JANUARY 1997

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*On the transformational path, everything that is false in us sooner or later falls away, and everything that is true remains.*

*—Stephano Sabetti*




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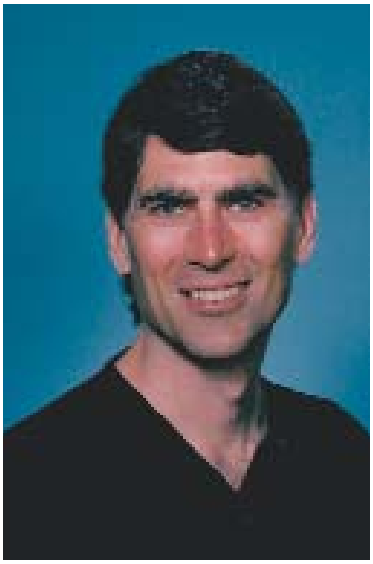
# From the Publisher

*If he [the teacher] is indeed wise, he does not bid you enter the house of his wisdom, but rather leads you to the threshold of your own.*
*—Kahlil Gibran*



We were getting some work done on our driveway the other day and one of the contractors asked about our magazine. He is a hard working man, a good man, and one not inclined to introspection. I hesitated, searching for a way to explain what we published in a way that he would understand. After thinking it over for a moment, I gave him a stock answer.

I told him something to the effect that personal transformation is a continual process of redefining ourselves, of becoming aware of who we truly are, of discovering a life that is vital and fulfilling. He looked at me with a questioning look, head cocked to the side, apparently not understanding. I went on about the articles that we publish and let the conversation lag until the subject changed.

His question intensified my wondering about how to describe personal transformation to people for whom it is unfamiliar territory. Often, when people ask, I sense their question is motivated by their yearning, however subtle it might be, for a more meaningful, richer experience of life. I want my response to rouse their deeper aspirations and our communication to activate their transformational process.

In that moment with the contractor, I didn't trust my wholeness, my being. I didn't give him an experience of my presence, which he would have connected with. I turned to my old friend, my intellect, from which to relate with him. I had hoped to awaken his deeper yearning. I did not. He awakened mine.

Our exchange reminded me that true transformation is about profound relationships; the quality of energy, attention, and awareness with which we relate to ourselves, life, and others. He led me into a deeper insight about myself.

Transformation and teachers always lead us more deeply into our own being, into the threshold of our own wisdom.

Rick NurrieStearns
Publisher

# From the Editor

*The natural healing force within each one of us is the greatest force in getting well.—Hippocrates*

To heal means to make healthy, well or sound again. Healing restores us to a state of being that is our fundamental nature and reconnects us with our essential wholeness. It asks us to direct our lives from our deepest desires and to realize our oneness with and love for life.

This issue explores healing as an aspect of transformation. Healing takes place in many dimensions of life. We can heal throughout our being—in body, heart, mind, and spirit. Health in one domain may depend upon healing in another or others, just as becoming well in one dimension has a positive impact in others.

Healing has to do with our experience of ourselves and our experience of life. Whether or not healing involves physical recovery, it is possible to find renewed meaning, to move into greater wholeness and fulfillment. True healing develops our appreciation for the value of life and gives us clarity about what is important. This wisdom increases the possibility of physical recovery.

John Robbins, in *Reclaiming our Health*, (see Book Reviews), reminds us that we all have the capacity for healing, though it means different things to different people at different times. It may involve increasing self-acceptance, realizing we still have a contribution to make, taking more responsibility for our lives, or allowing new life to awaken following frustration and loss.

The source for true healing resides within us all. While healing is one of life's mysteries, we impact the healing process in ourselves and others. Prayer, ritual, loving relationships, healing stories, answering questions about life's purpose, and forgiveness are powerful medicine, and are ways we can participate in healing. These healing agents are covered in this issue.

In our interview, Jean Shinoda Bolen describes the importance of stories in healing. She states that healing stories bring meaning, hope, and vision together. Stories like these have emotional power, and if we identify with the story, it becomes incorporated in us. Every cell and molecule in our body responds. The potential for recovery is magnified as our body, mind, and spirit remember the message to heal.

We all can be powerful stories, as life itself is a healer, and its experiences are opportunities for growing in wisdom and love. In one of this issue's Transformational Stories, Amy Allison demonstrates how ritual contributes to healing. Her ritual healed her broken story. She tossed a twig, symbolizing her surgically removed cancer, into a raging stream, and asked the Universe to cleanse her of all cancer, to make her whole and healthy. When the twig surrendered into the surging water, Amy felt purified and free. By symbolically re-enacting the surgery, she felt spiritually healed and able to move on, to invest in a new life story.

Prayer has been proven scientifically to be good medicine, to be a healing agent. I/Thou relationships, which provide profound companionship, are also well-documented to aid healing. Pets give us the benefits of relationship and prayer. Read Larry Dossey's article for a heart-warming description of how pets can be steadfast comrades when we are healing and how relating to pets has benefits similar to prayer. Devotion to pets, like devotion to prayer, brings out compassionate behavior in people. And pets, like prayer, save lives.

May this issue help us reap the benefits of loving relationships, prayer, ritual, and healing stories along our transformational way.

Mary NurrieStearns
Editor

# RELIGION AND THE SPIRITUAL

GEORGE JAIDAR

*This column features essays on aspects of transformation by leading thinkers and authors. Each essay focuses on a particular component of healing, evolution, spirituality, relationships, or consciousness.*
*Transformation heals, matures, and draws forth wholeness in all domains of human experience—in body, heart, mind, and soul. In this guest essay, George Jaidar delves into the necessity of developing our minds. An evolved intellect is a prerequisite to higher consciousness. He demonstrates that we need mental clarity and reflective thinking in order to transcend the limits of conventional religion and to move into the realm of spirituality. George Jaidar conducts "The Courage To Be" workshops, wrote "The Soul, An Owner's Manual," and resides in Ojai, California.*

Whether we refer to it as Higher Consciousness, the Life of the Spirit, the Soul, the Transpersonal, and so on, I sense that most of the readers and writers of *PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION* are pointing to a realm, state, or process that is transcendent yet immanent, however paradoxical that sounds. This seeming paradox I refer to as simply the *spiritual.* The spiritual is a developmental process and can be seen as quite analogous to sexuality, in that both require the growth and expression of certain potentials, that is, certain capacities must be developed and in place. Although the spiritual transcends the human mind, there is no excuse for considering the mind and its capabilities as expendable or obsolete. The threshold of the spiritual is arrived at by discovering the limits of the human mind, and the mind must be fully functional in order for it to discover those limits. Any explorations this side of the threshold of the spiritual deserve all the rigor and clarity of mind and its reflective thinking that we can bring to bear. Discovering such limits and attaining to that threshold is not achieved through psychology or any science, but by going beyond them to philosophy; not philosophy in its conventional sense, but more in its Socratic sense.

As a philosopher, I propose an alternate view of philosophy that will help us move past the conventional or the stereotypical. Philosophy is the art of wondering critically and constructively; it is the art of asking thoughtfully embarrassing questions in order to discover the limits of conventional wisdom. I never cease to be amazed at how much sloppy thinking is indulged in because this field is perceived as not requiring rigor and clarity, the hallmarks of reflective thinking. This is what we call *mind*, the crowning achievement, so far, of homo sapiens. So much of this sloppiness is the result of replacing clear thinking, that is, thinking that has no stake in the outcome, with an old habit, wishful thinking.

Let us first clarify some words that are widely used, namely *spirit*, *spiritualism*, *spiritual*, and *spirituality.* Here we need to get beyond the sophomoric sentiment of "words mean what I want them to mean." Spirit is often used in a religious context, while spirit and spiritualism are found frequently in the occult. Both reli-

gion and the occult are governed by wishful thinking and the magical. It would be well to leave them there and limited to those meanings. Spiritual and spirituality are usually used to designate the realm, dimension, or process that transcends the everyday mind and that is governed by a higher order and clarity.

The terms *religion* and *spiritual* are often used interchangeably as if they were synonyms, and this leads to great confusion. The thoughtful person will realize that *spiritual* is the more generic term and that *religion* is a special case or the more specific application. The term derives from the Latin *religio*, which means to bind together. But what needs to be bound together and why?

Here we need to look clearly and dispassionately at the probable genesis of religious experiences in human consciousness. Looking to religions for the answer would certainly be to beg the question. Would you ask a famished lion what zebras are for? A more reliable scrutiny is afforded by cultural anthropology. In all societies, the earliest or proto-religious experiences almost invariably spring from fear and the human attempt either to explain or to assimilate somehow the event that prompted the fear. Primitively (and even to this day by many), this was done by ascribing the fearsome event to some imagined invisible entity which needed to be placated or cajoled in some way or other. Further, since the imagined entity was invisible, it must be in another realm whose leader was to be feared in the same way as was the leader, chief, or king of the earthly realm. This I refer to as the *magical* phase of the evolution of our consciousness. (Magical thinking was a noteworthy precursor to the later advance of the more reflective causal thinking.)

Evolving from this earlier magical phase of consciousness was the *mythological* phase which was still magical thinking, but considerably abstracted and generalized, usually anthropocentric. It was this evolution from simple magical to mythological thinking that set the stage for the flowering of religions. At this point, any leader worth his salt could see the opportunity being presented to consolidate his (almost invariably patriarchal) power. Claiming to have an inside track to intervene with the fearsome otherworldly power(s), the leader(s) or delegates, such as a priesthood, could claim for themselves otherworldly powers. This had the effect of convincing individuals that, without the intervention of the religious leader, individuals were *separate* not only from the deity or deities, however conceived, but also from one another. And this is why binding people together with their deities and with one another became the avowed primary

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The term *spiritual* must be seen and used analogously to the term *education*, both of which deal with the evolution of our consciousness. Kindergarten is an early stage of education but would never be used as equivalent to or synonymously with it. Similarly, religion can be used to describe an early, childish stage of the spiritual. Religions tend to keep people in the kindergarten stage of our spiritual evolution.

# WORK AS A SPIRITUAL PATH

TINA RASMUSSEN

"It's no use walking to where we preach, unless the walking is the preaching." This quote from St. Francis of Assisi, in *Work as a Spiritual Path* by Marsha Sinetar, demonstrates that what we do with the spaces in between our spiritual practice is as important as the practice itself. Yet, many people think of work and the other "mundane activities" of daily life as outside the realm of spiritual practice. It is tempting to divide our lives into "meaningful" components, such as relationships and meditation, and "necessary" components, such as work and chores. In doing so, we miss a tremendous opportunity to turn all our daily activities into facets of the diamond we think of as our higher self. When we view our work as separate from our transformational journey, we miss the opportunity to express our unique contribution to the world. Choosing not to live our true purpose can even cause us to become physically ill, as Jean Shinoda Bolen describes in her interview in this issue of *PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION*.

Most adults spend almost half their waking lives working. Willingly or unwillingly, we dedicate half our time, and maybe even more than half of our mental and psychic energy, to work. As such, this component of our lives is much too valuable to be relegated to the status of "necessary, but not meaningful." But many people find the frustrations and obstacles presented at work to be overwhelming at times; it is difficult to stay centered, especially when there seems to be little positive reinforcement for it, in the workplace. In addition, the larger systems of which we are a part can seem so large and oppressive, we can become discouraged and focus our attention (and even blame) on the folks "out there," rather than concentrating on our own role and contribution.

