outer laws of church and society in order to be true to the absolutely binding inner vow “to love and to cherish from this time forward.” One does not have to be living with a person—or even to see him or her ever again—in order to love and cherish through everything. A conscious acknowledgment of failures, an unshaken devotion to the love that sets free can turn a divorce into a thing of positive beauty, an experience through which a man or woman may bring out of the suffering a purer love to all future meetings. The divorce is then a sacrificial, not a destructive, act and the original marriage may remain in the deepest sense procreative to the end of life.

It will be said that the promise at the altar includes the words “and forsaking all others keep thee only unto her as long as ye both shall live.” The essence of this vow is a commitment to the utmost loyalty and integrity of which a human being is capable. It is a statement that a man’s physical actions are as much a symbol of the singleness of the holy marriage within as any other part of him. In our state of partial consciousness, however, it may and does come about that the man or woman chosen no longer carries the symbol for the partner in any way at all, so that all love, all creation is dead between them. Surely then the greater loyalties lie in the conscious acceptance of failure and separation. Thus, each is set free to seek once more the realization of inner singleness of heart through new experiences of relationship and sex, through a new marriage, perhaps. “Until death us do part.” When the symbol is dead between two people, when there is no communication left except on the level of the ego swinging between the opposites, then if they cling to the letter of the law, a horrible betrayal of the marriage vow results in the unconscious where animus and anima struggle to destroy each other. Death has parted them in the most real sense of the word.

Yet the Catholic Church still clings to its undifferentiated attitude to these things; she refuses to

her children the opportunity of growth through a second marriage and clings to the rules without regard for individual truth. I read the other day of the simple and beautiful ritual of divorce in the Orkney Islands long ago before the coming of the courts of law. The couple who had decided to part had to go into a certain church together and then quietly go out of it, one by the north door and one by the south. That was all. It was surely the perfect symbol of a true divorce—a hint of its potentially holy character. The couple returned to the altar before which they had made their vow as though to renew it in the moment of their parting. One does not stand before the altar in order to announce that one is deliberately about to commit a sin. That simple ritual is an image through which we can feel the humble acceptance of failure, respect for individual responsibility, and the seeking of a blessing on a new attempt.

One of the great arguments against recognizing divorce is always the damage that the broken home brings to the child. If it were possible to assess this kind of damage, it would almost certainly be found that the hurt done to a child through the unconscious, when he or she is forced to live with parents in whom love for each other has turned to bitterness, is far worse than that caused by a physical breach. However successful the parents may be at covering up the fight between themselves, the child will suffer the terrifying consequences through the unconscious and will often carry the unsolved conflicts of his father and mother all his life. Insofar as a divorce really means a new chance for the parents to learn to love and is not just a running away, it can be a great gift to a child. Outer-seeming which is not true to the inner condition is a deadly thing—far worse in its impact on others than forthright, passionate sin. •

Helen Luke was educated at Oxford and was the founder of the Apple Farm Community in Three Rivers, Michigan. She was the author of “Old Age: Journey into Simplicity” and “Woman: Earth and Spirit.” From Doubleday, “The Way of Woman” by Helen M. Luke. Copyright 1995 by the estate of Helen M. Luke. Printed with permission from Parabola Magazine.

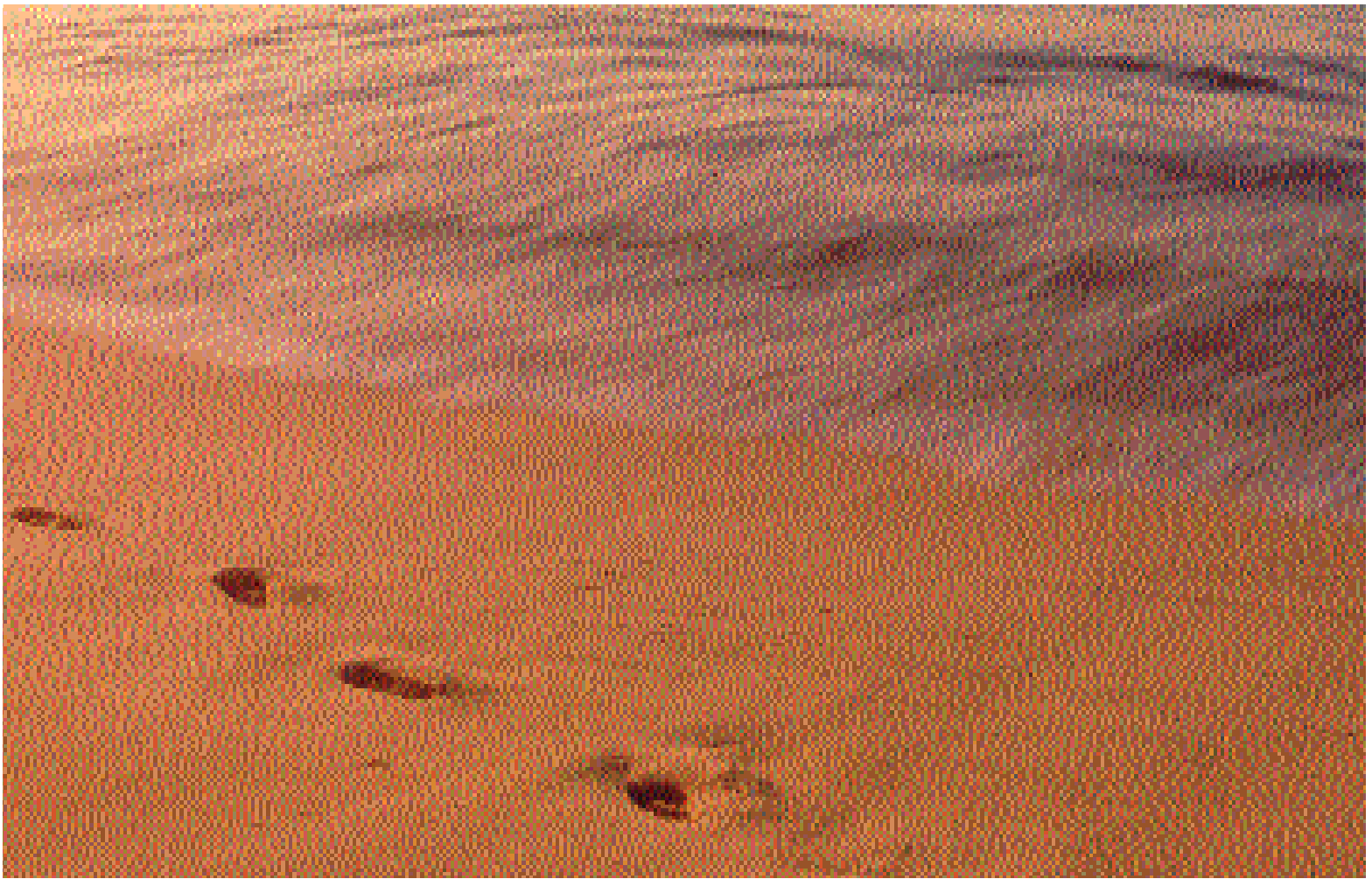


Walking the Mystical Path with Practical Feet

A N G E L E S A R R I E N

Recently I witnessed a moment of deep soulfulness between two strangers. I was at a bus stop, sitting next to a woman reading a newspaper, but I was totally engrossed in the performance of a fourteen-year-old boy on a skateboard. He had his baseball cap turned around with the bill in back, and he was skating beautifully and very fast. He buzzed by us once, then twice. When he came by a third time, he accidentally knocked the woman's newspaper out of her hands. She said, "Oh, why don't you grow up!"

TONY STONIZ/ANDY WELLS



Angeles Arrien, Ph.D., is an anthropologist, author, educator, and corporate consultant. She lectures and conducts workshops worldwide, bridging the fields of cultural anthropology, psychology, and comparative religions.



I watched him glide down to the corner of the block where he stood talking with his buddy. The two of them kept looking back over their shoulders at the woman. She hesitated for a moment, then rolled up her paper, tucked it under her arm, and walked into the street, motioning to him. “Won’t you come here?” she called. “I want to talk to you.”

Very reluctantly, he skated over to her, turned his cap around with the bill in front, and said, “Yeah?”

She said, “What I meant to say was that I was afraid that I might get hurt. I apologize for what I did say.”

His face lit up and he said, “How cool!”

In that moment, I witnessed what is called in Spanish a *milagro pequeno*—small miracle. This small miracle was a holy, healing moment between generations, between two human beings who had just become important strangers to each other. The woman chose to shift the shape of her experience by moving out of reactivity into creativity. This kind of shape shifting is possible when we allow ourselves to speak directly from our souls.

Part of the business of soul, in fact, is to be a shape-shifter. When we are in touch with the deepest undercurrents of our lives, we have no choice but to act honestly, to speak soulfully. Our soul work is, quite simply, to find and remove whatever gets in the way of our being who we are.

In our culture, we don’t have many aids to tracking our souls, to keeping in touch with the things that make us who we are and recognizing and eliminating those things that deter us. Indigenous cultures have important information to offer us about maintaining soulfulness in our lives. Just as they

have outer tracking devices—for locating such things as food and water—indigenous peoples of the world have internal tracking devices that enable them to integrate their experiences, learn from them, and move on.

I have found, among a variety of indigenous cultures, four central tracking devices. We can think of them as four “rivers” that we must learn to navigate in order to keep our souls fed and healthy, in order to keep our true selves alive. One is the river of inspiration. I know I’m still alive if I can be inspired, expanded, and uplifted by events, by beauty, by other people. Another is the river of challenge. I’m still alive if I can bring energy to the experience of being tested and challenged. This river is about being able to accept an invitation to stretch, to move beyond the familiar, to grow.

The third river is the river of surprise. Children love surprises; as adults, unfortunately, we often lose that love. Navigating the river of surprise means being able to be shaken out of our need for control and reawakened to the awe of the unexpected. The last river or tracking device is the river of love. I know I’m still alive if I can be deeply touched and deeply moved by life. If I’m not easily touched by life, my heart has begun to close. Native peoples believe that the heart is the bridge between father sky and mother nature and that, therefore, if we are to stay in contact with both the mystical and the practical in our nature, we must stay healthy and open in our hearts.

The open heart is one that can both give and re-

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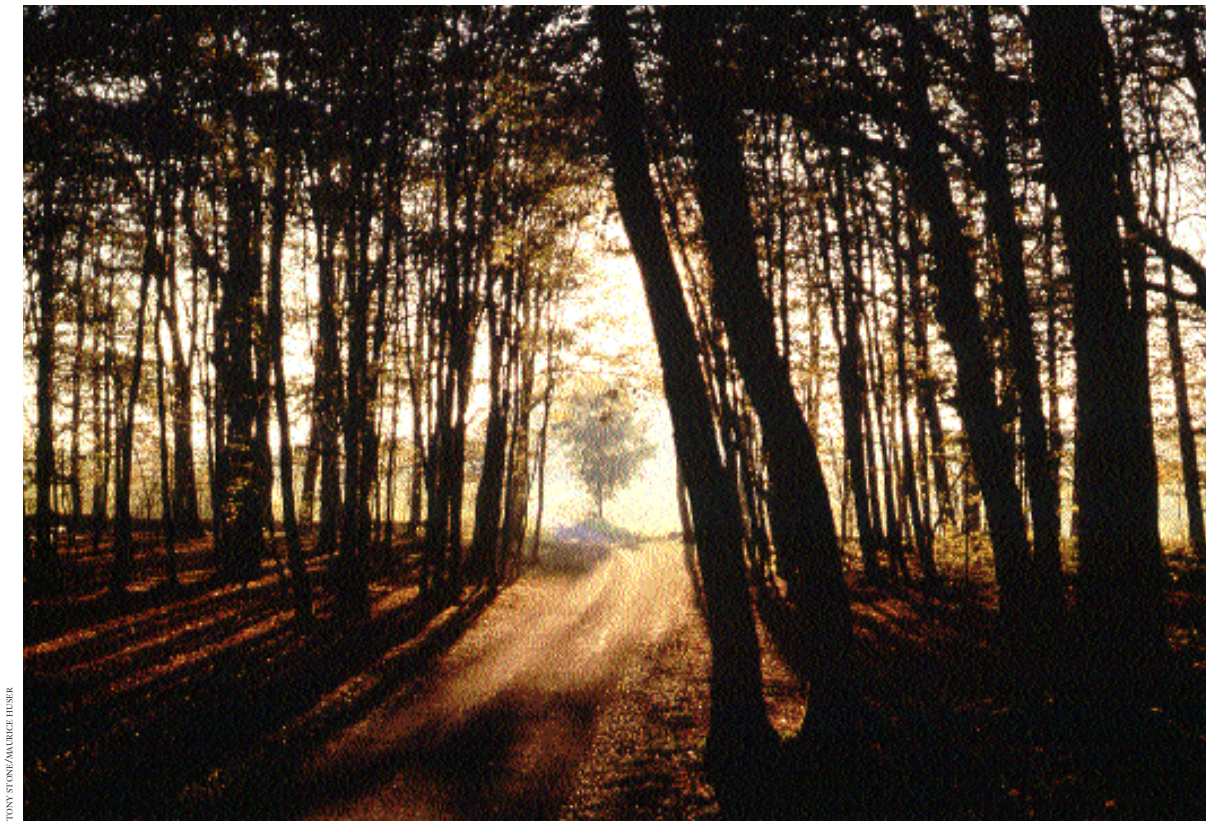
ceive love; an open heart also recognizes that love does not always come to us in the ways we expect. I thought of this recently as I watched a mother and her son, who must have been about seven years old, walking through a public garden. The boy plucked a rose from a bush, brought it to her, and said, “Mommy, you’re as pretty as this rose.” She took the rose, thanked him, and then said, “Why don’t you ever tell Mommy that you love her?”