Conversely, the rewards for thinking of work as part of our spiritual practice are great. Doing so gives us another 40 or so hours a week with which to put our beliefs into action, to try them out "where the rubber meets the road" and discover what happens. It helps us identify areas in which we have achieved a level of mastery, and those which are opportunities for future growth. Most importantly, when we transform our work from "necessary" to "meaningful," it is easier to retain our peaceful center in turbulent times. What used to throw us off balance now gives us pause for reflection. As a result, the time and energy we use in our work takes on a higher vibration, one of reverence, adventure, evolution, and even love. As Kahlil Gibran wrote in *The Prophet*, "Work is love made visible."

But how do we stay centered when the external circumstances of our work begin to throw us off balance? For example, when our company considers downsizing? Or in the case of a small business, when our cash flow dries up? It is difficult to stay "clear" in this area because problems at work affect us in two important

ways. First, at the material level. We view work as our "bread and butter;" it is our perceived security and ability to provide for ourselves (and others). When this is in jeopardy, our desire to believe that the universe is a place of abundance and prosperity can falter. Financial pressures seem to be the biggest obstacle in staying centered in our higher self. We can easily find excuses for reverting to behaviors which are more "realistic" and less consistent with our higher self. Second, at the ego level, many people place a large portion of their identity in their work. When our professional self-concept is at stake, the ego can cry loudly for protection. The answer to both these challenges is to shift our energy and attention to our higher self, our eternal essence that knows who we are transcends both the material and the ego levels of our earthly reality.

One word for this shift is self-referral. In *The Seven Spiritual Laws of Success*, Deepak Chopra writes, "Self-referral means that our internal reference point is our own spirit, and not the objects of our experience. When we experience the power of the Self, there is an absence of fear, there is no compulsion to control, and no struggle for approval or external power."

Stephen Covey's Circle of Influence provides an easy-to-understand model for putting the notion of self-referral into practice (see diagram). The outer Circle of Concern includes all of the things that affect us, but are out of our control. It includes things like the state of the economy and what our competitors are doing. Although we have no direct influence over factors within the Circle of Concern, we may use a lot of energy worrying about them because they do affect us. The Circle of Influence, in the center, includes the things over which we do have a direct influence, such as our state of mind, how we treat others, and our own work. When we focus on the Circle of Concern, we feel like victims—disempowered and impotent. Conversely, when we focus on the Circle of Influence, we feel empowered. Even if the areas we can directly influence seem small, our actions make a difference and increase our energy and sense of potency.

At its best, focusing on the Circle of Influence can transform our perception of a situation and enable us to stay centered, regardless of circumstances within the Circle of Concern. When we focus on the Circle of Influence, we take ownership of our lives. We move from blame to empowerment, and reside in the constancy of our true purpose, rather than in the turbulence of environmental conditions. And when we empower ourselves, our influence often expands, enabling us to have a larger impact on the factors in the Circle of Concern. Others can sense our grounded energy and want to be a part of it, whereas when we focus on the Circle of Concern, this helpless, negative energy disempowers both ourselves and others.

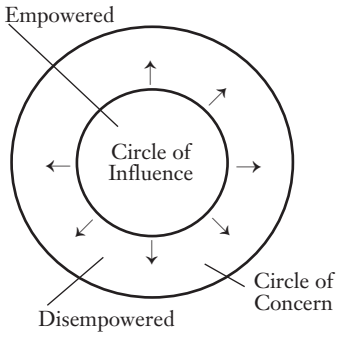


DIAGRAM FROM *THE SEVEN HABITS OF HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PEOPLE*, BY STEPHEN COVEY.

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# A New Way of Being

BONITA MCKEE

Its heart singing, the stream raced, frothing ahead of the storm. Its song noisily called up to me on my deck above it, as the rain dripped silently from the stretched dome of gray above. Quickly, I dressed in my jeans, hooded sweatshirt, socks and sandals, answering its call. Spring ruled the grassy hillside, the small stream bed, and the tiny park next to my suburban townhouse. The park was mine! No one entered in the rain, as I chose to be alone with the rushing stream flowing from the western mountains a few miles away.

As I watched the stream's spring dance, my unconscious merged with it as it jumped from small rock to rock, spearing off the dwarfed falls and racing on. My unconscious thoughts rising to the surface brought the realization that I had never asked the Universe for help in curing the disease. Never once had I thought that the cancer was eating my life away.

Many times I had thanked the Universe for healing me from my surgical wounds and radiation therapy. Memories flooded me as I remembered lying on the treatment table and asking that I be filled with holy white light. Then I invoked that the whole room be mirrored in it. When the technicians left, the next few minutes would be filled with affirmations, "God the holy, holy and mighty, holy and immortal, be gracious unto me. I am young and healthy and joyous." Later in my journal I wrote that "this cancer is the 'salute' to my life. It is about honoring and respecting my life. It is the enrichment of my life. It is about speaking out and moving forward. About acknowledging my own wisdom and sharing that wisdom. It is filled with beauty and is a joyous response to my own humanness."

Even so, I had never thought to ask the Universe to rid my body completely of any cancer. The chemotherapist had told me that cells may have sloughed off and traveled to a new location. And I had found chemotherapy too intrusive. After one treatment, I refused to continue. The radiation therapy only treated the breast itself. Could there be cancer somewhere else? I needed Divine help, and the first step was to ask for that help. I've never been good at requesting help in my life. But for once I did not hesitate.

Moving downstream to the next cascade of rocks, I knew a ritual would be appropriate in my request for total wellness from the Universe. Suddenly, the sight of a burly twig appeared out of the corner of my eye in

the grass beside me. As I gathered it up, I knew it was perfect for my purpose. Holding it, mentally I invoked white light upon myself and the ritual I was about to spontaneously perform.

The fat burly twig became my cancer cut away by the surgeon four months ago. I threw it into the power-raged stream asking the Universe to cleanse me of all the cancer, to free my body of disease, to make me whole and healthy once again. It tenaciously swirled, trying again and again to return to the spot it had entered the stream. The water forced it back and down, and it was gone. Gone. Breast cancer. The disease overcome by the will of nature itself.

I moved on downstream. As I walked, it occurred to me that a passage of years shadowed my steps. The stream sped ahead, taking me along with it into my future. When I stopped at the next cascading falls, I was five years into my future. It felt like a new watermark in my life! No cancer, but new challenges to overcome.

I was now in a new marriage and engaged in a new relationship challenge. Standing there rain drenched, bright joy and increased energy for living fully welcomed me. The watermark remained hidden beneath the opaque surface of my future, just as the stream dressed itself in the muddy soil hidden below. A stream of trust relentlessly thrust forward, just as the cloudiness dissolved to reveal new clarity of vision. This surge of trust enveloped me, assuring that the next challenge would meet a traveler seasoned with wisdom.

Wisdom. My whole spiritual life for the past twenty years has been "wisdom" centered. Today I acted with wisdom, tuning into my intuitive nature to visit the stream

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Make ads closer together than they were in last issue
Both v6n1 pg73

# Celebrating Abundance

ALINE COOK

My odyssey began May 1988, with a separation culminating in divorce by December from my twenty-three year marriage. As individuals are endowed with uniqueness, so was this divorce-not the legalities, but the horrific desolation of my spirit. By nature, I am a learner and a tenacious overcomer; by this remnant of vitality, my reconstruction began.

I applied and was accepted in a service position in a religious community associated with a local university. Soon, I had many resources available to assist me to walk again, one of which was a women's group. This group was a safe environment for me to gain an understanding of myself in relationship. I was blessed with a friend in this meeting ground, and we jointly declared our journey as having brought us to the crossroads choosing to be "victors rather than victims."

Within the next year, I had an insight, a shift in perception, brought about by a wonderfully simple dream. In the dream, I am swimming in a river with a good, intimate friend. We are enjoying ourselves, laughing, moving along with the current of the river. The river narrows, becoming a concrete-lined ditch. It takes two turns and becomes an even shallower ditch. Now, it is about eight or ten inches deep, with enough water for moving along, as on a slide. My mate is no longer with me: I am alone. The ditch ends abruptly, and the water falls over a ledge into a pool thirty feet below. There are two friends in the pool below, beckoning to me to let go and enter the pool. I am uncertain/fearful about just "jumping" in, and look to either side of the ditch for a trail which leads down to the edge of the pool. There are only insurmountable rocky cliffs on either side. One choice is to turn away and go back upstream. After consideration, I let go and enter the pool.

When I shared the dream with my friend, we laughed and cried about choosing life and "jumping in." After the laughter subsided, I clearly understood my message. It was time to embrace life and get in the swim.

The next few years were seasons of baby steps and giant steps, intermingled. One blessing was a spiritual counselor of immense focus and humility. His compassion and clarity illuminated my spiritual journey

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Innovative Wings v6n1 p20

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## *Conscious Notes*

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In a spiritual context, Covey's business model translates to the notion that "what we focus on expands"—whether our thoughts are fearful or creative. We co-create our own reality with our thought patterns. Our beliefs affect our internal state as well as our external reality. If we put our thought energy into something, either positive or negative, it is more likely to manifest. For example, popular opinion regarding the economy is that it is still an "employer's market." However, the reality is that unemployment is the lowest it has been in years. Similarly, economists have determined that recessions are caused more by people's fears about the economy than by any real indicators of economic growth. These examples demonstrate that we create our reality, both individually and collectively, more through our thoughts than through material factors.

This is not to say that, during times in which our cash flow is sluggish, all we need to do is "think positively" about the economy. That would be a naive oversimplification of a profound principle. We do start by holding an abundance consciousness. This means trusting and knowing in our hearts that the universe is a place of prosperity. Then, we stay focused on our own day-to-day actions, rather than the fearful "reality" which seems to be "out there." In *Conversations with God*, Neal Donald Walsch writes, "It is much easier to change what you are doing than what another is doing. The first step in changing anything is to know and accept that you have chosen it to be what it is. If you can't accept this on a personal level, agree to it through your

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Reiki Plus
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## *Conscious Notes*

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understanding that We are all One. Seek then to create change not because a thing is wrong, but because it no longer makes an accurate statement of "Who You Are." We can ask ourselves: "Who do I want to be in this circumstance?" "What part of myself do I want to see 'show up?'" "What is the blessing for me in this situation?" When we focus on the answers to these questions, rather than the external circumstances, we are fully empowered to transform ourselves and, as a result, the situation.

Work can be a wonderful vehicle for personal transformation, when we choose to make a life, rather than a living. When we bring our authentic, higher self to our work, and stay focused on our Circle of Influence, the universal energy begins to flow freely through us, and we are transformed. As it says in Conversations with God, "Go ahead and do what you really love to do! Do nothing else! You have so little time. How can you think of wasting a moment doing something for a living you don't like to do? What kind of living is that? That is not a living, that is a dying!"•

Charles Sweeney
self realization

## *Transformations*

*Continued from page 13*

when it called me and to perform a simple ritual, made up and shared with nature. I knew in that moment that trusting the Universe was the wisest choice on my path to the future. I gave thanks for the joy at being in the moment, for the spontaneity of my wisdom, for the future challenges and beauty of what had just taken place for me. I took a new path back upstream knowing that my brief visit with the future had changed me. A new way of being must be found from now on. The frothing stream of life carries the opportunity for wisdom to rise to the surface, encouraging me to respond to crisis by trusting in the Universe. Trusting I can sing from my heart just as the stream sang to me.•

*Continued from page 17*

water as if there were special stepping stones, unseen but there. One particular stone was as precious as gold. When I asked what it meant, the answer back was, "it is the step of unconditional self-love!" I have returned many times to ask, "what is unconditional self-love?" Answers that have come to me are Allow, Accept, Nonjudgment, Be, Love, and Cease the struggle.

Many synchronistic blessings have flowed my way that line up with unconditional self-love. They include Dan Millman's Courage Training and graduate studies in Organizational Leadership. Transformation is a process I have come to invite and appreciate.

Spirit has stood with me in the form of many treasured relationships—work associates, family, and friends. Recently a friend called to say hello after returning from a spiritual renewal. I listened to his insights and heard his restored spiritual vigor. As a caring friend and skilled listener, he invited me to share my spiritual state as well, which was stuck and in need of reorienting. Within moments, he reflected back to me that I had been giving up "thrival for survival." Without a revealing dream, once again I stood at the edge of the pool/pond with a choice to move ahead or not. Moving ahead was easy this time. My creativity engaged, and after ending my evening meditation, answers and solutions flooded in so quickly that I was challenged to document them.

Thrival means expanding spirituality, nurturing creativity, declaring my passions, fulfilling my purpose, and celebrating the abundance of God. These past eight years of transformation have been amazing. I am very aware of the enjoyment and the abundance I am living.•

# *Reflections*

## *From Our Readers*

### *DISTRESSED*

I was distressed when I began reading your interview (in the September-November 1996 issue) with Judith Orloff on *Second Sight*. I wondered why you were talking about psychic concerns in your magazine. I did not see the connection between being psychic and personal transformation. I have long considered the psychic to be the realm of maladapted and unstable people. What I didn't realize was that not only was I regurgitating the cultural stereotypes about the psychic, but I was misunderstanding and disregarding some of my own personal experiences.

As a mental health professional, I am often guided by my heart, intuitive hunches, body sensations, sixth sense, etc., in my work with clients, but I attempt to justify these sources of information with theory and technique, with science. While I believe at a deeper level that my intuition is one of my best therapeutic tools, I have learned to filter it through my logical mind. I never considered using the term *psychic* to justify a therapeutic intervention to my colleagues. I still fear that I would be disrespected and gossiped about.

After reading her interview, I see that I might be stifling my intuitive (it is still easier for me to say intuitive rather than psychic) capacities because I haven't respected them in their own right. At least in the office, I run them through my logical mind, before I validate them. After some contemplation, I am willing to consider a belief system for myself where my psychic is regarded as a valuable and innately human capacity. I am willing to experiment with listening more closely to my intuitive whispers in my personal and professional life. I would like for my psychic abilities to develop. Now that I understand them differently, I am more open and less fearful of them. However, I am still reluctant to discuss the psychic as a healing tool openly with my colleagues.

My basic message is that the interview ended up being impactful for me. Thank you for presenting a controversial subject.—*Pat Turner, Chicago Illinois.*

### *WORDS WERE HELPFUL*

Your *From the Publisher* piece written in the May-July '96 issue of *LOTUS* was so fine I wanted to write and tell you how much it "came through" to

me. I just love what you wrote.

I am facing a decision regarding change, and your words were so helpful to me. I loved your reminder that we have power that is so real and available to use in making moves for ourselves.

Thank you for your inspiration—and for the magazine.—*Leila King, Avalon, New Jersey.*

### *I REALLY ENJOYED*

I'm just writing to let you know how excited I was to read your September issue. I love the name change!

I really enjoyed the *Dream Worth Dreaming* piece, as well as the publisher's note. When you wrote about how you listened to your hearts and how much positive energy now surrounds your publication, I felt that same energy in my own heart, a reverberation that said "yes, these things are possible."

I also thought your transformations columns by readers were intriguing and related to a project I have been working on.

I am currently planning a cross-country motorcycle trip in which I will interview people who have gone through turning points and transformations in their lives. I have been writing professionally since 1990, and through my line of work, find myself in constant contact with "average" Americans who have gone through major life events and been incredibly deepened by the process. It's exciting to meet these individuals because they're so full of life.

I was compelled to write you after reading your issue because I got a real sense that there were many people out there who are hungry for this sort of information.

## *Reflections*

*Continued from page 23*

I know I am. Thanks for a great and meaningful magazine!—*Lynn Tryba, Acton, Massachusetts.*

***DISAPPOINTED***

I was disappointed to encounter "A Father For Every Child" by David Blankenhorn in the latest issue of *PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION*, particularly in light of *Utne Reader's* coincidental and much more balanced presentation of these issues in its current issue (Sept.–Oct. '96). The article by Judith Stacey from the latter points out, there is nothing inherently positive, spiritually enlightened, or beneficial to children stemming from the mere presence of biological fathers living under one roof with their children. Indeed, under the traditional intact biological family system Blackenhorn wants to return to, children far too often suffer physical, sexual, emotional, and spiritual abuse and neglect. There can be no truly transformational "new story" of fatherhood unless the presumed entitlement of fathers to dominate their wives and children through anger, intimidation, physical, and emotional violence is addressed and challenged. Blankenhorn's attack on "divorce culture" and assertion of the simplistic idea "a father for every child" without such analysis should not be endorsed as a path to spiritual transformation. (Or personal)

I suggest you consider printing alternative views such as Judith Stacey's. Also, I highly recommend a new book *Spiritual Parenting* by Gayle and Hugh Prather as a potential for an excerpt. These authors, in contrast to Blankenhorn, tackle the issues involved in actually raising and interacting with our children, as a spiritual

undertaking, exploring what it means to parent out of love rather than domination.—*Linda Kattwinkel, San Francisco California.*

### *DON'T LIKE ADS*

I don't like the number of ads you run. That's why I stopped subscribing to *Yoga Journal* and that's why I always drag my heels on renewing *LOTUS.* If you continue this ad-to-substance ratio, you'll probably lose me.—*Karin Wisiol, Grayslake, Illinois.*

### *EDITOR'S NOTE*

Long-time subscribers have noticed the increased advertising the last couple of years. We are grateful for advertising because it pays for the cost of printing, although it does not pay for salaries, overhead, postage, or marketing. Obviously we need revenue in order to stay in business. Last fall we conducted a subscription price test, to determine the feasibility of reducing our reliance on advertising revenues, by increasing the cost of subscriptions. While subscribers were willing to pay more, we realized even an increase would not cover our business expenses.

We publish this magazine because we believe it is a worthy cause. Our publishing company is run on a tight budget. Without advertisements, publication would not be possible. We screen advertisements and each issue we refuse ads that don't meet our criteria. We encourage readers to patronize the products and services advertised in this magazine. Transformational materials, workshops, and programs further personal growth. As we all know, investing in personal transformation pays off.•

# Illness And The Search For Meaning

AN INTERVIEW WITH JEAN SHINODA BOLEN, M.D.
BY MARY NURRIE STEARNS

*Jean Shinoda Bolen, M.D., is a Jungian analyst and clinical professor of psychiatry at the University of California, San Francisco. She is the author of "Goddesses in Everywoman;" she is an internationally renowned lecturer and workshop leader. Her other books include "The Tao of Psychology," "Gods in Everyman," "Ring of Power," and "Crossing to Avalon." A fellow of the American Psychiatric Association, Dr. Bolen has also served as chairperson of the Council of National Affairs of the APA and as a board member of the Ms. Foundation for Women. Dr. Bolen lives in Mill Valley, California.*

In this interview, we discuss the essence of Jean Shinoda Bolen's new book, *Close to the Bone.* Her compassionate work guides individuals and their loved ones through the realm of life-threatening illness. Jean offers hope and perspective for navigating through the "crisis of the soul" that accompanies serious illness.

Life threatening illness visits us all, either in our own lives or in the lives of dear ones. At some point, descending into the depths of the soul is inevitable.

***PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION: Life threatening illness as a crisis for the soul is a central theme in your book. What does that mean?***

JEAN SHINODA BOLEN: Life threatening illnesses are usually viewed as crisis. Crisis, in ancient Chinese language, is comprised of two elements, danger and opportunity. In medicine, it used to be that crisis occurred when a patient's temperature went up and up and up and then broke. Crisis was the place where one was in danger, and yet there was opportunity for major change. Life threatening illness has that effect on people. The focus often is entirely on the danger to the body, without awareness that the danger offers a major possibility of transformation of relationships and of the psyche, as well as the body.

***PT: We are never the same after life threatening illness.***

JSB: In hospitals and Doctors offices, often everything is ignored except the part of the body that has something wrong with it. People are discouraged from being conscious and expressing what is happening at a deep level, at the soul level. Patients get the message to be just the terrain or the body where the doctor and modern medicine will fight the illness.

***PT: You use the term liminal time, meaning threshold. What is this threshold that life threatening illness takes us to?***

JSB: When you are in between, you are in a threshold time, or a liminal time. When you are between the potential of life and death, you are in liminal time, on the threshold of crossing over from the visible material world to the invisible one. Life threatening illness puts you there because you know that your illness could result in your death. You are straddling the possibility of living or dying. During that in between time, different elements can tip the scales one direction or the other. You can be hexed by the people around you. If your doctor emphasizes the negative potential of what you have, and if you accept the message that this is going to kill you, the probability increases that it will. However, when you are in between, in that liminal place, it is also possible that you will deepen your connection with others who believe in the possibility that you can make it through. You can challenge authority, you can seek alternative possibilities to add to what modern medicine offers that can increase the possibility of surviving.

In my work, I often draw upon myth, because the language of myth touches the soul. The soul listens to metaphor, stories, poetic expression, and music. The soul is moved by emotion-laden expressions. In the myth of Persephone, she is burying flowers in a meadow and all is well one moment, and the next moment the earth opens up in front of her and Hades, the Lord of the underworld, comes and abducts her and she is pulled, terrified and screaming, into the underworld. Acute onset of a diagnosis or of symptoms can be like that. One moment you are fine, living ordinary everyday life in the upperworld, where the sun is shining. And then, the sudden onset of serious symptoms, the pain of a major heart attack, a test result that says you're HIV positive, or the appearance of cancer in the breast, requires much more definitive medicine, and you have to enter the hospital. The shift between everything being fine one moment, and you and the people who love you being in the underworld the next moment, is mythic. The myth helps express what your own experience is like. In the myth, Persephone is not given up on. Hermes, the messenger God, comes down to the underworld to bring her back. At that point, Persephone realizes that it is possible that she will not stay in the underworld forever. It is possible that she actually might return to life.

The story that you believe about the possibility

of recovery goes into the depths of yourself. In your bones, there is a response that says, it is possible for me to recover. Then the equivalent of Hermes goes through your entire body in the form of neuropeptides and every cell of your body shifts from a depressed state to actively responding to the possibility of recovery. At that point, there is an infusion of a life force energy conveyed to your body. When that happens, in this liminal time, the potential of pointing towards life makes the tilt.

***PT: This liminal time is also the time of soul questions. What are these soul questions?***

JSB: We are spiritual beings essentially. We are spiritual beings on a human path, rather than human beings who may or may not be on a spiritual path. We know this in our bones. An illness that brings us close to the bone, brings us into the realm of soul, where we know things, not with our intellectual minds, but at a soul level. I think that we do know that we have a soul. When I say that we are spiritual beings on a human path, I don't have to prove it; this is not an intellectual debate. The words describe what we deeply know. As spiritual beings on a human path, we come into a material existence in our bodies, where suffering and limitation is essentially part of the human path. We cannot get through life without our particular encounter with suffering, in whatever form it may take. All of us are limited by our life spans. Life itself is a terminal condition.

If we let this sink in, that we are spiritual beings on a human path, the questions are: What did we come to do? What did we come to learn? Who did we come to love? What did we come to hear? What are we here for? These are questions whose answers come from within, so that only we truly know when we are authentically living from our deepest self. When life threatening illness comes, a lot of what we are doing with our lives is revealed to us as being superficial or inauthentic. After realizing how precious life is and how potentially short it is, many people, especially women, become empowered by that knowledge to make major changes in their relationship life, and many men and women make changes in their work life.