That mother’s heart was closed to the variety of ways that expressions of love might come to her. Perhaps only the actual words would have made sense to her. How sad for both her and her son that she could not hear the “I love you” underneath his statement.

When, whatever the reason, we find ourselves incapable of navigating those four rivers—inspiration, challenge, surprise, and love—we have begun to lose touch with our souls. We miss out on the beauty and opportunity of the world; we find

ourselves caught in the prison of our own consciousness. And often we don’t take soul sickness as seriously as we do sickness in the body. Again, we can look to older cultures to help us find the medicines of soul retrieval.

If you were suffering from the symptoms of soul loss—if you were depressed or dispirited—and went to an indigenous healer or shaman, it is likely that he or she would begin to work with you by asking one of four questions. One of those questions is,



TONY STONE/MAURICE DUBER

“When in your life did you stop singing?” If you can remember a time when you stopped singing, you might remember feeling that you were beginning to lose your voice; you might remember some circumstance or idea or person that made you feel it was no longer safe to give voice to your own truth.

Another question is, “When did you stop dancing?” When you stopped dancing is when you began to lose touch with your body. Children dance spontaneously all the time; they simply respond to music. As adults, we need to ask ourselves when and how it was that we lost that ability to respond; we need to look at how it happened that we stopped dancing.

The third question is, “When did you stop being enchanted with stories?” Stories are the greatest healing and teaching art that we have. Through stories, we transmit values, ethics, traditions, memories, and identity. One way to retrieve our souls is to ask ourselves what our favorite stories are, to

repeat the ones that we find most healing and comforting, and to remember which ones we especially want to pass on to others.

The last and perhaps most difficult question that an indigenous healer would ask is, “When did you stop being comfortable with the sweet territory of silence?” Silence is recognized by all cultures as that place where we can connect to mystery, where our individual souls reconnect with the soul of the world. In order to allow ourselves adequate contemplation and reflection, we need to be comfortable with silence and solitude.

These four universal healing questions seem simple, yet they hold the keys to many of our soul-sicknesses. Despite all the obvious differences among cultures and peoples, there is not a culture in the world that doesn’t sing or dance or tell stories or recognize the mystery in silence. In our culture, silence is often impossible to come by, and this is a tragedy, for silence allows us to replenish

ourselves so that we can then give back to the world around us. The lack of generosity that we often experience in the world may be due to the fact that so few of us have adequate solitude within with which to replenish ourselves.

One image I find useful for describing the necessity for replenishing ourselves is that of a well with buckets around it. Our soul—our deep source—is the well. We fill our buckets from that well and then pour out to others what is needed from our buckets. In order to protect that source, we have to be sure that we give from the buckets and not from the well itself and that when those buckets are empty, there is a time for replenishing—a time to refill before we give again. Unfortunately, the frantic pace of our lives often requires that we begin to give not just from the buckets around the well but from the well itself; some of us, I'm afraid, are

squeezing the last few drops of liquid from the moss at the bottom. Soul work requires that we give ourselves adequate time for replenishment—time to deepen and integrate, time to come back to the center of our lives.

Meditation is a powerful way to provide our souls with adequate solitude and silence. Though many of us think of meditation as happening in one posture—sitting down, legs crossed—there are actually four universal meditation postures: standing, sitting, lying down, and walking. Each of these postures is appropriate for certain kinds of problems or issues.

Standing meditation is useful if you feel victim-

Despite all the obvious differences among cultures and peoples, there is not a culture in the world that doesn't sing or dance or tell stories or recognize the mystery in silence.

ized or helpless. It can remind you of what it feels like to stand up for yourself, to have literally both feet on the ground. In standing meditation, you can most easily access your authority and power. Sitting meditation gives you access to your own wisdom; sitting is the best posture for suspending judgment, for becoming a fair witness to your own processes. When I feel my self-critic gathering too much strength, I know it is time for sitting meditation.

If are struggling with fear or anger, or any overwhelming emotion, lying-down meditation can help that emotion move more easily through your body. The lying posture is the most healing posture the body can assume; lying down, you can most easily access the nurturing, loving energy within yourself. Walking meditation encourages creative problem solving and helps you to reignite your own creative fire. If I find myself in

periods of stagnation or inertia, I reenergize with walking meditation.

Recently I discovered that Albert Einstein arranged his study to accommodate all four of these meditation postures. He had a tall table designed so that he could stand while writing his formulas. He had a favorite chair—an old wing back—to sit on. He kept an army cot in his study, too, so that he could lie down from time to time. And he wore a circular path into the wood floor of that room—just outside the perimeter of a circular rug—from pacing. Though he might not have called it meditation, it is revealing that a man so deeply involved with both science and spirituality structured his

work room so that he would have standing, sitting, lying, and walking opportunities. On some level, he must have known that each of these postures allowed him to access different kinds of information.

It is becoming more and more important that we not only access such information but bring it into the world. That is our task in this decade. We can no longer continue to support the “either-or” world—the place where we either put all our energy into our own individual paths or into the larger community—but must move into the “both-and” world. Many of us have spent a lot of time doing inner work, in a sense hopping on one leg in the internal world. Our task now is to put the other leg into the outer world, to combine spirit and action. It is absolutely essential that we learn to walk the mystical path with practical feet.

That can be a daunting task. But again, indigenous peoples have wisdom to offer us. In many indigenous cultures, you can find some variation on the following rules, which are intended to make living a life very simple. The first rule is, *Show up*. Choose to be present to life. Choosing to be present is the skill of the warrior archetype, an old-fashioned term for leadership abilities. The warrior in us chooses to be present to life.

Once we show up, we can go on with rule number two, which is, *Pay attention* to what has heart and meaning. This rule is associated with the archetype of the healer, the one who recognizes that love is the greatest healing power in the world. When we pay attention to what has heart and meaning, we are opening the arms of love.

When we show up and pay attention to what has heart and meaning, then we can follow the third rule: *Tell the truth* without blame or judgment. This is the path of the visionary, the one who can give voice to what is so. Telling the truth without blame or judgment is not necessarily being “polite,” but the truth-teller does consider timing and context as well as delivery. Truth telling collapses our patterns of denial and indulgence, keeps us authentic.

When we are able to tell the truth, we can go to

the fourth rule: *Be open to outcome*, but not attached to it. This is associated with the archetype of the teacher who trusts in the unexpected and is able to be detached. Often in the West, we define “detachment” as “not caring,” but detachment is really the capacity to care deeply but objectively. If you’ve taken the other three steps, then the fourth rule should come naturally, if not always easily. If you have shown up, paid attention to what has heart and meaning, and told the truth without blame or judgment, then it should follow naturally that you can be open, but not attached, to outcome.

None of this is necessarily easy to do. But one of the great joys of soul work is that whether or not we are able to be fully present to life, life keeps calling out to us. No one is immune to the pull of the natural cycles of the universe; no one is immune to love. And because it requires just as much energy, if not more, to stay out of life as it does to be fully engaged in it, why not be engaged? Octavio Paz, a Latin American poet and Nobel Prize winner, realized when he was in his forties just how much of himself he had spent staying away from the deep currents of his life. He wrote this prose poem describing that experience and describing, too, the persistence of the world in spite of it all.

After chopping off all the arms that reached out to me; after boarding up all the windows and doors; after filling all the pits with poisoned water; after building my house on the rock of a No inaccessible to flattery and fear; after cutting out my tongue and eating it; after hurling handfuls of silence and monosyllables of scorn at my loves; after forgetting my name and the name of my birthplace and the name of my race; after judging myself and sentencing myself to perpetual waiting and perpetual loneliness, I heard against the stones of my dungeon of syllogisms the humid, tender, insistent onset of spring.

No matter how we try, soul calls out to us. We

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TONY STONE/ANDRE FRIESTIN

When you look around your world and see something that angers you or revolts you, it is because that same thing (or quality or trait) lives unconsciously somewhere within yourself. It is a reflection of a part of yourself that you have not yet acknowledged or taken responsibility for.

Projections

R H E A P O W E R S A N D G A W A I N B A N T L E

An important key in using relationship as a tool for waking up is “awareness of the process of projection.” However, before we discuss projection, we need to clarify what we mean by the conscious mind and the unconscious mind.

We define the conscious and unconscious parts of the psyche as follows: the conscious part of the psyche contains all the things you know—all the things within yourself and outside of yourself of which you have awareness. The unconscious part of the psyche is just that—unconscious. That is to say, it contains everything of which you have no present conscious awareness. The unconscious occupies a much larger part of your totality than you might assume. The conscious mind, in terms of its size relative to the unconscious mind, could be regarded as the last joint of the little finger of your left hand. The rest of the body could be seen as the unconscious.

The unconscious not only determines most of your actions and decisions but it also, in fact, determines the events of your life. Regardless of what the conscious mind says—regardless of your good ideas, good intentions, and positive affirmations—the unconscious is in charge. Without attempting to tackle the ancient debate between the concepts of free will and predestination, we observe simply that the choices you make flow from a much deeper part of yourself than the outer, conscious mind.

Projection is the psychological process by which you overlay your outer reality with your inner dynamics. Knowing about projection is absolutely essential if you are to use relationship as a means of becoming conscious. If you are not aware of the

process of projection, having a relationship serve you in “waking up” is difficult.

As a result of projection, what you perceive around yourself is not necessarily an objective reality independent of yourself, but rather is a reality shaped by your interior forces. For example, if you find yourself thinking that your partner really is being selfish, your perception is not necessarily the truth. You may actually be the one who is selfish and since you don’t recognize that quality in yourself, you see it manifested in the Other. Because of the process of projection, how you see the world and those around you is not necessarily how they really are. Rather, what you see and experience is your own internal dynamic, projected outward onto your environment, just as a movie is projected onto a screen.

Usually you are projecting parts of yourself (both the so-called positive and the so-called negative parts) which you have not seen, which are unconscious, and for which you have not yet taken responsibility. This is particularly true when you are reactive to what you see outside of yourself. By “reactive,” we mean you have an unusual amount of energy attached to the particular perception or that it has a “charge” for you. The more energy you have on something, the more you can be sure that what has touched you from the outside concerns what is happening inside yourself. I once thought Rhea was very insecure during our seminars, and I criticized her for it. When she hesitated in her response to a question, I thought she didn’t trust her answer, [which convinced me that I was right]. Months later, I discovered the insecurity I perceived as hers was actually my own.

What we are projecting onto the world around

us is our own unconscious material. We will use the word “shadow” to refer to that part of ourselves we do not see, that part about which we are unconscious. Although that term has been used in other contexts to specify the personal unconscious or repressed portions of the personal self, here we use the word “shadow” to represent both personal and transpersonal material that is not currently conscious to the individual.

People generally act as though they like hearing “good” things about themselves and dislike hearing anything “bad.” That is not true for many of us, however. Often we are much more inclined to recognize and expect the “bad” in ourselves than to recognize and expect the “good.” Because there is a tendency to equate “shadow” with “negative,” we want to emphasize that our shadow is not necessarily “bad.” It is simply that part of our totality of which we are not conscious. Often we fail to see our own “good” qualities and project those qualities onto those around us. Our shadow is not our secrets or those things about ourselves we do not like or try to hide. It is those things we don’t even know are there. If we know about something—if it is conscious—it is not shadow material.