***PT: You discuss Procrustes' myth in your book. What are its implications for illness and recovery?***

JSB: The myth is that if you were on the road to Athens, you had to pass Procrustes' bed. He would put you on his bed, and whatever part of you did not fit, he cut off. If you were too short for the bed, you were stretched, like on a medieval rack, until you fit. This story applies to us all. Every person has expectations placed on him or her as to what success means. It might be work success, or it might be to marry well. Your particular family expects its members to be a certain way. Whatever parts of who you really are don't fit expectations, or are unacceptable to the successful world you are expected to enter, you cut yourself off from. We lose that part of ourselves which stays buried in our underworld.

Facing the realization that life is limited is a mid-life issue. Life threatening illness raises all of the major questions of mid-life because mid-life, whenever that might be, is a state of mind when we understand how short life is. We have lived as many years as we have to that point, and life has gone by really fast. We have a sense of the limitations of time and of our active energies for life. An illness is an acute form of the crisis that many people have at mid-life, as they realize they may be wasting this experience, and become depressed. This might precipitate a crisis in relationship and work and life. When this happens, we are plunged into an underworld, where we find all of the human fears that none of us want to look at, but all of us have to.

When it is a life threatening illness, the fears are of death and dismemberment, of losing our essential womanhood or manhood, of pain, and also that we are going through something, and we will never be the same again. Going into the underworld also brings us into the realm of all the possibilities that we cut ourselves off from, our particular depths of talent and inclinations of joy that we stopped along the way. It is a time of remembering and reconnecting with that which we cut ourselves off from, as well.

***PT: We often fear the underworld as this place of fear and vulnerability, yet if we are willing to, or are forced to descend there, we can discover great richness and the realm of the soul.***

JSB: That's right. And that can make the experience a major turning point.

***PT: How can illness be a turning point for us?***

JSB: In psychological work, people make a descent, often precipitated by depression or anxiety. They begin to listen to their dreams and to connect with feelings that they have buried. In the underworld, there is a reconnecting with sources of mortality, and sources of meaning, and the potential of living authentically. Jung would describe it as, the potential of individuation, of following your own personal myth, of living from the inside out, rather than shaping yourself to meet or fulfill other people's expectations. When you descend into the psychological process, the turning point is when the potential of getting on a heart and soul track can grow.

I was very taken with the parallels between that which I do with depth analysis and Dr. Lawrence LaShan's work with terminal cancer patients. He initially found that even though people seemed to appreciate their sessions with him, they died at the same rate as people who were not doing psychotherapy. Then, he changed his focus in his work with apparently terminal people, and began to address what was right with these people. He has a wonderful series of questions which people were encouraged to find the answers to. They were questions such as: What would make you happy to get up in the morning, looking forward to what you would be doing during the day? What would you be doing if at the end of every day you would go to bed tired, but good tired? What would you be doing if your life were physically, spiritually, and emotionally in harmony? What would your life be like if you could imagine the world adjusting to you, rather that you adjusting to it?

His questions assumed that we have our own particular song to sing. Those are poetic ways of asking individuation questions. People found answers to these questions by going deep inside of themselves to remember and reconnect with their own sources of meaning and joy and service. He found that when people discovered what really would give their lives meaning, invariably, service to others was involved. People who were expected to die went into long term remissions. Half of the people he worked with lived on. Their cancers became a turning point in their lives.

***PT: Recovery literally can be dependent upon this discovery.***

JSB: Yes. Life threatening illness puts us on a soul path that may well lead to recovery on a physical level.

Difficulties are soul-shaping; they can be lessons that lead us to know who we are, and they can stretch us into becoming larger souls and more authentic human beings than we were before. How we respond to unwanted and unchosen circumstances, such as those which lead to a medical diagnosis and need for surgery—may shape us as much as, or more than, the adversity itself.

When suffering is a universal experience and we know it, we neither assume prosperity, work, love, or health as our due, nor do we rail against adversity, misfortune, or ill health as violations of some agreement that such things should not happen to us. Suffering, in one form or another, does go with the territory that is human experience. It is unpredictable in the form it will take, in the intensity and duration, and is not equitably distributed.

***PT: Suffering and illness can be the pathway that brings into our awareness what our talents and purpose are. For some of us, this may be impossible to discover without suffering. In this sense, suffering has great meaning.***

JSB: That's true. Our suffering and how we react to it has a possibility of really shaping and strengthening our purpose, or not. If people are able to grow through their experiences of suffering, the suffering is redeemed. They understand that their suffering was meaningful. One of my colleagues gave me Albert Schweitzer's description of "the fellowship of those who bear the mark of pain." Schweitzer had his health restored through a series of operations. After he went through those painful experiences and was restored to health, he knew suffering firsthand, and out of that, he responded to a need to help alleviate the suffering of others.

My colleague, an exceptionally fine psychiatrist for very disturbed patients, went through a descent into the mental realm of suffering when she was a medical student, and spent some time on a locked psychiatric ward. That descent into mental suffering provided her with insights and awareness of what it is like to be there, and she has grown to be a guide for others.

Creative work also grows out of the suffering of life. The depths that music takes us to may echo the experience of the depth the composer lived. Our potential for poetic expression is tapped when we go through periods of anguish and suffering. Essentially, life happens with its potential for joy and suffering, and how we react to it is soul shaping. The person who insists on identifying with the victim may get stuck there, while the person who learns compassion for others as well as themselves may grow and find motivation for their work.

***PT: Let's focus on healing and what helps. Begin by discussing the myth of Psyche and her two tools.***

JSB: When you find yourself in the dark, and become aware that you are not conscious of the reality of your situation, you enter the realm of Psyche. In her myth, Psyche took a lamp and a knife to see the man who came to her every night. She wanted to know who her unseen bridegroom was. Was he a monster, which an earlier prediction seemed to indicate? She took the lamp and the knife and hid. In the darkness, after he went to sleep, she took the lamp to see who he was and the knife so that she could sever his head if he turned out to be a monster.

We need those symbols to look at what might be

destructive in our lives. The lamp is a symbol of consciousness, of illumination. The knife is the symbol of discrimination and the power to sever the bonds with those people or addictions that, if we were to see clearly, we would know are bad for us. It is not enough to have some conscious awareness of a destructive situation, because without the capacity to sever the bond, the consciousness dims. Many people are in codependent relationships which are destructive to them. They need to be able to look at the situation holding both the lamp and the knife, so they have the power to sever those relationships or those addictions, if needed.

***PT: Or those attitudes within ourselves that are destructive or negative.***

JSB: I've heard women say that their diagnosis of cancer was both the worst thing and the best thing that happened to them, because for many, it allowed them to put themselves first or to take care of themselves. It's as if the cancer gave them permission to say no.

***PT: What about the usefulness of rituals in healing?***

JSB: Ritual is a deeply creative process that reenacts and draws up qualities of participants into consciousness. Ritual brings elements of energy or power to life situations. For example, one of my friends wanted to gather her friends, to be with her on her journey, which was an encounter with chemotherapy for her recurrent cancer. She was told to expect that her hair would fall out in clumps. She heard about a women who cut her hair off before chemotherapy, and she decided to have a ritual in which we would witness her having her head shorn. It was a powerful experience to be present and to watch her go through this major change in front of us. Her hair was beautiful. It was a symbolic, as well as a real act, to have it cut and shaved. She was transformed physically before us. The courage it took to do that reflected the courage it took to go through the realm of cancer and treatment, which is a major heroic ordeal. That ritual was an archetypal experience.

Some rituals touch on patterns that humans have engaged in for thousands of years. Having your hair shaved is a major initiatory act from marine boot camp to the ordination of Buddhist priests. Women who marry in an orthodox Jewish tradition shave their heads, and Catholic nuns used to shave their heads as part of their initiatory experience. Another ritual that some women have done is to take either a symbol of or the actual pathology specimen that was surgically removed from them, and ritually bury it in the ground, as a symbol of returning to the earth. I recall a woman who buried the uterus that was removed from her, that it might become part of the earth, and then planted a tree that her uterus might contribute to new life.

***PT: Let's move to the power of relationship. When we are in relationship with someone who is going through a life threatening illness, how can we help?***

JSB: Companions on the journey make a tremendous difference. An I/thou experience with soul connection is essential, and often makes the difference as to whether or not a person comes through the underworld descent into which illness takes them. At a research level, participating in cancer support groups results in living twice as long and maybe even surviving a terminal prognosis. This finding contributes to the scientific validation of what we know at a soul level, which is that who and how others are with us influences whether or not we come through. People have extraordinary capacity to give support to each other. The support is partly emotional and spiritual, and partly energetic. A healthy person has an excess of life force, and through physical touch conveys energy to a person who is sick and may have a deficit of it. When you love the person that you are supporting through the journey, you might want to be a conduit for the energy of love and compassion, which are words that describe energy that is healing. The combination of energy and supportive belief helps significant others to endure and to come through. In most cases where unexpected remarkable recoveries or spontaneous recoveries have happened, a significant relationship has contributed. A connection between people is significant on a healing journey, and a relationship to the invisible world through prayer is significant.

People's prayers make a major difference in recovery. We know this at a soul level, and research studies verify the effectiveness of prayer. I quote the study done at San Francisco General Hospital on patients who were in the cardiac care unit. One half of them were prayed for and the other half were not, in a research project in which no one knew who was being prayed for, and who was not prayed for. The results were dramatic. The prayed for group did much better. Studies like this help us, for we can minimize that which we know on a soul level, until the scientific feedback confirms that what we innately want to do is right. Healing touch, prayer, or other alternative or complimentary choices, such as affirmations or rituals, aid healing. Without scientific backing, there is a tendency to not want to appear foolish or do something that others might say is silly. What we innately know to do, that which arises in the moment, is right to do. Outside authority, especially skeptics and cynical people, are toxic to healing processes.

***PT: In healing, it is important for us to turn to people and to stories that give hope and that nourish us deep inside.***

JSB: It is so important, for example, if you are expected to go through chemotherapy that has serious and difficult side effects, and you have a disinterested, impersonal oncologist who says, "This is what I am prescribing for you; it has a forty percent chance of helping you," and you already feel bad; you will think the odds are against you. As you get weak and throw up and feel awful, when you receive this treatment, chances are that your psyche is depressed and has little hope that this experience is going to result in something good. On the other hand, you might have an oncologist who says, "I've chosen this particular chemotherapy because I think that it will help you. It has a forty percent record for your particular kind of cancer, but I've chosen it feeling that it is going to help." Next, you talk to somebody who was helped by chemotherapy, who describes its positive effect. As you take chemotherapy, your belief is "this is an ordeal, and it's making me sick now, but it's going to help me." The messages from the doctor and from the anecdotal story, the witness who says it helped her, have the effect of giving every cell in the body the message "this is going to help." The body is much more likely to respond to that belief system and to the chemotherapy.

***PT: How does life threatening illness impact relationships?***

JSB: When there is a life threatening illness, especially if the person who has it is a woman, her relationships are tested, and some of them don't make it. If the people in the woman's life are self-absorbed and draining of her, and she has been co-dependent to them prior to this, she may need to and finally be empowered to sever those relationships. With her primary relationship, the husband may grow in his capacity to be a loving person, and find inside himself the ability to be a caretaker at a level that he never knew was in him. The woman and the man discover their barriers to emotional intimacy, and take down what has been erected. The potential of death makes both risk loving more. Others do the opposite. The risk of losing this person makes them draw away. It is a true test of relationships. When you come through such an ordeal, the people who helped you through the descent are the ones that you then proceed on with. With AIDS, it is remarkable seeing men who were, up until then, living an eternal youthful side of themselves be able to be caretakers at a profound level for their significant other.