When you look around your world and see something that angers you or revolts you, it is because that same thing (or quality or trait) lives unconsciously somewhere within yourself. It is a reflection of a part of yourself that you have not yet acknowledged or taken responsibility for. If you have a really strong emotional reaction to a child-abuser or a wife-beater or an exhibitionist or homosexuals or a thief or a killer or men in general or women in general, you can bet that the very thing you are reacting against is alive and well in some part of your own psyche. When we get into fights with our partners, becoming angry and finding ourselves making our partners wrong and judging them, some of our own shadow material has been triggered and we are projecting it onto them. In fact, the more righteous we are about how wrong *they* are, the more we are defending against recognizing in ourselves the very things of which we are accusing them.

The quality or trait in our partner that is triggering our anger may show up in us in a different form but we are judging ourselves nevertheless. We saw a very powerful example of this during a recent Relationship Training we led for committed couples in Holland. One evening over dinner, we were talking to a couple in the training. The husband, whom we will call Bodan, is from Ghana and has established a successful life for himself in Munich where he now lives with his German wife. As we ate, Bodan told us about a shaman who came to his village in Ghana when he was one week old and dying. The shaman saved his life with the help of plants and herbs and marked him with a scar on his left cheek. At his parents’ request, the shaman stayed in the village.

As Bodan grew up, the shaman taught him the art of talking to the local plants and leaves to find cures for sickness and other forms of distress experienced by the villagers. Bodan explained to us that the plants would tell his teacher the different illnesses they could cure.

Shortly before the shaman died (twenty years earlier when Bodan was eighteen years old), he told Bodan that he had chosen him to carry on this work. The early scar was the mark of being chosen. All Bodan had to do as a sign of accepting the mantle was to place a traditional white garment on the shaman’s grave, whereupon the teaching would be his. At eighteen however, Bodan had other ideas. But two decades later over dinner in Holland, he was asking us if we thought he should still do something about accepting what his teacher had tried to pass on to him. The conflict between his enjoyment of his life in Europe and the call of his heritage was clear to us and to his wife.

The next day during a session in the training, Bodan started expressing his irritation at his wife for her practice of talking to a toy stuffed dog whenever she had a decision to make in her daily life. He got very righteous and indignant as he warmed to his story of how a “grown woman” not only talked to this stuffed animal but also experienced getting answers from the dog and acted on those answers. How ridiculous! As his righteous in-

dignation turned to anger, something clicked for us and we recognized what was happening. His wife's behavior was similar to the technique used by his teacher. The technique of using an external object to gain access to one's own transpersonal awareness is the basis of many forms of "readings," from tea leaves to Tarot cards or the *I Ching*. Since he himself had rejected the technique (and the mantle of healer/teacher that went with it) and was not at peace with his choice, he had to make his wife seem wrong for using a similar technique. The anger directed toward his wife was actually the anger of one of his own internal aspects directed toward another of his inner aspects. He was angry at himself for rejecting the role his teacher had offered him. Once we pointed this out to him, he had the grace to recognize the projection. The next time the training met, not only were the couple in much deeper harmony with each other but they also had begun to plan their first evening workshop in Munich on traditional African healing techniques. Further, the wife was

now willing to take back the wisdom she had projected onto the stuffed dog and claim it as her own.

Recognizing your projections is another way that engaging consciously in relationship can support you in discovering who you are. Understanding that what you see in your partner and are reactive to is what you don't see in yourself (even though it is there) gives you the chance to know yourself more completely. By being aware of the process of projection, you come to see that your judgments

When you realize that the process of projection is itself an unconscious defense against seeing yourself clearly, you can appreciate how difficult it is to recognize your projections and claim as your own the qualities or traits in others that triggered your reaction.

about your partner say more about yourself than they do about your mate.

It is very difficult to begin to "own" one's projections. We really do not want to understand that everything we criticize in others has an equivalency within ourselves. When you first start to integrate this awareness, you may find it painful to acknowledge that everything you hate, everything you loathe and can't stand, everything you have ever judged negatively is, at some level, in some form, a part of your own totality. When you realize that the process of projection is itself an unconscious defense against seeing yourself clearly, you can appreciate how difficult it is to recognize your projections and claim as your own the qualities or traits in others that triggered your reaction. Most of us would rather not acknowledge that we carry within ourselves the very things we judge as wrong in others.

On the other hand, if you can hold the concept that ultimately who you are is everything, that you are connected to all creation, then perhaps recog-

nizing that you must also be connected to those expressions of the life force of which you disapprove is not so difficult. If ultimately you are one with All There Is, then you can't just be one with the parts you prefer. You are one with all of it.

Let's get back to aspects. You have probably experienced the feeling that your partner is absolutely revolting to you in the middle of an upset and then, moments later, when the upset has been cleared, he or she seems completely different. How can this

be? Sometimes bringing the apparently conflicting images of a partner together is difficult. Your perception changes as the aspect dominating your own psyche switches. What one aspect of your psyche projects onto the outer screen called “your partner” maybe different from what a different aspect of your psyche projects onto that same screen. When you shift aspects, your perception also shifts, because what is being projected has shifted. What you see in the other person and what you see in your surroundings are a reflection of the aspect that is doing the perceiving. What is around you is a mirror of what is inside you. This is what projection means.

There is wisdom in the observation that whenever you point a finger at someone or something, three fingers of your own hand are pointing back at yourself. (Try it!) That simple gesture will give you clues to your own interior in a way that few other techniques can.

The moment we take responsibility for our disowned material and move toward integrating the parts of ourselves we previously projected outward onto others and then judged as wrong, our experience of who we are expands. “Yes, I am that, too.” When we can say that, our experience of our Being expands and the way we experience the world around us shifts.

We all acquire a self-image in the process of growing up. Any time your self-image is threatened, your ego has a hard time. Taking back your projections, owning the disowned parts of yourself can be extremely painful. Recognizing that what

If we take back our projections, if we own our disowned forces, our world will not have to reflect that material for us. If we can own and be responsible for our violence as individuals, acts of violence will decrease in the world.

you judge in your partner is actually a part of yourself can be shattering to your self-image.

In your self-image, you might regard yourself as a nice person, a peaceful person. But let’s say your partner can be violent and you have always judged him or her to be wrong for outbursts of violence. (And no doubt you could get any number of people to agree with you!) Now, you hear about projection. Oops! Could that mean there is actually some violence lurking as shadow material in your very own psyche? Bingo! Yes, it could! Since you have always thought of yourself as a peaceful person, suddenly discovering that you may carry unexpressed violence can be a major shock to your image of yourself. (But then, why would you be attracted to someone who carries violence?) In fact, you may want to defend yourself righteously from acknowledging this truth. Here then is one saving grace of the recognition that you are a multiple, not a singular Being: you may have peaceful aspects *and* you may also have violent aspects. Both

are part of your totality. You are not one *or* the other. You are one *and* the other.

This points to another challenge. When you do not own your shadow material, it will be dramatized by those around you. Usually this role falls to the mate. However, it may fall to the children or someone else in your circle. (You may have noticed that the children of ministers often live out those ranges of expression that are shunned by their parents.)

Once you begin to see how subtle and uncon-

scious the process of projection is, you can begin to appreciate the challenge of reclaiming those parts of yourself you have projected onto others. It is often easier to continue to be the victim of a violent partner and righteously make that partner wrong than it is to acknowledge that, yes, violence also lives within yourself. Most people have seen teachers or gurus who maintain an image of holiness while their disowned violence, dishonesty, or promiscuity shows up in their followers or is eventually expressed through them. Examples of this range from Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh to Werner Erhard and Jim Bakker.

Last year when our assistant totaled our car and the one she crashed into, it was very tempting to make her wrong. However, since we knew about projection we also knew that we had some difficult soul-searching to do. Since she was driving our vehicle, we were clear that in addition to whatever was happening for her, she was also dramatizing something for us. Looking at the underlying source of the apparent “accident” was very uncomfortable. We saw that after years of creating and maintaining our work in Europe, we had not taken responsibility for our own destructive energy which was, through the “accident,” surfacing and needing to be honored.

When you begin to take back your projections, your sense of self expands and your awareness of who you are increases. When you begin to take back your projections and acknowledge as present within yourself what you have judged to be wrong in others, you need not necessarily act out those qualities in your own life. Acknowledging that you (for instance) carry violence within yourself, that some aspects of your own psyche can be violent does not mean you must therefore start manifesting violence in your daily life. Again, this is one of the gifts of the realization that you are multiple. You may have violent aspects within your totality. But you do not have to make that violence wrong. Nor do you need to allow your own violent aspects to dominate your psyche inappropriately. At times, allowing those aspects that are capable of violence to dominate your behavior may be absolutely appro-

priate. If you or those in your care were attacked by a person or a beast, your responding with violence might be appropriate.

As you say “yes” to the parts of yourself to which you have previously said “no,” those around you will no longer need to reflect it for you. As you say, “Yes, I can be violent,” “Yes, I can be selfish,” “Yes, I can be self-absorbed... I can be promiscuous... I can be nagging... I can be controlling,” then those around you will no longer have to express your projected shadow for you. You may even find that your circle of friends begins to change as you take back parts of yourself you projected on others. Again, the unconscious wants to be made conscious. If you are unconscious of your own violence (or any other quality or characteristic), it will continue to present itself to you until you acknowledge it—until it becomes conscious.

If we take back our projections, if we own our disowned forces, our world will not have to reflect that material for us. If we can own and be responsible for our violence as individuals, acts of violence will decrease in the world. We will not need to create tyrants on whom to project what we have hidden within ourselves.

We—Gawain and Rhea—spend a great deal of time in Germany and we have watched what happened to the West Germans as the Wall came down. Most of them were born after the war or were children during the last stages of the Third Reich. Suddenly there was no “them” on whom the West Germans could project their shadow. In the last half century, first the Nazis and then later the Communists were the “bad guys.” That gave the rest of the Germans a reason to distance themselves from experiencing themselves as “bad guys.” It is the same process the Western World went through with regard to the “evil empire” of the Soviet Union. But now the Wall is down. Germany is one country. There is no “them.” The German people have therefore brought the neo-Nazis forward in order to have a screen on which they can see their shadow and have an opportunity finally to finally confront the unconscious Nazi that lives within themselves—as it does in all of us.

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Discover The



AN INTERVIEW WITH GEORGE JAIDAR
BY MARY NURRIESTEARN S

George Jaidar is known for his work in emergent human nature and consciousness. He co-founded the Ojai Seminars. Thousands have attended his "The Courage to Be" workshops, which explore the cultural and psychological bases of humanity's evolution to a new level of spiritual unfolding. He currently resides in Ojai, California.

Life of Fullness

LOTUS: *In your recent book, “The Soul: An Owner’s Manual,” what do you mean by a “life of fullness”?*

GEORGE JAIDAR: For me it’s a synonym for the “life of the spirit.” This fullness is available to us but we are blinded by our enculturation.

In order to experience a life of fullness we have first to live successfully as a survivor. You say there are three levels of survival conditioning. What are they and how do they shape our awareness?

The life of survival takes us through three levels. The first one we almost take for granted because it’s learned derivatively through our enculturation. This is the subsistence level where we learn to shelter and feed ourselves. In our society, subsistence is highly abstracted from what it once was, namely hunting and gathering. Once our ancestors discovered the limits of subsistence survival and were willing to go beyond it, they discovered the second level which is to create the useful. This enabled them to assure continued survival. The third level is creating the harmonizing aesthetic. When you reach and discover the limits of creating the useful, when you know how to develop an assembly line, distribute goods for use and so forth, you are ready to decorate it. I don’t use the word decorate trivially. I mean to create or discover beauty. That’s done through creating the harmonizing aesthetic. The harmonizing aesthetic level includes the sciences, history, philosophy, and the arts. These ascending three levels are the life of survival. I don’t belittle any of them; they were all absolutely magnificent efforts in our collective evolution.

And necessary...

And very necessary. Each of these stages of evolution was and is absolutely necessary. After developing the third level, either as individuals or as a society, we cannot help but discover the limits thereof. The limits are discovered by two events. I

hate to call them “events;” but two things happen. One is that we become aware of our yearning, quite intensely. The third level really exacerbates our yearning. It opens us to that yearning, so much that we often confuse the yearning with what we’re doing at the third level. We often think that by extending the third level we will satisfy the yearning. That never happens no matter how much we try, whether it’s through the arts or philosophy or science. So at this point, the yearning comes and this is where we start with the life of fullness. Becoming aware of that yearning leads us inexorably and sometimes immediately to an awareness of the bankruptcy of that very fundamental part of our conditioning, the hope process.

You say that our usual attempted spiritual strivings unwittingly serve our survival conditioning and we miss the mark of the life of fullness. How does that happen?