***PT: In closing, if you were to give a statement of hope to someone with a life threatening illness, what would you offer?***

JSB: Wherever we are, on the journey that is our particular life, encounter with a life threatening illness is a major time of transformation. It is part of the great adventure that is life. Remembering that we are spiritual beings on a human path, how we react to this illness is critical and crucial. It is at a soul level that the journey is significant. The quality of the life we have remaining, and our capacity to recover from whatever it is that we are suffering from is enhanced when we act as if what we do can make all the difference, while at the same time knowing that there is a great mystery. When it is our time to go, it is our time to go. We need the

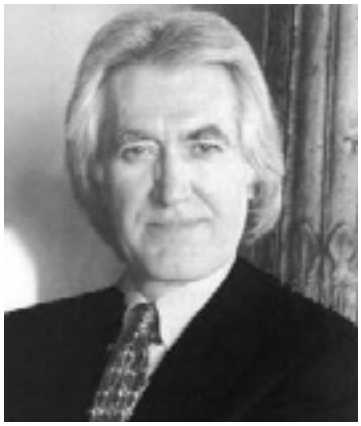
*Please turn to page 74*

IMAGE BANK/VIKKI HART

# Four-Legged Forms of Prayer

Larry Dossey

*The effect of prayer is not restricted to humans. Prayer has been proved to work on practically every living thing to which it has been applied—humans, various cells and tissues, animals, plants, and organisms such as bacteria, fungi, and yeast. The evidence supporting these widespread effects is abundant and includes more than 130 controlled laboratory studies, as we've mentioned.*



*Larry Dossey, M.D., is the author of "Healing Words," "Recovering the Soul," "Space, Time & Medicine," and "Beyond Illness." He is the former chief of staff at Humana Medical City Hospital, Dallas, and former co-chair of the Panel on Mind/Body Interventions for the National Institutes of Health; he is currently editor of the journal "Alternative Therapies." The following is from "Prayer is Good Medicine," by Larry Dossey. Copyright 1996 by Larry Dossey. Printed by arrangement with the publisher, Harper San Francisco.*

Some people have difficulty accepting these experiments because they can't imagine how one could possibly pray for bacteria or other so-called lower forms of life. How could one experience enough empathy and love for these nonhuman creatures to genuinely pray for them? For millions of animal lovers, this is not a mystery; for them, animals are simply not "lower." Some religions, such as Hinduism, view nonhumans with the same reverence we extend to our own kind. This degree of reverence for life is not just "Oriental." I'm reminded of a very old saying from Jewish mystics: "Over every blade of grass bends an angel whispering, 'Grow! Grow!'"

Researchers have begun to study the health benefits of having pets. These studies have interesting implications for our understanding of prayer. Aaron H. Katcher, a physician at the University of Pennsylvania School of Veterinary Medicine, and his colleagues found that 98 percent of dog owners spent time talking to their dogs, 75 percent thought their dogs were sensitive to their moods and feelings, and 28 percent even confided in their dogs. Katcher believes people derive benefits from these interactions not unlike those from prayer. "Without being irreverent," he states, "it is possible to think about the similarities of the comforts of prayer and the comforts of talking to an animal. Prayer is frequently accompanied by sensual enrichment such as incense, music, special body postures, the touch of folded hands or rosary beads, just as dialogue with an animal is accompanied by the enrichment of touch, warmth and odor. In both instances the talk is felt to be 'understood.'"

Devotion to a pet, like devotion to prayer, can bring about improvements in human nature, as seen in the dynamics of families. Ann Ottney Cain, professor of psychiatric nursing at the University of Maryland in Baltimore, studied the sociological impact of animals in sixty families who owned pets such as dogs and cats as well as more exotic skunks, goats, and monkeys. She discovered that many of the families experienced increased closeness, more time playing together, and less time arguing after they had obtained their pets. "One woman even used the family's dog to cool family arguments," Cain reports. "'Stop fighting; you're upsetting the dog,' was her favorite comment."

Harvard University's Dr. Herbert Benson showed in the 1970s and '80s that prayer can reduce stress and lower blood pressure and heart rate by inducing what he calls the Relaxation Response. Dogs may be a four-legged form of prayer, because they bring about the same effect. Being in their presence results in a lower blood pressure, researcher Katcher discovered. Dogs don't have a monopoly; gazing at a tankful of tropical fish lowers blood pressure, too.

Prayer breaks down barriers between people. So, too, do pets. Peter R. Messent of the Animal Studies Centre in Leicestershire, England, recruited eight dog owners and asked them to take two strolls through Hyde Park—once with their dog and once without. An observer followed, recording the responses of the people who passed within five feet of the walker or the dog. There were a significantly greater number of responses and more longer con-

versations if the dog owners were with their pets. It did not matter if the dogs were pedigreed or not.

Being around pets, like praying, brings out compassionate behavior in people. Sharon L. Smith studied interactions between ten pet dogs and their family members. She found that the pets provided men as well as women a socially acceptable outlet for touching—rubbing, scratching, patting, or stroking, something that American men are reluctant to engage in.

And pets, like prayer, save lives. In a study of ninety-six people with heart disease released after treatment at a coronary care unit, psychiatrist Erika Friedmann of the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia and her coworkers discovered a higher survival rate one year after hospital discharge among pet owners, even after accounting for individual differences in the extent of heart damage and other medical problems. In fact, Friedmann's team found that having a pet at home was a stronger predictor of survival than having a spouse or extensive family support.

Being around pets, like praying, brings out compassionate behavior in people. Pets provide men as well as women a socially acceptable outlet for touching, rubbing, scratching, patting, or stroking, something that American men are reluctant to engage in.

To summarize, there are striking similarities between prayer and having a companion pet. These include:

- *Having someone to talk to*
- *Developing compassionate behavior*
- *Fostering a sense of being welcomed or greeted*
- *Promoting a sense of being loved unconditionally, "no matter what"*
- *Reducing psychological stress*
- *Increasing health and saving lives*
- *Breaking down barriers between people*

At Riverside Methodist Hospital in Columbus, Ohio, one of the most valuable members of the hospice staff is Barlow, a handsome golden Labrador. Barlow makes rounds with the nurses and physicians and enjoys immense rapport with patients. At Maine Medical Center in Portland, another beautiful Lab, Pandora, makes regular rounds in the intensive care unit with her handler. Pandora is quite photogenic, and the staff nurses report that she adores being photographed—a real camera hound. "Pet Therapy Program Guidelines" have been adopted by the hospital's physician and nursing staff, and the program enjoys enthusiastic support by patients and personnel alike.

Can animals pray? Because prayer involves a sense of love and connection and a reaching out, perhaps the answer is a qualified yes. If so, might "animal prayer" have healing effects? Most authorities would ascribe the positive influences of pets to psychological factors such as stress reduction from having a pet around; proposing "pet prayer" is going too far. Yet many pet owners would not find it outrageous to suppose that their unconditionally loving Lab is extending prayerlike healing influences to them.

Why take an anthropocentric attitude toward prayer? Why would the Absolute limit prayer to Homo Sapiens? Pet prayer, if proved, would be yet another step in the democratization and universalization of prayer.

The next time I get sick, I plan to get on the prayer lists of as many Saint Bernards as I can.•

IMAGE BANK/MICHAEL GOSBEE

# How to Deal with Anger

EVELYN AND JAMES WHITEHEAD

*How do we deal with our anger? Giving free range to rage seldom helps. An angry outburst may momentarily vindicate our sense of honor, but at heavy cost. We come away from the fray with people injured, relationships wounded, potential allies alienated. Regret cannot undo the harm done when anger turns to assault, whether in family life or in random social violence.*

*Most of us know from personal experience other responses that don't work: denial (I'm NOT angry!), guilt (I'm angry, but I shouldn't be), self-condemnation (What right do I have to be angry, since whatever is wrong is probably my fault), or blame (No, it's YOUR fault I'm angry). These reactions doom anger from the outset.*

*Evelyn Eaton Whitehead, Ph.D., is a developmental psychologist, and James D. Whitehead, Ph.D., is a historian of religion. Through Whitehead Associates, based in South Bend, Indiana, they offer educational seminars throughout the United States and Canada, as well as Australia, New Zealand, Taiwan, Hong King, Ireland, England, and France. Together they have authored eight books.*

Dealing effectively with anger demands a different starting point: we might name it acceptance, but "acceptance" sounds so patronizing. The benefits—and risks—of anger inspire more than reluctant assent or begrudging tolerance. How do we befriend our anger? First, we honor it, then we evaluate it, then we tap its energy to help us act positively for change.

## Honoring Anger

Honor captures the awe and respect that anger provokes: "Here is a formidable, even dangerous, emotion." Anger threatens the delicate web of social life. Unattended, its energy erodes relationships and risks degenerating into vengeance. But access to this energy is indispensable.

In the dictionary, *to honor* means both to recognize and to respect. How do we honor anger? Recognizing that angry feelings are normal is a good place to start. Honoring helps us hold this formidable emotion as expectable, inevitable, allowable in our life—without rushing into actions we will later regret. Simply acknowledging "Yes, I feel angry" begins to release us from the burden of denial. The esteem implied in the word *honor* serves as an antidote for the wounded attitudes that many of us carry still, especially a tendency to punish ourselves for feeling angry. Instead of being besieged by guilt over an outlawed emotion, we learn we can accept our anger even as we struggle to decide what to do about it. Reaffirming for ourselves the difference between *feeling* angry and *acting* enraged takes us a long way in taming anger's power.

Anger signals "passion ahead; proceed with caution." Honoring anger helps respect this power. To honor anger we have to pay attention to what we are feeling. The effort of paying attention counteracts an impulse to respond too quickly. This discipline interrupts the urgency of our arousal, giving us time to consider consequences. Psychological studies show how paying attention helps people respond well to anger. Summarizing more than a decade of research on how people deal with their emotions, psychologist Leonard Berkowitz describes a pattern of reflection found among people who are able to regulate negative moods effectively. Berkowitz discovered that paying attention starts a significant process of discernment. When people first become aware of their anger, for example, "they are somewhat surprised or disturbed, and this prompts a relatively high level of cognitive activity. They think about the possible causes of their feelings and even consider what may be the best way to act. These considerations then steer their behavior."

When attentiveness does not intervene, Berkowitz found that "the hostile and aggressive tendencies created by the negative mood are less likely to be restrained and are likely to be expressed openly" in harsh language and violent actions. A commitment to honor anger encourages us to pay attention to our feelings. And paying attention helps us read anger openly and use its power productively.

## Evaluating Our Anger

Anger's always been hard for me to deal with. Some of my friends call me a hot-

head; I admit I'm likely to respond immediately if I feel slighted or if somebody takes advantage of me. And sometimes that's good, but sometimes not. Lately I've been getting a better hold on my anger. Something that works for me now—when I start feeling angry, I say to myself, "My anger is trying to tell me something." I keep repeating the phrase, like a mantra. This calms me down, but also points me in the new direction. Instead of flying off the handle, I try to look more closely at what's making me mad… and why. And that's been a real revelation to me!

"My anger is trying to tell me something." Anger always carries information, but its message is seldom immediately clear. Befriending anger includes finding ways to retrieve this message. The first step is to interrupt our typical pattern of response. For some of us, the automatic response is finding a scapegoat, someone to sacrifice to our rage. Searching out a culprit shields us from facing our own part in the problem. This stance warps anger's strength for self-defense into a strategy of self-delusion.

Or our customary response may be to give in when we are angry. Perhaps we've learned that anger is terribly unladylike, or seriously sinful, or patently immature. Or we may fear the consequences of our own or other people's rage. So we acquiesce, hoping that refusing to assert ourselves will make the feelings go away. "I don't want to upset anybody; it's dangerous to demand my rights; protesting would be impolite." This compliant stance, too, subverts the revelation our anger may hold.

Sandra Thomas, director of the Anger Research Project at the University of Tennessee, recommends a simple strategy to help uncover our automatic response. "Keep a log of your anger experiences, recording with whom you become angry, to whom you express it, to whom you do not express it, how long it lasts, and what thoughts accompany it." Soon, patterns will emerge, giving us a better sense of what our own anger looks like. Evaluating these patterns helps us decide what we want to do differently.

"My anger is trying to tell me something." In befriending anger, the response to be nurtured is readiness to learn. To learn what? Something about ourselves—the risks we sense to our self-esteem. Or the ways our personal histories have left us vulnerable to hurt. Or how events and circumstances trigger this vulnerability into rage. Since anger erupts when deeply held convictions are threatened, being angry can reveal the values we hold worth fighting for. Tracking our anger back to its source can also uncover a rift between our professed values and how we are really living. Anger here is an ally of our integrity, challenging us to make the changes necessary to get back on course.

Or anger may be trying to tell us something about our world. Being angry is a response to frustration. For many of us, the frustration is lack of time; our irritability stems from a sense that we're falling behind. We strain against the seemingly endless demands of workplace and family responsibilities. For others, anger reveals the weight of other people's expectations. We live in a world where many people feel they have a right to dictate to us, setting goals we should achieve and faulting us for failing standards that are not our own. Our frustration may point to a troubled relationship—a valued colleague undermines our authority in public; a teen-age son retreats into silence or verbal abuse. Or anger alerts us to a significant setting that has become dangerous—a climate of racial intimidation pervades our neighborhood; the threat of sexual harassment erodes our confidence at work. Examined, our anger can give insight into ways our environment has become hostile and start to show us the shape of an effective response.

"My anger is trying to tell me something." Discerning this message requires effort. We stop to reflect on what triggers our angry feelings; we interrupt a customary pattern of response to ask what needs to be questioned or challenged or set aside, evaluating our anger inserts a pause in our arousal, leaving space for anger's wisdom to emerge.

### Discern the Appropriate Response

Determining how to act with anger starts by focusing on our goal. What do we want to accom-

plish here? Sometimes the goal is communication; we want to let someone know how we feel. Sometimes the goal is change; we want to remedy a bad situation. And sometimes the goal is conversion; we want to turn away from our anger and move on. Each of these options involves decision.

Seeing angry behavior simply as a spontaneous eruption beyond our control is misleading, because angry action always involves choice. Being angry is better understood as an interpersonal strategy, one of the ways we learn to deal with other people. For example, people decide *whether* to show their anger, *how* to express it, and who will be its focus—whether a spouse or a pet or a stranger on the street. Befriending anger means learning how to make the choices that transform our arousal into effective response.

Many of us learned early that "feeling angry is bad," a lesson that limited our choices to denial and repression. But when refusing anger's arousal deprived us of its energy, we recognized our composure came at too high a price. For us the chief discipline is to carry our arousal forward into effective action.

But in many American families, children learn different lessons about anger. Early on, the links between anger and violence are reinforced—by parents who, when they are angry, discipline their children by harsh physical punishment; by adults who characteristically handle frustration by lashing out; by violent arguments and assaults in the home. If this is our early experience, befriending means breaking the pattern that automatically links angry arousal to violent behavior.

Experimental programs are being developed in schools and rehabilitative centers and elsewhere to help violence-prone young people learn ways to break these links. From what has been learned so far, three strategies seem key. First, teaching young people simple ways to interrupt their anger—deep breathing, relaxing stretches, counting to ten, using their imagination to take them somewhere else. Second, showing young people how to find alternatives to their explosive response by introducing them to basic conflict-management skills—considering different ways to communicate their anger, learning nonviolent ways to be assertive, tracking the consequences of their actions. Third, helping young people find support for new ways of acting—setting up peer groups committed to change, encouraging them to identify people and situations to avoid, establishing adult contact persons to whom they can regularly report both their successes and mistakes. Obviously, troubled children are not the only ones who might benefit from these helpful strategies.

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Since we experience anger in both mind and body, both mind and body can help us let go. Moderate physical exercise—taking a walk, gardening, even doing laundry, or cleaning house—channels energy away from angry behavior. Spending time in yoga or meditation lowers the body's physiological arousal, lessening the physical sense of urgency. Getting involved in activities that demand concentration and give us pleasure—such as pursuing a favorite hobby or preparing a festive meal—helps bring our body around and calm our emotions as well.

## Expressing Anger

In close relationships, letting the person who has upset us know of our distress often helps. Rochelle Albin notes that, "Expressing anger not only provides relief for ourselves, it can also help other people see things differently. Expressing anger relieves hurt and can change things." In fact, Beverly Harrison insists, "Anger expressed directly is a mode of taking the other person seriously." When anger arises, Harrison continues, "We have two basic options… We can ignore, avoid, condemn, or blame. Or we can act to alter relationships toward reciprocity, beginning a real process of hearing and speaking to each other."

Telling a friend or co-worker how her action offends us may not be easy, but—if skillfully done—this honesty makes change possible. Our friend may not have meant to hurt us; she may not even have known we took offense. Aware now how her behavior affects us, she can take steps to act differently.

Communicating anger sometimes leads to more than changed behavior. When people care for one another and for their life together, expressing anger can deepen intimacy. Letting someone know our distress opens our inner world to them. Anger exposes us, revealing where we feel vulnerable. Telling someone how they have hurt us risks giving them information that can hurt us more. But in a safe relationship, revealing our vulnerability—paradoxically—strengthens us. Having been angry with one another, and survived through that sweaty distress, strengthens the relationship, as well.

Sadly, not all close relationships are safe, and not every angry statement supports positive change. Sometimes, expressing anger just makes things worse. Carol Tavris cautions that, contrary to some common sense recommendations, "letting it all out" usually increases our rage. Anger dissipates when injustice is rectified, when a sense of personal control is reinstated, when self-esteem is restored. Giving vent to angry feelings can sometimes be part of this process, moving us beyond apathy and prompting us to get involved. But "getting it out of our system" usually does not dissipate hostility. On the contrary, angry expression tends to increase anger—in ourselves and in other people.

Psychologist Ron Richardson observes that many angry people act on the supposition, "If I just show how upset I am, the other person will change." He warns that angry expression makes a clumsy tool for change. Since people under siege strike back, verbal attack is usually counterpro-

ductive. But expressing anger does not demand hostile behavior. We can let someone know that we are angry and why, without attacking verbally or physically. To show the difference, therapists distinguish between a communication style that starts with information about oneself, "This is how I am feeling now… This is what I am going to do…" and messages that insult or blame the other person, "It's your fault, stupid! Look what you have done to me…" In situations where emotions run high, "I" messages often make it easier to give and receive information. When our goal is to move beyond anger—toward understanding, toward negotiation, toward peace—these communication skills become crucial.

## Acting with Our Anger

Anger moves us to remedy a grievance. Sometimes, expressing anger is enough, and just letting people know our complaint brings the change we need. But most often, the world doesn't come around quickly in the face of our displeasure. We have to do more than register our distress; we have to strategize ways to effect change. When our goal is change, the challenge is to channel anger into effective action.

Acting *with* anger means holding our anger in a new way. Rather than moving away from our arousal, we want to stay in touch with its urgency. In the face of entrenched bias or long-term patterns of abuse, change can seem impossible. Falling back into a resigned stance that "nothing can be done," or "it's not my job to make things better" is tempting then. Resistance seems worthless. But giving in to this sense of futility saps our strength. Losing touch with our anger, we fall out of the loop of social transformation.

When our goal is to remedy a bad situation, anger gives us steam to make things change. But being steamed up doesn't guarantee success. Channeling anger into effective action is the real work of change. Strategies of planning and problem solving are key—being clear about what we want to accomplish, recognizing the barriers we face, gathering needed resources, enlisting allies to help. But anger remains an underlying energy of social transformation, fueling personal commitment and sustaining social resolve.

## Letting Go of Anger

Acting *with* anger can be an appropriate, even virtuous response. But often enough, we need to turn away from wrath. When recalling a grievance spirals us into despair, our goal is to move beyond anger. When rage provokes us to respond recklessly, our goal is to dissipate its force. Later, reclaiming this energy may be useful, but now it needs moderation.

Since we experience anger in both mind and body, both mind and body can help us let go. Moderate physical exercise—taking a walk, gardening, even doing laundry, or cleaning house—channels energy away from angry behavior. Spending time in yoga or meditation lowers the body's physiological arousal, lessening the physical sense of urgency. Getting involved in activities that demand concentration and give us pleasure—such as pursuing a favorite hobby or preparing a festive meal—helps bring our body around and calm our emotions as well. And when we are angry, doing something generous for someone else almost always transforms our mood. Anger harbors the impulse to punish other people; helping people counteracts that urge. Hostility drains away, even when the recipient of our good deed is not the person who has angered us.

## Forgiveness in Anger

Forgiveness, too, reinterprets anger. And it can be the gift of anger courageously faced. Forgiveness allows us to start again, to come to a sense of a new beginning.

Forgiving involves a decision, but it is not completed in the moment of choice. Forgiveness is a process that gradually allows hurt to heal as trust rebuilds. The process of forgiving does not bring us back to where we were, allowing us to go on as if nothing has happened. Something *has* happened, something profound. The fabric of our interwoven lives has been torn. Yet we can choose not to be defined by this rupture, incorporating it instead, as part of an ongoing relationship. We hope the hurt will not become the pattern, but we sense its contribution of depth and substance to the design.

Forgiveness is not easy to extend or to receive. To forgive, we must face the offense and experience

*Please turn to page 79*

PHOTO: ANASAZI VEIL BY SUSAN SLOTTER. SEE RESOURCE SECTION PAGE 71 FOR GREETING CARD INFORMATION.

# Dreaming as a Creative Art

JILL MELLICK

Some dreams haunt us with their images, words, sounds, and feelings. They often influence our inner and outer lives. They disturb, amuse, intrigue, haunt, and inspire. They are messengers from another realm with their own logic antithetical to waking logic. Dreams use the narrative structure of the soul, an acausal logic that exists in a timeless, spatially unbound universe. At times in our dreams, we occupy two time frames or places at once: we are our current age but in our childhood home; we change our sex; we are older, younger; we may occupy the consciousness of two people at once, seeing events from different perspectives simultaneously; we are in the future; we are both dead and alive. Wiser and more humorous than we, dreams remind us that we are subject to larger forces and influences than we tend to acknowledge on a daily basis. Many of our most profound images surface from dreams.

What happens if we let this dream world constructively intersect with waking life? What happens if we pay creative attention to our dreams, consciously allowing their imagery, patterns, and forms into waking consciousness? The wisdom of the dream can balance or affirm our waking attitudes. The heartbeat of the dream can beat in our actions and in the presence we bring to situations.

We do not always need to fully "understand" or interpret dreams to receive their gifts to heart and soul. Rather, we can circumambulate them, respect them, let their images feed our imagination and lead us onward, just as a glimpse of ocean or lake renews and orients us on a long drive. Fine plays and films leave images hovering in awareness—the hand reaching out across the car seat, the old letter being opened, the long shadow across the lawn. They also engender feelings that linger in the heart—inspiration, paradoxical whimsy, poignancy. Even a film in an unfamiliar language can still touch something universal in the depths of the heart.