You are quoting Joseph Pierce, which is perfect because he captured it ever so eloquently. Our conditioning for survival, our enculturation, recognizes only that which contributes to successful survival, which is society’s primary task. It is not to be dismissed. It is most important to achieve successful survival. However, many of the abilities and tendencies that we develop as successful survivors serve as impediments to transcending to the next level.

How is survival intended only as a first journey rather than our complete life journey?

For most people, this first journey is taken as the whole journey of life and here I must speak about evolution. We are an evolving species. Marvelously so. We’re at the stage that is called “Homo sapien,” which is basically the “knowing human.” Knowing, in the sense of this third level of awareness, is the most we can obtain as Homo sapien. We have evolved from a subsistence homo to a creative, useful Homo sapien. At this point we have an op-

THE PRACTICE FOR THE LIFE OF SOUL

The Practice consists of acting on the answers to four very basic life questions.

1. Who am I? “I am a son/daughter of God.” For those of you who find the term God a difficulty, you may use the less-charged term Cosmos. The important theme here is to overcome the conditioning of which you are often unaware: that you are only an unimportant member of a species who is practically interchangeable with others. This conditioning makes you dependent upon the feedback of others for a sense of identity. Such identities are what you must learn to transcend. Identities, such as names or titles—like husband or wife, professor, officer, physician, artist, star, or mother of the year—are just labels. We tend to identify with these labels, and yet we never confuse the label with the contents of a jar.

By acting on the answer to the question “Who am I?” you not only will be in the process of discovering who you are, you will also be discovering who each other person is: a son/daughter of God.

Also intended here is a new view of your relationship with God or the Cosmos; namely, the relationship of heir. An heir does not have to earn, but simply makes claim to inheritance. What you are heir to is really quite inexpressible, except to say you can discover who you really are—your Higher self-order of functioning. As an heir you share the qualities or charac-

portunity, just as we had similar opportunities at each of the previous levels, to transcend them. We had to transcend the subsistent survival level to create the useful level. We transcend by discovering the limits of each level and by being willing to go beyond it. At this time in human evolution, we are discovering the limits of successful survival in all sorts of ways. Books are being published demonstrating the limits of this level. We now have to look at the world as both wave and particle. This boggles us. Whenever we come to such points in our world view, it invariably calls for a transcending. This happened with Einstein. He couldn't make sense of the world using the old recognized variables. He had to come to a new world view. This is being asked of humankind at this juncture. If you want to evolve, this is what needs to be done. We often think of evolution as a passive activity; we just lie back and let it happen to us. This has not been the case. We have to take the step.

Please talk about the foundation of this first journey, the life of survival.

Society a long time ago discovered something really powerful. Society discovered that it could get people to do what was needed for society by teaching them what I call the “fear process.” I emphasize that this process is learned because all too often, especially using the present day psychological models, we tend to think there are fears out there, that the object of fear is the fears. But the fear process is learned at our mother's knee. We learn it very early in our enculturation. And it works wonderfully. There is nothing that so concentrates the mind as the fear of our demise. The fear process really focuses you. All you have to do is raise a stick to get someone to do what you want. I hate to bring it down to that but basically it works.

Society learned rather quickly that the fear process alone leads to apathy and paralysis, neither of which contribute to successful survival. So they had to find the other half of the foundation which was the hope process. Hope makes the fear process tolerable. With the hope process, you do the same thing that you do with the fear process—you use your imagination. This wonderful fragility of humankind is used in the service of the fear and hope processes. The hope process, unlike the fear process, protects—but let's stay with the fear process a moment. The fear process invariably involves a stimulus in the present, something that startles us.

It's that next step that is our nemesis. This step is a mental step. It may be accompanied by affective and behavioral elements but is it primarily mental. The next step, after the startle which is inborn, is to project an anticipated outcome in the future. That gives fear power over us. And where does that power come from? It comes from within ourselves. We delegate our own power to that which we imagine. A mental, internal process. That is what enculturation is. It is getting people to internalize these processes so we don't have to keep referring to manuals. Can you imagine if we had to keep referring to manuals to live? You couldn't even get your car out of the driveway.

The fear and hope processes serve successful survival devices but become impediments to our continued evolution. How is that?

The fear and hope processes both end up being the most grievous impediments to going beyond. They become the way in which we see the world. They become the basis of our world view. This is our fundamental psychology—the fear and hope processes alternating. In fact in modern times, we even have a name for this alternation. Manic depressive, or bi-polar, describes a mental illness that is the result of this enculturation. And it's becoming quite rampant. In fact, the fear and hope processes are the root of our mental illnesses.

They certainly prevent moving on to the next possibility.

What they prevent is successful survival. If you are continually trapped between these two, which is the average condition, how can you possibly have the strength and confidence to go beyond? That is why successful survival is so important. It is important to manage that first journey successfully so that you acquire self confidence. Self-esteem workshops notwithstanding, the confidence and the strength that is needed is acquired as a by-product of successful survival. That is essential for beginning the second journey. It is going to require all of the strength and self confidence that you can possibly muster to embark on that second journey because you have to cross no-man's-land to get to it.

What is the "tragic life" and how is it linked to the hope and fear processes?

The tragic life is one that is limited to the first three

teristics of God or the Cosmos. You discover these only in action. With words, all you can do is point at it. By acting on this answer, you have the opportunity of discovering and incarnating the truth of who you are.

2. Why am I here? "I am here to let my unique Divine Plan unfold."

This simple statement is loaded with meaning. This is not referring to some grand overall "Divine Plan" for all. This refers to "my unique Divine Plan." An excellent analogy here is that of your very unique genetic plan. This genetic plan is not a blueprint, but a set of potentials which may or may not be realized depending on how our lives are lived.

Similarly, your unique Divine Plan is not a blueprint, but is like a set of potentials which may or may not be realized. Like the genetic plan, these are unique for each one of us. Unlike the genetic plan, which is limited primarily to your body and somewhat to your mind, the Divine Plan, while also concerned with your body and mind, is especially concerned with your Soul process, which is the emergent human nature that you are here to discover and explore.

Note the words let and unfold. These convey something quite different from our tendency to "make it happen." You cannot make your unique Divine Plan happen, but you can let it unfold. Unfold here conveys the sense of being revealed. Revelation is the response of God, or the Cosmos to your Yearning.

You can discover, by acting on this answer to the second question, that letting your unique Divine Plan unfold entails primarily getting yourself—that

is, your Lower self-order of functioning—out of the way.

3. *Where am I? “I am in God’s good world where all runs according to principle such that each next event is the will of God.”* We are trying to counter the effects of the experiences people have when they are limited to acting on their conditioned-for-survival lower self-order of functioning. This is what has been referred to as “man’s will” or our “willfulness,” as compared to surrendering to God’s will.

The next phrase in our answer is “where all runs according to principle.” This counters the conditioned view that anything beyond our readily controllable world of survival is quite beyond us and probably part of a helter-skelter or magical reality.

“Such that each next event is the will of God” is a corollary of the previous phrase. If the Cosmos runs according to principle, then all phenomena are the expression of principle or principles. We can see that these expressions of principle are what is meant by the “will of God.” This has to be claimed, just as a tentative hypothesis has to be grasped and then acted on, in order to discover the truth of it.

4. *What am I to do?* The answer has two basic components: the Inward and the Outward. The Inward is seemingly the simpler, but can be the more difficult due to some serious misconceptions that abound. The Inward component is “going for Meditation,” but to grasp what that is, you must approach it most innocently—that is, without any of the usual preconceptions. Meditation is not anything you

levels of our awareness. We continue to expect some sort of fullness or fulfillment from doing the second and third levels. The tragic life assumes that by somehow continuing to do this, we will make a breakthrough.

That is the hope process.

Yes. We are really fear and hope addicts and the tragic life is that we are addicted to them. We welcome horror books, movies, amusement park rides, and so forth, anything that generates the fear process as though we were fear junkies. The same goes for the hope process. We are addicted to fairy tales, soap operas, improvement books and programs, and religion.

We continue to do more of the same. We try to be more successful and stay in this third level.

At best, we stay in the third level. What is tragic, getting back to the original Greek meaning of the word, is that we limit ourselves to what we consider to be our strengths, which is the way we see life of survival as a successful survivor. Think of the irony—you need to arrive at successful survival and be aware of it and yet be willing to set it aside, not getting rid of it but superseding it. The Greeks were most perceptive in this. Today we use word tragedy to mean someone being run over and that isn’t the original meaning. For your strengths to act as your weaknesses is tragedy and this is what I’m referring to. Those very strengths that brought us to successful survival serve as our weaknesses in crossing no-man’s-land on the journey to the life of fullness.

You say that we are here to discover our “Areté.” Please introduce this wonderful word to our readers.

Areté [ar’-i-tay’] is an ancient Greek word that refers to the fullness or excellence of anything. It really has to be understood in terms of ancient Greek myths where human beings are conceived of as arrows that are shot by the gods, or a god, at their Areté. When we interfere with our Areté, which is what the conditioning of the life of survival tends to do, we are committing “hamartia.” Hamartia originally was translated from Greek [which was the first reliable writing of the New Testament,] into the word “sin,” with all of the connotations we’ve added to the word sin. The word sin would be far better translated the way hamartia was intended, mainly to miss the mark, to miss the mark of our Areté. That is the great sin.

Which happens when we do not go beyond the first journey into the life of fulfillment, the life of soul.

Yes.

What are the requirements for the second journey?

You have to consider yourself to be a successful survivor. This should not be underestimated. It's important to be a successful survivor and also to see yourself as a successful survivor. We all know people others consider to be very successful who do not see themselves as successful, so it's important to realize that you are a successful survivor. After that occurs, you need to become aware of the yearning which is practically unavoidable at the third level. It emerges with such power. Because it doesn't have survival value for our society, there is no framework, no vocabulary for describing it; although good psychologists like James, Maslow, and Jung have tried. The word yearning comes the closest to what it is we are experiencing. Something isn't there that needs to be. Something is missing. That's when the search begins for many.

Please introduce the "life boat experience." You say that many people experience the feeling of yearning and are compelled to search, then succumb to the life boat experience.

Yes. The lifeboat experience is one that many are familiar with—namely when we find ourselves in a situation that is quite threatening and all pull together and survive it somehow. This develops tremendous bonding and loyalty to that group. Groups based upon such events meet for years. This sort of experience is manufactured regularly by religions, cults, seminars, and workshops as the way out. Usually they are based upon a glimpse of something that is worth acting on but is not acted on. They simply try to recapture it. These groups provide for the individual who thinks, "My God, there's nothing in life." Remember, these people have begun to experience the limits of fear and hoping. We have a hard time admitting such a thing. In fact in our society admitting such a thing is practically forbidden. What is said when researchers think they've affected a cure for any mental illness? "There's hope." Many of our therapies are geared to reinforcing the hope process.

This life boat experience is a group experience.

can do; that is, no human has ever meditated. What you can do is to "go for Meditation." In going for Meditation, you relax and present yourself unencumbered by your goals, expectations, or stereotypes. You are not to bring an agenda or menu. Just simply present yourself quietly. Let the Meditation be done unto you by the Source. You must get out of the way so that you may receive these true nutrients of the Spirit. Getting out of the way means that you cease your ordinary ways of always trying to control your world and your self. Going for Meditation is to be done alone and quietly.

The Outward component of the answer to "What am I to do?" consists of two elements to be performed sequentially in any next event in your everyday world until they become habitual. These are *Let* and *Love*.

First, *Let* means "choiceless awareness" in any next event, but acting upon it is not easy. In any next event, which is an event in which you have a choice to make, your stance must be one of choiceless awareness, which means being aware of the situation without the usual overlay of your goals and purposes. Perceive and receive each next event as though you had no stake in the outcome.

Second, after assuming the stance of *Let*, you need to *love* which means "to respond according to the needs of the situation." The "situation" includes only events in which you have a choice to make. I am talking about the "needs," not the "wants," of the situation.

"According" to the needs means bringing about harmony among potentially conflicting needs. In any given

situation, you will often face needs that conflict, including not only the needs of others but also your own needs. Nothing here should be construed as putting either the needs of others or of yourself first. That can only be determined contextually through practicing.

It is critical that you respond rather than act on your reactions. Learn to “catch” the reaction in each next event; that is, pause momentarily upon perceiving that next event and not just act on the reaction automatically, no matter how long you have been doing it that way. This brief pause is what you need in order to remember to practice. Thus, you can truly act by choice, and that is responding.