Dreams prove us creative artists, natural poets capable of simile, metaphor, symbol, and sheer imagery unbound by the cognitive restrictions of waking life. Dreams prove us painters, sculptors, superb storytellers, and myth makers. Dream images are sketched in fugitive ink, however. If we don't re-experience them immediately, they fade to invisibility on the fast-turning pages of waking consciousness.

In the ocean of the unconscious, dreams are swells that rise and pause and break on the shores of personal consciousness, only to suck back, leaving precious flotsam and jetsam on the beach of waking awareness. We cannot influence the tides or the currents, but we can ride the crest of the wave into shore and gather the treasures to us as we walk at dawn.

We cannot make a contract with our dreams. And dreams do not make contracts with us. Dreams promise nothing. They don't give answers. They don't even promise us their remembered presence.

We can, however, make a covenant with our dreams. Dreams ask trustworthy questions, questions from our deepest selves, perhaps deeper. We can choose to have a passing acquaintance or a deep, long friendship with them. We can promise them we shall be with them, record them, sing them, dance them, laugh with and weep for them, draw them. If we are willing to make this covenant, we can then receive what comes from our dreams as

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unbidden gifts. Two separate, trusting people in a loving, conscious relationship cannot demand reciprocity. They can only offer each other the possibility of being together in ways that allow their best selves to fly accompanied into an unknown, often moonless sky, sustained by quiet air currents of acceptance.

Like lovers, all we can do is promise to be there for our dreams—with heart, soul, intellect, body, and discernment. If we can let go of demanding, we can begin to learn the dream's language of love.

## Approaching the Dream World as a New Culture

My approach to dreams has its roots in curiosity about my own dreams since childhood and my many cherished years working with dreamers in my capacity as a clinical psychologist in private practice. The wisdom and work of Carl Jung, Jungian theorists, and other selected theorists, have deeply watered and fertilized those roots and shaped my understanding. So has a lifelong interest in and involvement with other cultures' world views.

My personal heritage includes several cultures and, having grown up in Australia and lived most of my adult life in the United States, I consider myself bicultural. I have also been fortunate to travel widely and to work in other cultures, including many years with the Pueblo Indian communities of the southwestern United States. However, no matter how many ceremonial dances I attend in the Pueblos, I shall always be a welcomed visitor, never a participant in the ritual. Nor shall I have more than a superficial understanding of the religious context of that dance, no matter how many books I read or how much form and feeling I absorb. I can better appreciate, however, the role of ritual drama, the spiritual impact of slow, repetitive dance and low singing, and the appearance in religious ceremonial costumes of nature symbols—rain, cloud, mountain. I can breathe in the experience and feel it enrich the breath of my own culture. I can include ritual, dance, art, nature, symbol, and song with more care, intent, depth, and fidelity in my life.

Our dreams, too, enact themselves in a different culture that we can only partially understand. So we must be wary of the preconceptions we bring to our dreams from our waking culture or from other cultures. However, by learning from other cultures' ways of structuring and receiving stories, dreams, images, and experiences, we can enrich our perceptions of and responses to dreams. Free of the constraints of our answer-addicted, deterministic culture, we can open to new secrets, new themes, new ways of listening and attending.

## Opening to New Ways of Experiencing "The Other"

In *Keeping Slug Woman Alive*, a study of Native American narrative, Greg Sarris, a part-Pomo ethnographer, demonstrates that, after listening to a story, different cultural groups remember different elements of the story. In one culture, for example, listeners value the facts of the story; in another, listeners value who told the tale and in what circumstances; in yet another, listeners value not the

objects appearing in the story, but their color.

Sarris describes his friendship with Mabel McKay, a Pomo Indian basket weaver and medicine woman. He was recording her life story. One day when he visits her, relatives Violet and Frances are peeling potatoes. He quickly observes that they are making perfectly round, peeled potatoes. He works at making perfectly round potatoes, gets good—and fast—only to see Violet glance with a small smile at the peelings. He looks, too. The women's peelings are fine and transparent and have wasted no potato. Greg's peelings are chopped off bits of dense potato. Sarris realizes he has missed the point of the exercise. Aunt Mabel simply says, "My life is like that." She quietly teaches Greg to be wary of attending to the wrong thing in the stories she tells.

Like Aunt Mabel and Sarris, each culture peels the skin off the dream differently, although almost all cultures, across seas and time, have regarded dreams as guides for unmapped spiritual, emotional, and physical—even cultural—territories. There is wide cross-cultural agreement, too, that "big" dreams carry special significance for the individual, and even for a whole community. In the Senoi tribe of Malaysia, for example, individual dreams are important to the whole group. In classical Greece, visitors to the healing center at Epidaurus slept in a dream chamber until they had a special dream that opened the way to psychological or physical healing. In other shamanic tribes, those desiring a big dream or an encounter with their guardian spirit set themselves aside to fast until a dream guide appears.

Sigmund Freud considered dreams the "royal road" to the unconscious, to inner worlds of personal history, trauma, and primitive need. Carl Jung believed that dreams draw from not only a personal well of experience, but also a vast reservoir of universal human experiences, responses, images, metaphors, symbols, and mythology. Jung observed, from extensive and deep analytic work with his patients and himself, that dreams perform restorative, corrective, compensatory, prophetic, and developmental roles in the psyche. To attend to our dreams is to attend to the cry of the soul through image. While putting forward the most comprehensive, culture-sensitive, and open system of dream theory, Jung also believed that it is wiser and more personally fruitful to approach individual dreams with humility and unknowing.

Through the window of Jung's experience, we see dreams speaking on many levels at once, just as a piece of art does. Michelangelo's *Pieta* has many levels of meaning: one sculptor's rendering of two individual human models; the por-

If we can allow the dream to be what it is, rather than immediately compare it to what it is not, we can allow the dream its own structural integrity, which is probably best expressed through an art form more fluid than conventional story. We need to let dreams paint themselves, dance themselves, sculpt themselves, begin at the end and end at the beginning, spiral in on themselves, meander without climax or major turning point.

trayal of a scene significant to Christian cultures; the depiction of a universal emotion; the unbearable grief in the loss of a child. What the sculpture evokes is not only personal but archetypal: people from all cultures looking at that sculpture touch their own experiences of loss.

Familiarity with the work of Freud or Jung or another coherent dream theory consonant with your personal acculturation is helpful but not crucial for fruitful dream work. In fact, interpreting dreams by exclusive and unquestioning application of a template from one theoretical system can be dangerously misleading at times. The theory must take into account the culture, the individual, and *the nature of the individual dream with which we are working.* To apply a theory blindly is to make assumptions about the dream culture without traveling with an open mind. We become souvenir hunters, missing engagement with the vibrancy and mystery of the unknown culture, bent only on collecting and carrying a heavy suitcase of artifacts that will fit into our predetermined decor.

Most theorists assume that the dream's narrative structure exists almost independently of its substance, like a frame waiting for a painting or a survey for answers. Many even believe that if the dream (as it is reported in *words*) lacks a defined beginning, middle, and end, something is awry or unformed in the dream or dreamer.

In *Woman Native Other*, Trinh Minh-ha, a writer, filmmaker, and composer, points out that stories from different cultures are told in infinite ways. Each story creates its own structure. She adds that it is not only self-limiting but also oppressive to force Western "beginning-middle-end," cause-and-effect story structure onto another culture and then to evaluate the narrative or retell it in that mode.

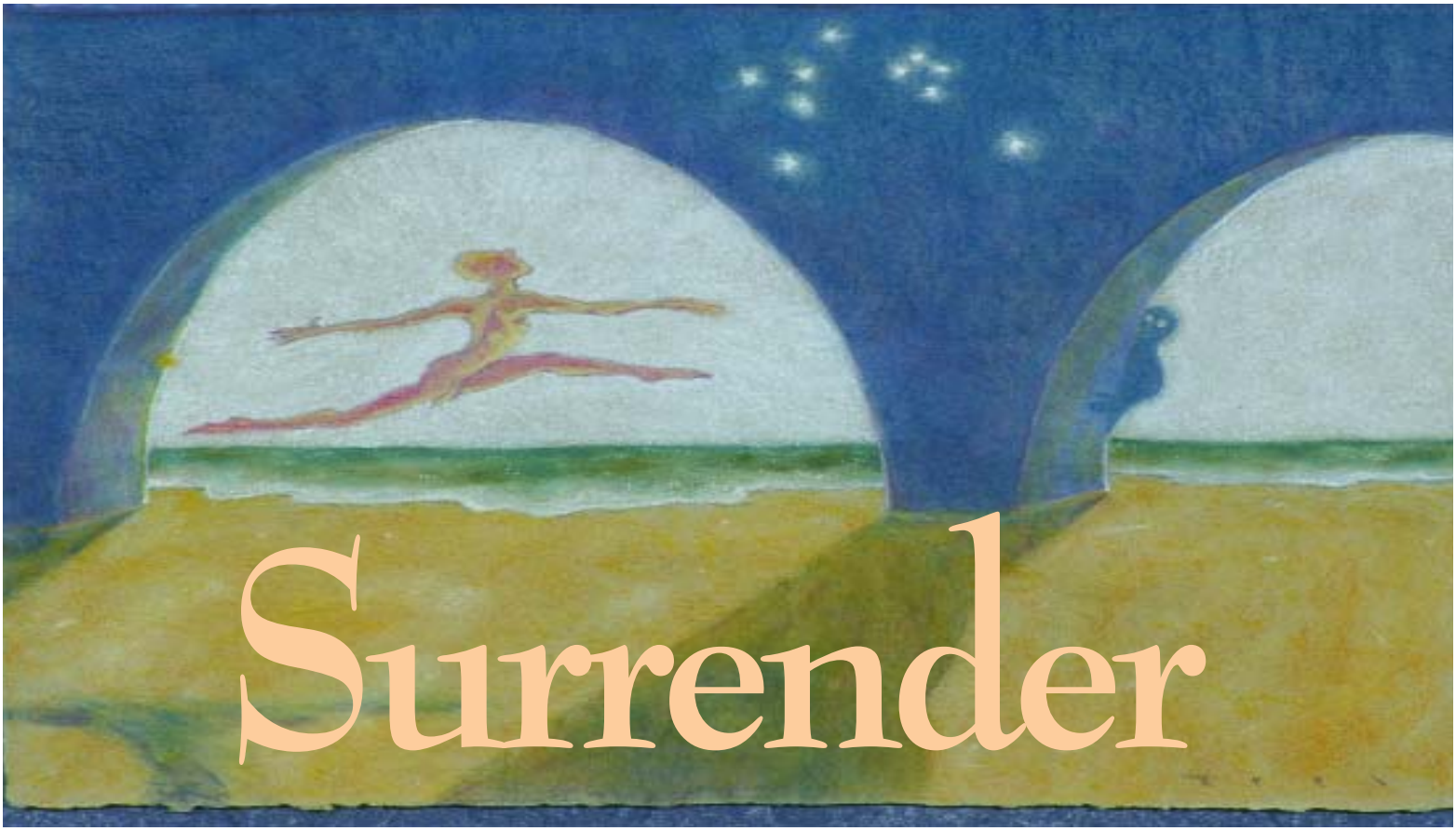
We often oppress dreams in the same way. We separate their content and structure. In order to retell our dreams with some verbal, linear coherence, we unthinkingly use Western story structure to make the dream comprehensible to waking consciousness. Unconsciously influenced by telling stories that have a beginning, middle, and end, that wrap up loose ends from certain events or characters, that make one thing lead to the next, we make our dream tales conform to our storytelling habits, to our need to place them within a familiar narrative framework.