Love, in order to be realized in its fullness, must eventually be universalized. Cosmic or Divine Love excludes nothing. Stewardship describes our true relationship to all things, living or not, in our world. Love is not restricted or constrained; it applies to all, including all of the “things” in our world.

Remember that areté applies not just to humans, but also to all living and nonliving entities: everything in all of creation has a fullness or excellence to express. Stewardship describes your relationship with any entity which has been placed in your care, even if temporarily, whether through purchase, loan, gift, birth, finding, or however encountered; it requires that you attend to the areté of that entity.

Acting on stewardship expands your awareness of your capacity for Love. Such Love is a dynamic in which you find yourself more than just rewarded. You will discover the unity or that oneness with all.

Absolutely. The group experience was developed and used very effectively by religion. Religion has used it to achieve social cohesiveness, stability, and control, usually in support of the society or state.

Isn't the life boat experience based on the belief that we are inherently separate?

Yes, the word “religio,” on which the word religion is based, is the Latin term that means to bind together. You can only bind things together that are conceived of as separate. Why else would they need binding together? To be bound together with one another and to God is the intent of religion.

But this life boat experience does not lead to fulfillment.

No, because of the assumption of separateness. What is attempted in the life boat experience is to bring the separate entities together to build the group. Group cohesion becomes important. This serves many as a comfortable resting place on their search. Those very few who have the strength discover the limits of that and go on. But that is rare. Most people are looking for a comfortable resting place.

And miss the call to discover their Areté, their life of fullness. Also necessary to the second journey is the “despair experience.”

Bottoming out is essentially recognizing the bankruptcy of the hope process. At first you recognize this hope and that hope are not doing their job of fulfilling. That is the way it begins. Eventually it leads to a recognition that the whole process is bankrupt. No matter what I hope, it doesn't lead to fulfillment. The bottoming out is necessary. It's a desolate feeling. This intense awareness of despair is needed and becomes a friend. Most people treat despair as the enemy, understandably, but it isn't. It is your friend, like a fever, an illness, or a pain attempting to warn you because you're now at the level where you can be aware that hope is no longer effective. Not that it ever was. It was an illusion that never led beyond survival. You become aware of your despair which simply means without hope. To be aware that you are without hope is in effect being aware of the bankruptcy of the hope process. Something interesting then happens. What the mind, your mental conditioning, does with awareness of despair is interesting. The mind has a hard time accepting no hope. No hope equals no future.

The mind alone cannot and will not handle that. In order to embrace despair, you have to do something very simple. You have to claim your intent. It's a naked intent. I say naked because it isn't clothed with anything. There are no desires around it. Desires are active expressions of the hope process. They are illusory. One needs to make that naked intent to yearn first for the kingdom of heaven. That is an old expression and for many it will be a turn-off. I'm rescuing this term from its dungeon of misuse and disuse.

What do you mean by the "intent to yearn for the kingdom of heaven?"

The intent is to yearn first. We have to realize that nothing comes before this. Up until this point, we thought that the life of survival came first. Here we have an opportunity to become aware, as we need to, that there is a life beyond. I am not talking about time and space. There is life that transcends the life of survival that is available to us. That's what I mean by yearning first for the kingdom of heaven. Actually it is redundant because that's what our yearning is about. That's why we experience the yearning. The yearning surfaces to lead us to the kingdom of heaven, the life of fullness, or the Tao.

This journey includes what you call the "umbilicum process." What do you mean by that?

When we become aware of our despair, we are without hope. We enter no-man's land. No-man's-land, contrasted to man's-land is not well charted and sign posted. In man's-land we have sign posts that tell us what to do and where to go. That's part of the life of survival. In no-man's-land there are no such sign posts because you and most other humans haven't been there. You have to make that transition through no-man's-land in order to discover the life of fullness. To make that transition through requires tremendous trust, which is really just a little thing. I say tremendous and little intentionally. Trust is to be distinguished from faith. Faith is a long term operation where you continually sort

your beliefs against reason and doubt. In this framework, reason and doubt are not cast aside, repressed, or ignored. They are simply treated as respected old friends to be transcended which means to be subsumed. You never get rid of them; they are always there. In order to do that, you have to recognize how very much alone you are. Nothing can approximate the desolation—that sense of no hope and no future. When you embrace and accept it, you discover something quite marvelous, how very much you are not alone. I'm not talking about an old man with a gray beard. You discover the umbilicum process, the wonderful communicative grid that is available to us. This is a marvelous opportunity to become aware of it and to enter into it. The umbilicum process is a repository of species wisdom and more. It is dynamic and encompassing since there is a continuing multi-way communication among the source, the individual, and others. This communication often comes to us as revelations.

You said that this second journey requires the aid of a guide. What kind of guide is needed?

When the candidate is ready, the guide and the candidate will be brought together. It's unavoidable. What prevents this the most in our society is the stereotypes that people have of the guide. Candidates on this journey need to set aside the stereotypes that we have—the kindly old Roshi, the guru with the accent, flowing robes and beard, or the sweet Jesus type.

The guide advises the seeker about how to travel through no-man's-land.

Yes, just like a safari guide. That is what the guide is, nothing more. He is not to be worshiped or made into a super guy. It is evolution's way. Looking back in our own development we see an emergence of human consciousness. We are in transition, going from the mental as the highest state we can obtain to something beyond it. This began probably only a few thousand years ago, as far as we know. It is rather recent, evolutionarily speaking. The very first mutants, as I refer to them,

were few and far between. There was Gautama the Buddha, Socrates, Jesus the Christ, Nanak, and numerous others. They've been coming along periodically. Some become known and others do not. In effect, a new species is emerging, the species that follows Homo sapien. As with any emergent species, there are mutants. People usually think of the word mutant as a negative and we're using it here as a positive change. This new species might be called Homo spirit. We are in this transition and a few thousand years is a blink of an eye speaking.

You say that we have to have a practice in order to be on this second journey. What is this practice?

I will deal with why we need to practice, but I won't deal with the practice because it is so simply stated in my book, "The Soul." Two things are needed in order to traverse no-man's-land. One is almost obvious. The successful survival conditioning that impedes this journey needs to be inhibited. We do not set aside the life of survival, we simply subsume it. That is what it is to transcend something. It's like going on to graduate school. You don't forget everything you learned as an undergraduate; you subsume it. When you enter no-man's-land, you need a way to inhibit those impediments. At the same time, you will continue to need all of your successful survival conditioning. It would be silly to forget how to drive. You need a way to inhibit the conditioning which works as impediments. You need a practice to elevate yourself. The practice will not only enable you to inhibit those

By acting on the answer to the question "Who am I?" you not only will be in the process of discovering who you are, you will also be discovering who each other person is: a son/daughter of God.

impediments, the fear and hope processes, but will also place you on a threshold that enables you to see over each next event and what it is pointing to. You discover by practicing, that each next event is there for our learning. It isn't pointing to that which we think it's pointing to because what we think it's pointing to is out of our conditioning. It's pointing beyond that and we need to have a practice that helps us to see beyond. Practice is a step-up or threshold that allows us to stand a little higher to see over, to see beyond.

We also discover our true source of power.

Absolutely. I distinguish control from power. Control is what we have been enculturated to do. This requires manipulation of our environment and ourselves in order to achieve our goals and purposes. This is all lower-self order of functioning. Remember, we have to

become good at that to be successful survivors, which isn't bad by the way. Nothing that came before is bad. That would be like thinking the fetus is bad because it preceded the baby.

In the book you say the evolutionary steps are necessary but not sufficient for the life of fullness.

Exactly, all of this is necessary but certainly not sufficient. To arrive at successful survival differs from society to society. In another society, successful survival requires the ability to hunt and to trap. In our society, the equivalent of that is the ability to read. A person in our society, without the ability to read, would be as helpless as a member of another

society who couldn't hunt or trap. The conditionings that are needed for successful survival vary from society to society.

In order to become successful survivors we need to learn control and we need to learn it well enough to be successful survivors. However, we also need to discover the limits thereof. The ability to control does not bring you to fullness. We see this all around us. Look at Howard Hughes and others whose ability to exercise tremendous control did not lead to fulfillment.

In contrast to control, which requires your ability to manipulate things, there is a power available to us that I call our "higher-self order of functioning." Another word for that is the "soul process." I use the word process in conjunction with these words to emphasize that these are not entities. The power that is available to us is not something we can manipulate. There is an old magical view of thinking wherein we've thought we could somehow manipulate this power out there. That's for the childhood of our race. We've been through that. That magical thinking combined with mythology gave us religion and it served us well. But we're ready to go past that. We are ready to discover our power. That it is available to us is the most astounding discovery one can make.

Through this practice.

Yes.

Is there anything else you would like to add?

I keep talking about evolution. Evolution applies

Meditation is not anything you can do; that is, no human has ever meditated. What you can do is to "go for Meditation." Just simply present yourself quietly. Let the Meditation be done unto you by the Source.

both to the individual and to the society or to humankind. There are societies, just as there are individuals, who have not gotten beyond subsistent survival. We are fortunate to live in a society that has gotten beyond "creating the useful," the second level of awareness. We are living in a society that goes beyond that to encourage the third level, "creating the harmonizing aesthetic." This is a tremendous achievement. People are taking shots at our society and often justifiably so, but we must acknowledge this tremendous leap that our society has made. We as a society are encouraging third level awareness. The big conflict in our world today is between societies who are encouraging this third level and those who are stuck at the second or the first level. This applies also to individuals. Most individuals in our society are stuck at the same level. People think that evolution is democratic and it isn't, at least to begin

with. It may end up that way but it begins with mutation. Individuals. I stress how absolutely individual this is. This is not a group practice or a group divine plan. This is not for people to get together and do. In fact, group approaches practically kill it. People who would never dream of going to a physician, dentist, or an accountant in a group want to approach their life of the spirit in a group. Where did that come from? Religion. Religion wants to achieve social cohesion, stability, and control. We need to know that there is no way of discovering our power through a group. We discover it only by going within•



TONY STONIGARY/TOWELL

Thich Nhat Hanh is a Zen master, poet, and peace advocate. He is the author of "Being Peace," "Peace is Every Step," and "The Miracle of Mindfulness." He lives in a small community in France, where he writes, gardens, and works to help refugees worldwide. From "Peace is Every Step" by Thich Nhat Hanh. Copyright 1991 by Thich Nhat Hanh. Printed with permission from Bantam Books, a division of Bantam Doubleday Dell Publishing Group, Inc.

The River of Feelings

T H I C H N H A T H A N H

Our feelings play a very important part in directing all of our thoughts and actions. In us, there is a river of feelings in which every drop of water is a different feeling, and each feeling relies on all the others for its existence. To observe it, we just sit on the bank of the river and identify each feeling as it surfaces, flows by, and disappears.

There are three sorts of feelings—pleasant, unpleasant, and neutral. When we have an unpleasant feeling, we may want to chase it away. But it is more effective to return to our conscious breathing and just observe it, identifying it silently to ourselves. “Breathing in, I know there is an unpleasant feeling in me. Breathing out, I know there is an unpleasant feeling in me.” Calling a feeling by its name, such as “anger,” “sorrow,” “joy,” or “happiness,” helps us identify it clearly and recognize it more deeply.

We can use our breathing to be in contact with our feelings and accept them. If our breathing is light and calm—a natural result of conscious breathing—our mind and body will slowly become light, calm, and clear, and our feelings also. Mindful observation is based on the principle of “non-duality”: our feeling is not separate from us or caused merely by something outside us; our feeling is us, and for the moment we are that feeling. We are neither drowned in nor terrorized by the feeling, nor do we reject it. Our attitude of not clinging to or rejecting our feelings is the attitude of letting go, an important part of meditation practice.

If we face our unpleasant feelings with care, affection, and nonviolence, we can transform them into the kind of energy that is healthy and has the

capacity to nourish us. By the work of mindful observation, our unpleasant feelings can illuminate so much for us, offering us insight and understanding into ourselves and society.

NON-SURGERY

Western medicine emphasizes surgery too much. Doctors want to take out the things that are not wanted. When we have something irregular in our body, too often they advise us to have an operation. The same seems to be true in psychotherapy. Therapists want to help us throw out what is unwanted and keep only what is wanted. But what is left may not be very much. If we try to throw away what we don’t want, we may throw away most of ourselves.

Instead of acting as if we can dispose of parts of ourselves, we should learn the art of transformation. We can transform our anger, for example, into something more wholesome, like understanding. We do not need surgery to remove our anger. If we become angry at our anger, we will have two angers at the same time. We only have to observe it with love and attention. If we take care of our anger in this way, without trying to run away from it, it will transform itself. This is peacemaking. If we are peaceful in ourselves, we can make peace with our anger. We can deal with depression, anxiety, fear, or any unpleasant feeling in the same way.

TRANSFORMING FEELINGS

The first step in dealing with feelings is to recognize each feeling as it arises. The agent that does this is mindfulness. In the case of fear, for example, you bring out your mindfulness, look at your fear, and recognize it as fear. You know that fear springs from yourself and that mindfulness also springs

from yourself. They are both in you, not fighting but one taking care of the other.

The second step is to become one with the feeling. It is best not to say, “Go away, Fear. I don’t like you. You are not me.” It is much more effective to say, “Hello, Fear. How are you today?” Then you can invite the two aspects of yourself, mindfulness and fear, to shake hands as friends and become one. Doing this may seem frightening but because you know that you are more than just your fear, you need not be afraid. As long as mindfulness is there, it can chaperone your fear. The fundamental practice is to nourish your mindfulness with conscious breathing, to keep it there, alive and strong. Although your mindfulness may not be very powerful in the beginning, if you nourish it, it will become stronger. As long as mindfulness is present, you will not drown in your fear. In fact, you begin transforming it the very moment you give birth to awareness in yourself.

The third step is to calm the feeling. As mindfulness is taking good care of your fear, you begin to calm it down. “Breathing in, I calm the activities of body and mind.” You calm your feeling just by being with it, like a mother tenderly holding her crying baby. Feeling his mother’s tenderness, the baby will calm down and stop crying. The mother is your mindfulness, born from the depth of your consciousness, and it will tend the feeling of pain. A mother holding her baby is one with her baby. If the mother is thinking of other things, the baby will not calm down. The mother has to put aside other things and just hold her baby. So, don’t avoid your feeling. Don’t say, “You are not important.

If we face our unpleasant feelings with care, affection, and nonviolence, we can transform them into the kind of energy that is healthy and has the capacity to nourish us.

You are only a feeling.” Come and be one with it. You can say, “Breathing out, I calm my fear.”

The fourth step is to release the feeling, to let it go. Because of your calm, you feel at ease, even in the midst of fear, and you know that your fear will not grow into something that will overwhelm you. When you know that you are capable of taking care of your fear, it is already reduced to the minimum, becoming softer and not so unpleasant. Now you can smile at it and let it go but please do not stop yet. Calming and releasing are just medicines for the symptoms. You now have an opportunity to go deeper and work on transforming the source of your fear.

The fifth step is to look deeply. You look deeply into your baby—your feeling of fear—to see what is wrong, even after the baby has already stopped crying, after the fear is gone. You cannot hold your baby all the time and therefore you have to look into him to see the cause of what is wrong. By looking, you will see what will help you begin to transform the feeling. You will realize, for example, that his suffering has many causes, inside and outside of his body. If something is wrong around him, if you put that in order, bringing tenderness and care to the situation, he will feel better. Looking into your baby, you see the elements that are causing him to cry and when you see them, you will know what to do and what not to do to transform the feeling and be free.

This is a process similar to psychotherapy. Together with the patient, a therapist looks at the nature of the pain. Often, the therapist can uncover causes of suffering that stem from the way the patient looks at things, the beliefs he holds about him-

self, his culture, and the world. The therapist examines these viewpoints and beliefs with the patient, and together they help free him from the kind of prison he has been in. But the patient's efforts are crucial. A teacher has to give birth to the teacher within his student and a psychotherapist has to give birth to the psychotherapist within his patient. The patient's "internal psychotherapist" can then work full-time in a very effective way.

The therapist does not treat the patient by simply giving him another set of beliefs. She tries to help him see which kinds of ideas and beliefs have led to his suffering. Many patients want to get rid of their painful feelings but they do not want to get rid of their beliefs, the viewpoints that are the very roots of their feelings. So therapist and patient have to work together to help the patient see things as they are. The same is true when we use mindfulness to transform our feelings. After recognizing the feeling, becoming one with it, calming it down, and releasing it, we can look deeply into its causes which are often based on inaccurate perceptions. As soon as we understand the causes and nature of our feelings, they begin to transform themselves.

MINDFULNESS OF ANGER

Anger is an unpleasant feeling. It is like a blazing flame that burns up our self-control and causes us to say and do things that we regret later. When someone is angry, we can see

Anger can be a kind of compost and it is within its power to give birth to something beautiful. We need anger in the way the organic gardener needs compost. If we know how to accept our anger, we already have some peace and joy. Gradually we can transform anger into peace, love, and understanding.

clearly that he or she is abiding in hell. Anger and hatred are the materials from which hell is made. A mind without anger is cool, fresh and sane. The absence of anger is the basis of real happiness, the basis of love and compassion.

When our anger is placed under the lamp of mindfulness, it immediately begins to lose some of its destructive nature. We can say to ourselves, "Breathing in, I know that anger is in me. Breathing out, I know that I am my anger." If we follow our breathing closely while we identify and mindfully observe our anger, it can no longer monopolize our consciousness.

Awareness can be called upon to be a companion for our anger. Our awareness of our anger does not suppress it or drive it out. It just looks after it. This is a very important principle. Mindfulness is not a judge. It is more like an older sister looking after and comforting her younger sister in an affectionate and caring way. We can concentrate on our breathing in order to maintain this mindfulness and know ourselves fully.

When we are angry, we are not usually inclined to return to ourselves. We want to think about the person who is making us angry, to think about his hateful aspects—his rudeness, dishonesty, cruelty, maliciousness, and so on. The more we think about him, listen to him, or look at him, the more our

anger flares. His dishonesty and hatefulness may be real, imaginary, or exaggerated, but in fact the root of the problem is the anger itself, and we have to come back and look first of all inside ourselves. It is best if we do not listen to or look at the person whom we consider to be the cause of our anger. Like a fireman we have to pour water on the blaze first and not waste time looking for the one who set the house on fire. "Breathing in, I know that I am angry. Breathing out, I know that I must put all my energy into caring for my anger." So we avoid thinking about the other person and we refrain from doing or saying anything as long as our anger persists. If we put all our mind into observing our anger, we will avoid doing any damage that we may regret later.

When we are angry, our anger is our very self. To suppress or chase it away is to suppress or chase away our self. When we are joyful, we are the joy. When we are angry, we are the anger. When anger is born in us, we can be aware that anger is an energy in us, and we can accept that energy in order to transform it into another kind of energy. When we have a compost bin filled with organic material which is decomposing and smelly, we know that we can transform the waste into beautiful flowers. At first, we may see the compost and the flowers as opposite but when we look deeply, we see that the flowers already exist in the compost, and the compost already exists in the flowers. It only takes a couple of weeks for a flower to decompose. When a good organic gardener looks into her compost, she can see that and she does not feel sad or disgusted. Instead, she values the rotting material and does not discriminate against it. It takes only a few months for compost to give birth to flowers. We need the insight and non-dual vision of the organic gardener with regard to our anger. We need not be afraid of it or reject it. We know that anger can be a kind of compost and that it is within its power to give birth to something beautiful. We need anger in the way the organic gardener needs compost. If we know how to accept our anger, we already have some peace and joy. Gradually we can transform

anger completely into peace, love, and understanding.

PILLOW POUNDING

Expressing anger is not always the best way to deal with it. In expressing anger we might be practicing or rehearsing it and making it stronger in the depth of our consciousness. Expressing anger to the person we are angry at can cause a lot of damage.

Some of us may prefer to go into our room, lock the door, and punch a pillow. We call this "getting in touch with our anger." But I don't think this is getting in touch with our anger at all. In fact, I don't think it is even getting in touch with our pillow. If we are really in touch with the pillow, we know what a pillow is and we won't hit it. Still this technique may work temporarily because while pounding the pillow, we expend a lot of energy, and after a while, we are exhausted and we feel better. But the roots of our anger are still intact and if we go out and eat some nourishing food, our energy will be renewed. If the seeds of our anger are watered again, our anger will be reborn and we will have to pound the pillow again.

Pillow-pounding may provide some relief, but it is not very long-lasting. In order to have real transformation, we have to deal with the roots of our anger—looking deeply into its causes. If we don't, the seeds of anger will grow again. If we practice mindful living, planting new, healthy, wholesome seeds, they will take care of our anger and they may transform it without our asking them to do so.

Our mindfulness will take care of everything, as the sunshine takes care of the vegetation. The sunshine does not seem to do much, it just shines on the vegetation but it transforms everything. Poppies close up every time it gets dark but when the sun shines on them for one or two hours, they open. The sun penetrates into the flowers and at some point, the flowers cannot resist, they just have to open up. In the same way, mindfulness, if practiced continuously, will provide a kind of transformation within the flower of our anger and it will open and show us its own nature. When we understand the nature, the roots, of our anger, we will be freed from it. •



Fat Was Not Bad

CAROL MUNTER AND
JANE HIRSCHMANN

What does it mean when a woman says, in one way or another, “I feel fat”? Although “feeling fat” is a relatively recent addition to our language of feelings, unfortunately it is a feeling that most women understand. Because we live in a society in which fatness is denigrated, each time a woman says, “I feel fat,” she is saying, “There is something wrong with me.” Each time a woman feels fat, she is feeling self-hatred and self-disgust. The disturbing truth is that our culture fosters and supports this kind of self-denigration in women.

Carol Munter is a psychotherapist and certified eating disorders specialist in private practice in New York City. She started the first anti-dieting group for women in 1970. She currently is the codirector of the National Center for Overcoming Overeating. Jane Hirschmann, is a psychotherapist in private practice who specializes in treating women and children with eating problems. She currently is the codirector of the National Center for Overcoming Overeating and is coauthor of "Preventing Childhood Eating Problems." From "When Women Stop Hating Their Bodies" by Jane Hirschmann and Carol Munter. Copyright 1995 by Jane Hirschmann and Carol Munter. Printed by permission of Ballantine Books.



How can we rid ourselves of Bad Body Fever? First, we must investigate the environmental conditions that foster its growth. In order to understand an ailment like Bad Body Fever, which is so clearly gender-related, we must stop thinking only in terms of our individual psyches and begin thinking in terms of the collective position of women in our society. After all, Bad Body Fever has not always been around; it is a phenomenon of our current culture. Once we understand Bad Body Fever as a social ill, we must look deeply within ourselves in order to discern the particular ways in which our psyches have been shaped by our culture, leaving us vulnerable to Bad Body Fever in the first place.

FAT WAS NOT ALWAYS BAD

Why is it that when we want to berate ourselves, we call ourselves fat, rather than short, or tall, or blue-eyed, or brown-eyed? We are all so accustomed to thinking of the word *fat* as a slur that it is hard to imagine a time when it was anything other than that. The fact is, until fairly recently, *fat* was not a dirty word. A quick review of other languages tells us much about the history of the word.

According to *Webster's* dictionary, the Latin word for fat is related to the word *optimus*, which means "fertile" or "copious." In Greek, the word for fat is related to the words *pidyein* and *pidax*,

which mean "to gush forth." In Sanskrit, the word for fat, *pivan*, means "robust." English definitions include "well filled out," "of sizable proportions," "thick" (as in a fat letter or volume of verse), and "unusually large, substantial, and impressive" (as in a fat bank account, a fat fee, or a fat part in a play). The list of positive definitions continues with "productive," "fertile," and "fruitful." Only at the bottom of the list of definitions do we find negative connotations like "coarse," "gross," or "slow-witted."

It is very hard for women today to imagine a world in which people were not repelled by fat, but we urge you to do just that. Plan an excursion to a museum and look at paintings of large women. Try to find one with a body like yours. If the museum gift shop has a postcard of that particular painting, buy two of them. Put one on your refrigerator door and see how much more relaxed you feel in the kitchen. Put the other in your purse. Each time you have a bad body thought, take out the postcard and think about what life was like for the woman who modeled for the painting. She may have had her problems but her size was not one of them. She was not assaulted with electronic and print images of what her body should look like. She sewed her own clothes or had them made to fit her body. There were no standardized sizes for women's clothing until the late nineteenth century. Imagine never being asked your size.

Every time a woman says, "I'm fat," she is really saying, "I'm not good enough" or "I'm bad." Now we would like you to consider the possibility that when a woman says disgustedly that she feels fat, she is really saying that she feels she is too large—larger than any woman is supposed to be in a man's world.

How much space is a woman supposed to occupy? How fertile and substantial is a woman supposed to be? Is it possible that women feel fat when they think their ideas, wishes, and feelings are out of line or unladylike? We believe that when women suspect they have overstepped some boundary, they attack themselves for the transgression by calling themselves fat. In this way, women keep

their ideas, feelings, and forbidden ambitions in check.

Does this sound too far-fetched to you? Consider Mary's story. Mary received a long-overdue promotion at work. She was delighted. Then her supervisor called to tell her that a photographer would be there the next morning to take her picture for the company newsletter. From that point on, all Mary could think about was how fat she felt and how much she did not want her picture taken. That night she slept fitfully. Each time she woke up she saw herself looming large in the photograph. The joy she felt about her promotion was completely eclipsed by her concern about being too fat, too big, too successful.

Megan told us that she had recently completed an intense self-defense class for women. "I didn't recognize myself—fighting back in the class the way I did. But ever since, I haven't been able to stop thinking about my body. I feel huge," she said. Like Mary, Megan felt that she had overstepped some boundary.

BEFORE FAT WAS A BAD WORD

Bad Body Fever is an outgrowth of a culture that makes women feel inferior. Women feel that their bodies are deficient because they are born female into a world in which men hold the power. Women are, in fact, treated as if they are not good enough.

Although it has shown itself differently in different cultures, women have been treated as inferiors for as long as men have held power. In some primitive societies, menstruating women, isolated

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from the tribe, were feared and shunned. Some variation of this practice still goes on today in more than one religion, where women continue to be regarded as unclean or unworthy of performing sacred tasks. Clitoridectomy, the ultimate measure by which men control women's sexuality, is still a common practice in parts of the world today. In "Possessing the Secret of Joy," Alice Walker reports, "It is estimated that from ninety to one hundred million women and girls living today in Africa, Far Eastern, and Middle Eastern countries have been genitally mutilated."

Although women have been oppressed throughout recorded history, the particular result of that oppression that concerns us—body hatred—is of recent vintage. According to the historian Roberta Seid, women's bodies were not regarded as "packaging" until the eighteenth century when women began to compete on the marriage market. Before that, fashion was regarded as part of upper-class life for both men and women. Even when fashion became a female concern rather than an upper-class one, the emphasis was on clothing and decoration, not on diet, exercise, and body shaping.

If women wanted to emphasize their buttocks, they wore bustles—they did not try to build up their actual muscles.

Naomi Wolf argues convincingly that the hatred of fat per se did not emerge until women began to join forces and reject their inferior status. "Soft rounded hips and thighs and bellies were perceived as desirable and sensual without question, until

women got the vote,” she writes in “The Beauty Myth.” It appears that the more powerful women become, the more pressure there is for us to get rid of the padding and curves that make our bodies so different from the bodies of men. When we loathe ourselves for being fat, we are succumbing to this pressure. When we lash out at our stomachs, our thighs, our hips, our backsides, our breasts, and our cellulite, we are hating our femaleness. We live in a culture that demonstrates its ambivalence toward women in the violence of its pornography and in the prevalence of rape and battering. When we hate our bodies, we are turning against ourselves.

What do you think would happen if all women stopped hating their bodies? We routinely ask this question of workshop participants. Their answers are always strikingly similar and demonstrate what we have been saying about the inhibiting effect of Bad Body Fever. “Our energy would be astounding,” said one workshop participant. “No question about it,” said another, almost giddy with pleasure. “We would take over the world!”

Shape our bodies or shape the world? It is a choice that men do not have to consider. Yet, by the time we reach womanhood, each of us has internalized the pressure to make ourselves less than we are, to take up less room in the world. Our bad body thoughts preoccupy us, constrain us, and control us.

DISSECTING BAD BODY FEVER

It is important to recognize the intensity with which the vast majority of women evaluate their bodies. We *hate* our bodies with a passion. And as is the case with all passionate hatred, there is more to our response than meets the eye.

Generally, passionate hatred disguises some other story. We hate what we fear; we hate what we envy; we hate the people and things that frustrate our needs and desires. But our focus on hating, like our focus on fat, keeps our real feelings at bay. Think about the intensity with which people hate minority groups or foreigners. Such hatred is fueled by a fear—which is the real feeling—that something strange and unknown about these groups will

threaten the values and power structure of the dominant culture.

Fear, envy, and frustration underlie hatred on a more personal level as well. For example, have you ever felt that you hated a coworker who always insisted on having things her way, when in fact what you really felt was envy of her ability to assert herself and frustration at your inability? Or did you ever hate a friend’s self-involvement, realizing that underneath your attentiveness to others lurked an equally pervasive self-absorption? Or perhaps you hate your ex-husband, when what you really hate is the fact that he did not love you the way you loved him.

What is the story behind our hatred of our bodies? We have already talked about the fact that our bodies reveal our femaleness. Now we must go one step further and explore the fear, envy, and frustration that underlie the hatred with which we regard our female flesh. After all, social ideas must be endorsed by each one of us in order to be effective without the use of coercion or violence. We endorse ideas willingly only if they correspond to our needs. Our intensely negative feelings about our female bodies take hold in part because they are rooted in our very earliest experiences.

THE AMBIVALENCE OF DEPENDENCY

In her book “The Mermaid and the Minotaur,” Dorothy Dinnerstein suggests that nothing fundamental will change in the relationships between men and women until child care is shared equally. She believes that as long as women are in charge of caring for children, both boys and girls will continue to turn to women for nurturance and then blame them when they feel deprived. All of the ambivalence that children feel about being dependent and not getting everything they want exactly when they want it is directed toward their mothers, who are both the recipients of their love and the targets of their rage.

Dinnerstein maintains that we continue to act out our love and rage toward our mothers throughout our lives. Men act it out directly when they exert power over women, and women act it out indirectly when they acquiesce to men. In other words, when we either allow ourselves to be de-

meaned or demean ourselves, we are—by identifying ourselves with her—reaping revenge on the mother who frustrated us and whom we both loved and feared.

For all of us, fat represents the large, nurturing, and feared bodies of our mothers. Our culture's current ambivalence toward female bodies, which is expressed in the ideal of thinness, is able to flourish because it echoes the deep feelings we each hold about our early dependency on our mothers. It was our mothers' bodies with which we fiercely wished to merge, and it was their bodies from which we fiercely wished to separate. It was our mothers who enforced the restrictions we resented yet who gave us enormous pleasure. We approach our own womanhood with both sets of feelings: loving our mothers/their bodies and hating our mothers/their bodies. As Kim Chernin states in her eloquent book, "The Obsession: Reflections on the Tyranny of Slenderness," "When we attempt to determine the size and shape of a woman's body, instructing it to avoid its largeness and softness and roundness and girth, we are driven by the desire to expunge the memory of the primordial mother who ruled over our childhood with her inscrutable power over life and death."

At some point in our development, we realize that our mothers, who had so much power in relation to us as children, have a lot less power in the

The more powerful women become, the more pressure there is for us to get rid of the padding and curves that make our bodies so different from the bodies of men. When we lash out at our stomachs, our thighs, our hips, our backsides, our breasts, and our cellulite, we are hating our femaleness.

"real" world. For us as young women, this realization is met with ambivalence. On the one hand, it means our mothers are far less threatening; on the other, it also means our mothers have little power with which to endow us for our own adulthood. Either way, we lose.

How can you cure yourself of Bad Body Fever? If you accept the idea that Bad Body Fever develops as a result of the inequities between men and women, its cure then becomes part of the larger struggle for women's liberation. As a result of this struggle during the past twenty-five years, the general condition of women has improved considerably. Despite these improvements, however, Bad Body Fever lingers and is more virulent than ever. It is time to address this ailment seriously, to ask ourselves why we have such difficulty recovering from it, and to explore specific remedies.

LEGALIZE YOUR BODY

The cure for Bad Body Fever involves a liberation from all cultural views on body size. To cure Bad Body Fever you must *legalize your body*. In other words, you must stop trying to lose weight and accept your body precisely as it is, regardless of size. Understandably, this suggestion inspires fear and disbelief in most women. Stop trying to lose weight in a culture like ours?

This task is an extremely difficult one. Accepting your body

regardless of its size requires a great deal of self-nurturing, an ability to free yourself from cultural beliefs, and a willingness finally to get to know yourself. You will discover how much you rely on the negative thoughts you have about your body—your bad body thoughts—to mask other important issues in your life. You would not be so focused on your body if you felt comfortable acknowledging your thoughts and feelings more openly. Shedding that mask and confronting those issues head-on can be a frightening prospect.

Along with ridding yourself of bad body thoughts, you need to *inhabit your body* as it is, with genuine love and understanding. This kind of self-affirmation leaves no room for the negative judgments of the culture in which we live.

In “The Beauty Myth” Naomi Wolf writes, “A man’s right to confer judgment on any woman’s beauty while remaining himself unjudged... is the last unexamined right remaining intact from the old list of masculine privilege... that it was universally believed that God or nature or another absolute authority bestowed upon all men to exert over all women.” For most women, the notion of challenging such long-standing authority by loving and accepting their bodies, regardless of their size, feels about as possible as the notion of defying gravity. The fact is however that you can learn to love and accept your body without altering it in any way. To get an idea of what that might feel like, we suggest you try this exercise.

Suspend your disbelief for the moment and imagine that the atmosphere is about to be infused with a strange and powerful substance—a substance that will make it impossible for anyone ever to gain

Accepting your body regardless of its size requires a great deal of self-nurturing, an ability to free yourself from cultural beliefs, and a willingness finally to get to know yourself.

or lose another pound. Your body and the bodies of everyone you know will remain exactly at their current weight.

How would you lead your life in this new atmosphere? What would you wear once you were no longer waiting to change size? Would you take that trip to the beach you have been postponing until you lose weight? And how about the exercise regime you were planning to begin? Are you still interested, even though you know it will not have any impact on your size?

Before you answer these questions, consider this one final piece of information. This strange and powerful substance that you are now inhaling with every breath has an additional quality. It creates an environment in which no one’s body is considered more beautiful than any other, an environment in

which bad body thoughts no longer exist, in your mind or in anyone else’s, and all bodies are regarded as lovely and interesting.

How would you feel living in a world in which the size and shape of your body were regarded without any judgment? How would you feel walking down the street, sitting on a bus, buying your groceries, and eating your lunch in a world in which you knew that your body’s size and shape were just fine?

Right now, such a world is only a fantasy. Regardless of what is happening in the world around you however you can create the kind of acceptance we are talking about *within yourself*: You can create a world in which you see your body as it is and enjoy it. You can challenge all of the ideas you have unconsciously internalized about how bodies should look. You can take your bad body thoughts and put them aside. You can dress yourself in ways that

PLEASE TURN TO PAGE 86

Calendar of Up-Coming Workshops, Seminars, and Events

DECEMBER

- 24-30 GEMINIDS METEOR SHOWER

A warm weather winter adventure of fun and personal discovery at Baja, California. Hot springs, camping, hiking, boating, exceptional snorkeling, and fishing. One of the many wilderness destinations for InnerQuest. For other locations and dates and more information call (800)990-HERO.

- 28-JAN 7 CREATE YOUR LIFE

You can create your life in each moment with the tools you will receive from this Avatar course. The Avatar course is based on the simple but profound concept that

your beliefs will create or attract situations that you experience as your life. Call Roseann Gould (800)381-2465

JANUARY

- 8-20 JUNGIAN WINTER SEMINAR IN SWITZERLAND

“Myth, Symbol & Soul,” a seminar for people with a professional or personal interest in analytical psychology at the Jung Institute, Zurich. Contact Michael Galazka, Jungian Seminars, (800)258-3533 or (203)767-3533.

- 19-20 WOMEN’S SPIRITUALITY IN THE NINETIES



THE SACRED CIRCLE ANNUAL WOMEN’S HARVEST CELEBRATION HELD EACH YEAR IN SEPTEMBER AT THE FEATHERED PIPE RANCH, HELENA MONTANA BY DR. SUSAN RANGITSCH.

Our deepest fear is not that we are inadequate. Our deepest fear is that we are powerful beyond measure. It is our light, not our darkness, that most frightens us... Your playing small doesn't serve the world. There's nothing enlightened about shrinking so that other people won't feel insecure around you.

—Nelson Mandela



THE SACRED CIRCLE ANNUAL WOMEN'S HARVEST CELEBRATION HELD EACH YEAR IN SEPTEMBER AT THE FEATHERED PIPE RANCH, HELENA MONTANA BY DR. SUSAN RANGITSCH.

Utilizing the mythology, symbols, and rituals of the Goddess, the lecture explores the potential for personal empowerment and transformation of consciousness. The focus is on the body and sexuality. Contact July Mathews at the California Institute of Integral Studies (415)753-6100, Ext. 238.

• 19-21 WEEKEND AT AVIVA'S—
PAINTING FROM THE SOURCE

Spend a weekend at Aviva's Retreat nestled in the foothills of the Berkshires. Aviva has been teaching inspired art for over 25 years. Contact Aviva Gold, Spencertown, New York. (518)392-2631.

• 20-21 SHAMANISM AND THE
CELTIC SPIRIT

In this workshop by Tom Cowan, learn to use core shamanic techniques to journey to sources of power important in Celtic spirituality. Explore important life issues, including the often misunderstood issues of service, suffering, and death. For more information con-

tact the Oasis Center (312)274-6777.

• 20-23 HERBS AND HEALING

Herbal therapies are an ancient healing modality quickly gaining recognition in our society. Herbal therapies can be considered therapeutic doses of food, concentrated nutrients and pharmacologically active drug substances in their natural state. Returning your body to its maximum health level is the key to oneness with the universal thought: to be "one" with the universe you must be "one" with your body. Mark William McDermott Contact Wisdom House (860)567-3163.

• 26-28 THE WAY OF TEA

Explore the spiritual discipline of this Oriental path emphasizing harmony, respect, purity and tranquility. For more information contact the Wisdom House (860) 567-3163.

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Calendar

- 20-26 THE THERAPIST: A JUNGIAN PERSPECTIVE

Sponsored by Journey into Wholeness. For more information contact Annette Cullipher Kanuga, Hendersonville, North Carolina. (704)877-4809.

- 26-27 WOMEN'S POWER

This workshop celebrates the many strands of women's spirituality and explores ways we can weave together our different traditions to strengthen our power to change the world. Contact Judy Mathews, CIIS, (415)753-6100, Ext. 238.

- 31-FEB. 9 WINTER PAINTING RETREAT AT AMORE DE MAR (SEA OF LOVE)

Located on the southern tip of the Nicoya Peninsula of Costa Rica near the charming village of Montozuma, this magical spot has the tropical Pacific at its front door and a spectacular waterfall in its back yard. Contact Aviva Gold (518)392-2631.

F E B R U A R Y

- 8-18 BIRTHING THE THIRD MILLENNIUM HUMAN

With eight great visionaries in the fields of science, psychology and spirituality, co-create a ten-day accelerated learning experience to awaken your capacities to live more fully in the 21st century. Held at the beautiful Namaste Retreat Center in Wilsonville, Oregon. Contact The Living Enrichment Center (800)893-1000 for more information.

- 9-11 FREEING HEART, MIND & HAND WITH CALLIGRAPHY

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• 9-13 17TH ANNUAL TRAINING INSTITUTE ON ADDICTION

An exceptional combination of inspiring speakers and trainers addressing today's most interesting topics. This year the program tackles the issues of addiction using an integrated approach. Held at beautiful Clearwater Beach, Florida. For more information contact the Institute for Integral Development (719)634-7943 or (800)544-9562.

• 11-16 THE DYNAMICS OF HEALING: HEALING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

When we are ill, what parts of us are asking for change? Explore Yogananda's methods of healing in a safe, supportive environment. For a free 24-page guide to programs, call The Expanding Light at Ananda Village: (800)346-5350.

• 17-24 A JOURNEY OF HEALING

A week of wake-up calls to the power of love and forgiveness in healing our relationships, emphasizing letting go of our attachments to guilt, blame and fear, along with the incredible power of forgiveness.

A Feathered Pipe Foundation Seminar with Jerry Jampolsky and Diane Cirincione in San Salvador, Bahamas. Contact the Feathered Pipe foundation for more information. (406)442-8196 or Fax (406)442-8110.

• 24-25 THE PATH OF THE SOUL: LIFE AS A CREATIVE PROCESS

A shamanic workshop with Christina Stack that will explore who we are and why we are here. By working with the spirits and the forces of Nature we will seek to understand the reactive process and its potential for transforming the ways we live and work in the world. Contact the Oasis Center (312)274-6777.

• 25-MARCH 3 WINTER RENEWAL WEEK: DEEPENING YOUR SPIRITUAL LIFE

Take time out and celebrate your inner life during this annual winter retreat. The whole Ananda community gathers together with guests for this special week of inspiration. For more information contact The Expanding Light: (800)346-5350.

MARCH

• 1-5 FIVE DAY PAINTING
RETREAT AT SEDONA, ARIZONA

With its red crystal cliffs it is known as the healing vortex of the continent. Paint in a unique and beautiful retreat center off the beaten track, deep in a breathtaking picturesque canyon. This is the best of Sedona, a truly ideal and inspirational site for accessing your creative energy. Contact Aviva Gold (518)392-2631.

• 2-9 GIFTS FROM THE SEA:
RENEWING BODY & SOUL

A Women's Retreat, inspired by Ane Morrow Lindbergh's words and the beauty and simplicity of a quiet tropical island, Jean Shinoda Bolen and Jan Lovett-Keen invite you to explore at the water's edge, flow with the tides or dive deeply as you gather beside the peaceful, blue Caribbean ocean at the Riding Rock Inn in the Bahamas. Contact the Feathered Pipe Foundation (406)442-8196.

• 9-16 STAR, STONE & BONE

This time together among the stone temples of the Dawn Star on the exquisite Quintanaroo coast of Mexico is a journey to the beauty and wisdom within as well as around ourselves. Angeles Arrien and Brooke Medicine Eagle joyfully assist you in recovering your center as you visit centers of light in the Yucatan, bathe in the turquoise water and share deeply with one another. For more information contact The Feathered Pipe Foundation at (406)442-8196.

• 9-16 NATURAL HEALTH,
NATURAL HEALING WITH
ANDREW WEIL

Held at the beautiful Riding Rock Inn on San Salvador Island in the Bahamas. The best, most practical alternatives to high-tech, disease-oriented medicine: nutrition, exercise, stress-reduction, herbs, vitamins, breathing and the process of connecting with nature, community and the higher self. Contact The Feathered Pipe Foundation at (406)442-8196.

• 15-17 JOURNEY TO THE
BOUNDLESS

Discover how to develop your inner abilities to go beyond the boundaries and limitations of judgments, definitions and denials with Dr. Deepak Chopra. Denver, CO. For further information call (800)757-8897.

• 28-31 WOMEN'S MYSTERIES
INTENSIVE

Each woman will bring the individual concerns and issues in her particular journey and will use ritual to hold profound and deep individual and group process. For more information contact Judith Barr c/o Mysteries of Life, PO Box 552, Pound Ridge, New York 10576. •

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Emotions

Continued from page 39

matizing in the past, many if not most people will automatically respond in the same way they did then. The same discomfort will come up, the same sense of panic and fear. There will be the same unconsciousness about what's going on. They forget about all the water that's passed under the bridge and forget about all the choices they can make about how to respond to their feelings. That's why it's so important to be able to sort out the present moment from the past and to give both the past and the present their due. Your emotional capacities can bloom and thrive when you know and appreciate the history of your heart.

Adults actively seek a greater understanding of their personal past, knowing its value to their freedom of choice in the present. If you're stuck in frustrating or destructive emotional patterns, it's usually because something from your past is blocking your ability to learn from your emotions and continue to grow. If every time a shaming or painful thought, conversation, or feeling comes up you have to run away from it, your life is going to be an experience of averting your eyes, not hearing, missing the point, and failing to notice what's happening right under your nose. Your parents' emotional handicaps will resurface in one form or another to become your handicaps, and then your children's. If you don't spot these problems now and begin to learn about them, the cycle will just continue. As Harriet Goldhor Lerner

notes in "The Dance of Intimacy," "We all have important emotional issues and if we don't process them up the generations, we are more than likely to pass them down."

Emotions that plague you with their continual reappearances in your life are actually gold mines to be explored, for they contain information about who and what you are. When you're willing to look at them and claim them—to tame them, in Saint-Exupery's words—you greatly expand your options. A friend told us recently, "There is nothing more satisfying than to see an emotion that once plagued me come up, to recognize it for what it is, understand the information it's giving me, and then watch it recede without claiming my attention for hours and hours all day long."•

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Fat Was Not Bad

Continued from page 78

please you. And you can begin to live the kind of life you have put on hold "until I lose weight."

SELF-CARE

How do you transform self-contempt into self-love and self-care? This transition is at the heart of curing Bad Body Fever and has many facets. In general however developing an independent point of view about your body requires an extensive internal system of support. You need to develop an ally or caretaking presence within your-

self to help challenge old beliefs and replace them with more life-enhancing values.

Our friend and colleague Robyn Posin, a psychologist in California, calls this process of developing internal support "creating the mommy within." Robyn learned our approach to eating many years ago and has applied the principles of self-acceptance and respect for internal cues to many aspects of her life and the lives of her clients. She teaches people how to create a nurturing mother within themselves in order to cope with the fears that accompany freeing yourself from ingrained attitudes that have been harmful. Robyn understands that it is one thing to learn about your inner child, but it is still another to foster that child's growth.

With courage, patience, and resolve, you can learn to care for yourself unconditionally and give yourself the support you need to cure your Bad Body Fever. Are you going to clobber yourself or care for yourself? Each time you stop a bad body thought, you strike a blow for all women and take another step in the direction of self-nurturance. As you gain experience confronting your thoughts and treating yourself kindly, you will begin to notice that your bad body thoughts come less and less frequently. Be patient. It took time for you to accommodate yourself to the kind of self-abuse that we associate with womanhood, and it will take time for you to make new associations as well. With effort, you will slowly but surely begin to feel independent and strong. •

Projections

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When you start to work in your relationship with the mirror image called your partner, when you begin to see yourself in the Other, to see your disowned parts in your partner, your world changes. Recognizing that what you saw in the Other is actually something you didn't see in yourself is part of the process of taking back your projections. It means you have recognized that what you reacted against was a mirage, a characteristic within yourself that you projected onto your partner. When you really see that, then there is no longer any need to blame your partner and make her or him wrong. In this moment, your partner changes in front of your eyes. It is miraculous. Suddenly you see your partner as you have never seen him or her before. *Abba!* Now who is *really* over there? These moments are very sobering because you have given up some sacredly held belief about reality, and you suddenly must acknowledge that you were wrong—which contributes to creating true humility.

The process of taking back projections is a necessary part of waking up to the truth of who you really are. In a committed relationship there are plenty of opportunities for this process to occur. If you can let go of indulging your wish to blame your partner and play the innocent victim and instead use him or her to learn about yourself, you are a step farther on your own journey of waking up.

This is not easy work. It is

confronting and embarrassing to see that what you have judged negatively is actually a part of yourself. It is also difficult for many of us to recognize that something we thought was so wonderful in the Other is also a part of ourselves. The so-called positive projections can be equally difficult to take back from the screen of the Other and integrate as a part of self. •

Rhea Powers and Gawain Bantle are leaders of workshops, seminars, and trainings throughout Europe, Australia, South America, and the United States. Rhea is the author of five books that have been translated into Spanish and German. They live in the Dominican Republic. From "Riding The Dragon" by Rhea Powers and Gawain Bantle. Copyright 1995 by Rhea Powers and Gawain Bantle. Printed with permission from North Star Publications.

Mystical

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may have become so injured in our instincts, so wounded in our souls that our demons threaten to overwhelm us, that we cannot quite hear the call of spring. But spring calls to us anyway. The center of our soul work is ensuring that the good, true, and beautiful in our nature is at least as strong as the demons and the monsters; put another way, it is ensuring that my self-worth is at least as strong as my self-critic. That issue is central to all of the indigenous peoples that I have studied. If I am living in a way that feeds the good, true, and

beautiful in my nature—as opposed to feeding the self-critic—then I can heal myself. I can stay in touch with my own deep source, my soul. And I can also be a healing agent in my family, my community, my nation, and the world.

I said before that the basis of soul work is really to eliminate everything that gets in the way of my being myself and to feed that which encourages me to be myself. I want to suggest a simple exercise—two simple questions—to help you track that. Each morning, before you step out into the world, ask yourself, “Is my self-worth as strong as my self-critic?” Be sure you can say yes before you go out the door. Then, using your name, say, “Jim, are you Jim?” or “Sally, are you Sally?” and be sure that you can say yes to that, too, before you go out into the world.

All of us carry, within ourselves, an original healing medicine that is not duplicated anywhere else on this earth. If we say yes to those two questions every day, then we can bring our medicine fully into the world. We can, as the woman at the bus stop did, move out of reactivity into creativity. When we live soulfully, each of us can be a shape-shifter; each of us can create holy, healing moments. Each of us can be fully engaged, moment to moment, in the great gift called life. •

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The Kingdom of Heaven

T H I C H N H A T H A N H

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 not to walk on thin air or water, but to walk on Earth.

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TONY STONE/ANDREW WELLS