Aunt Mabel showed that we can miss the point by our preconceptions or by restructuring experience. A well-known author and creative writing teacher asserts that he makes his students tell their dreams in class, whereupon other students deem the dream a good story or a bad story! They are to critique the dream for having no ending or beginning or for being boring or uneventful!

Who said that all dreams are stories? And according to whose definition of story? Undoubtedly, many dreams are indeed stories. And it is even possible that our ways of storytelling can actually influence the original formation of certain dreams. Yet many dreams are not stories at all, but natural plays, paintings, poems. Would we "analyze" a poem as though it were a novel? Would we analyze a novel as though it were a painting? Would we expect an Aboriginal tribal member to produce a dance ritual in the classical form of a Shakespearean play—or a Noh drama, or a nineteenth-century novel in which every character is accounted for and *The End* is printed on the last page? Why, then, do we do this with our dreams?

Beautifully woven rugs from Newlands, a remote area on the Navajo reservation, have one pattern of overlaid threads on one side and a slightly different pattern on the other. Because we expect both sides to look the same, it's easy to miss the difference. At a recent exhibit of fine paintings, one was suspended in a clear, double-sided frame; there was a drawing on both sides. Used to looking for what we look for, we rarely expect this. We stop too soon and miss the beauty of the other side of the rug, the painting. We miss the transparency of the potato peelings.

If we can allow the dream to be what it is, rather than immediately compare it to what it is not, we can allow the dream its own structural integrity, which is probably best expressed through an art form more fluid than conventional story. We need to let dreams paint themselves, dance themselves, sculpt themselves, begin at the end and end at the beginning, spiral in on themselves, meander without climax or major turning point. Perhaps then, when content and structure are seen as an indivisible whole, we can truly begin to appreciate the elegant sagacity of the dream.•



# Surrender

DAPHNE ROSE KINGMA

Surrender is a beautiful movement in which you gracefully, willingly, languidly fall, only to find midway that you have been gathered into some unimaginable embrace. Surrender is letting go, whether or not you believe the embrace will occur. It's trust to the hundredth power—not sticking to your idea of the outcome, but letting go in the faith that even the absence of an outcome will be the perfect solution.

Surrender is diaphanous and fluid. It's the giving up of rigidity of every kind: rigidities of the mind that design outcomes to occur in very specific ways; rigidities of the heart that refuse the heart to be soft and open; rigidities of the body that refuse to receive the touch that could heal, the passion that could transform; rigidities of the soul that congeal and congest the spirit, causing it to imagine it has a life apart from the body and mind.

Surrender is meltdown of every rigidity we've ever been committed to, the conscious and unconscious dismantling of how we thought things should be, to make way for the way things will, in fact, occur. It's a kind of being surprised by joy, of happily swimming into the greater consciousness that's always operating on our behalf. Just as a child, learning to swim, discovers, amazed, that the water does hold him up, so surrender buoys us up, supports us for the fulfillment of our destinies.

Surrender requires purity of intention. In the absolute freedom it grants in response to our letting go, it requires an absolute commitment of holding onto nothing. Whatever you thought you had—the idea, the expectation, the plan, the hope of how things should be—you must let go of it fully. Surrender is stepping away from the certainty of your categories into the no-man's-land of all possibilities.

And it is in surrendering, in letting go into the void—into the mysterious, unnamed, mystical, formless future, into the arms that are invisible—that we become finally ready to receive it all. Surrender is the giving of your all to the All, the waiting with an absolute absence of expectation for the totally perfect thing to occur.•

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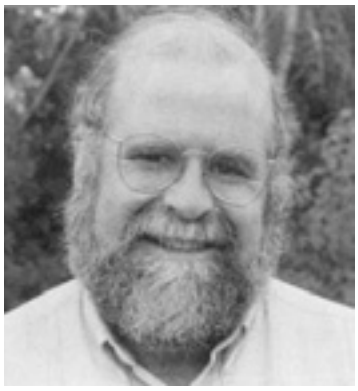
DAVID SIRGANY

IMAGE BANK/WHITNEY LANE

# Healing Broken Stories

DANIEL TAYLOR

*Stories can be broken. The stories we live by sometimes fall apart. They no longer adequately explain our experience or give us enough reason to get up in the morning. Even worse, we sometimes come to doubt there is any story to our lives at all. They seem plotless. We lose any sense of ourselves as characters making significant choices. We cannot imagine a meaningful outcome to events. In such cases, we need to heal our broken stories. The best cure for a broken story is another story.*



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No story has been more relentlessly battered than that of the Jews. They have survived as a people only because of their commitment to storytelling. Elie Wiesel prefaces his novel, *The Gates to the Forest*, with the following brief story:

> *When the great Rabbi Israel Baal Shem-Tov saw misfortune threatening the Jews, it was his custom to go into a certain part of the forest to meditate. There he would light a fire, say a special prayer, and the miracle would be accomplished, and the misfortune averted.*
>
> *Later, when his disciple, the celebrated Magid of Mezritch, had occasion, for the same reason, to intercede with heaven, he would go to the same place in the forest and say: "Master of the universe, listen! I do not know how to light the fire, but I am still able to say the prayer." And again the miracle would be accomplished.*
>
> *Still later, Rabbi Moshe-Leib of Sasov, in order to save his people once more, would go into the forest and say: "I do not know how to light the fire, I do not know the prayer, but I know the place, and this must be sufficient." It was sufficient, and the miracle was accomplished.*
>
> *Then, it fell to Rabbi Israel of Rizhyn to overcome misfortune. Sitting in his armchair, his head in his hands, he spoke to God: "I am unable to light the fire, and I do not know the prayer; I cannot even find the place in the forest. All I can do is to tell the story, and this must be sufficient." And it was sufficient.*

The right stories can heal our brokenness and cure what ails us. They do so most often by reconnecting us with others who share our story, rescuing us from the sterile cycle of self-absorption, alienation, and radical skepticism. When our own ability to narrate our story falters, we can lean on the shared story to sustain us.

Every story implies a community, and community offers us our single best hope for healing broken stories. At its smallest, a story defines a community of two: teller and listener. At its largest, it embraces the entire human community and beyond. Whether small or large, community is healing because it both requires something of us and gives us something back. In story, both teller and listener have responsibilities to the other, responsibility being the fair price we pay for the many benefits of sharing a story with others.

One of the most encouraging truths in a difficult world is that we have the freedom to change our defining stories. Broken stories can be restored, deficient ones replaced, and healthy stories identified and nurtured. If many of our stories are inherited from the various communities of which we are a part, they are also chosen and lived. We can be active participants, not merely passive receivers, in the making and remaking of our story.

Broken or diseased stories are those that fail in any of the crucial areas in which a life story must succeed. They give an inadequate sense of plottedness and meaning to our lives, or of ourselves as characters. Failed stories tend to ignore or undervalue either our freedom or our responsibility. They bind us to explanations of the world that do not correspond with our own experience, or they leave us isolated in a desperate pursuit of individual satisfaction like a dog chasing its tail.

We participate in the creation of the stories by which we live. Although every story we hear has

the power to affect us, a handful of core stories determine the general shape of our lives. These are the stories that most directly answer the big questions: who am I, why am I here, who are these others, what is success, what should I do, what will happen when I die? These are our life stories, the ones that organize reality for us, give us our values, and enable us to explain our experience.

We should evaluate these core stories by the highest criteria and act accordingly if they are found wanting. We can heal our stories and choose new ones, for instance, by becoming true, acting characters, rather than mere personalities. Characters are defined by their choices, and their choices are a reflection of their values and understanding of the world. Your most meaningful stories should be chosen, not lived by default.

Many times, the stories you choose *will* be the ones that come from the communities in which you live. There is no particular merit or benefit in rejecting a story simply because it is familiar. But in choosing such stories, rather than passively receiving them, they become *your* story, and the community story will be different because you are a part of it.

Sometimes, however, our stories are not merely broken or fragmented, they are profoundly flawed. They cannot be healed, only replaced. The same freedom and responsibility that make us characters, also give us the possibility of choosing new stories in which to live. One of the clearest indications of a flawed life story is its failure to give one the sense of purpose and conviction necessary to live life with an acceptable degree of optimism and resolve. A failed story no longer encourages the kind of life you feel it is important to live.

Healthy life stories do full justice to our situation, our needs, and our nature. They have many qualities, but I would like to suggest four that should mark the stories in which we choose to act as characters. These stories should be truthful, freeing, gracious, and hopeful.

A true life story explains the world to us in a way that accounts for the facts of our experience. Inadequate stories require constant stretching, patching, deflecting, and suppression. Procrustes is a character from Greek mythology who was less than a perfect host. He invited guests to sleep in a bed but insisted that they fit it perfectly. Anyone who was too short was stretched and made to fit, and anyone too long had overhanging limbs chopped off. Many of us try to live by Procrustean stories that force us to stretch and chop our experience to make it fit.

A truthful life story will not only convincingly account for the facts of our experience, it will be satisfying. It will meet our emotional and intellectual need for meaning and purpose and the sense that our lives have value. Satisfying, however, is not the same as happy. This is one of the distortions in the common American story of success, a good example of a flawed story that at least needs to be supplemented, if not replaced. Enshrined in our "Declaration of Independence" is the quintessentially American idea that we have the inalienable right to pursue happiness. Originally, that probably did not mean much more than the right to private ownership of property (apparently a key to happiness for Americans then, as now). But over the years, we have subtly modified that idea into not simply the right to pursue happiness, but the unquestionable right to *be* happy, which is not the same.

The American success story tells us we are to achieve this happiness primarily through four avenues: money, power, prestige, and pleasure. These are the great themes of countless stories paraded before us in novels, films, self-help books, talk shows, television, and advertising. You can be richer, stronger, sexier. You can be envied, on top, out front, desired. You can be confident, gratified, in control, calling the shots, in charge. And, it goes without saying, you will be happy.

Then why aren't we? Why is arguably the richest, most powerful, most envied, most pleasure-soaked society in human history so widely unhappy? We are filled with complaint, frustration, anxiety, hostility, and violence. At least, that is what we tell ourselves through the media, day after day. (When was the last time you saw a "study" of anything that concluded that we were healthy and

doing well?)

We are unhappy because we are trying to live by a broken story. As attractive as it is in many respects, the American success story simply doesn't tell us the truth. It lies both in suggesting that everyone who works hard enough will have these things, and in suggesting that once you have them, you will finally be happy. It is a testimony to the human appetite for illusion that this story persists in the face of countless counter-stories from disappointed individuals who have followed these paths and found no contentment.

A satisfying story is one that is true not only to how the world is on the outside, but to how we are inside. It is emotionally and spiritually true. We do not have to divide ourselves to live it. We do not have to suppress something we know in our emotions to be true. Such emotional congruence is not a sufficient test by itself, because we know our emotions can support lies, but it is a necessary test. Our spirits will approve our most important stories.

A healthy story is also freeing. Stories that are true conform to reality. Understanding what is real and acting in accordance with it results in freedom—especially the freedom to do things. A bird can fly because it behaves in consort with the aerodynamic laws of nature. It is most free, and most capable, when it aligns itself with the unbreakable laws of how things are. A bird does not lament the restrictive laws of physics; it uses them to soar.

Human beings, on the other hand, too often think they're flying when they're only falling. Our prevailing notion of freedom is "No one can tell me what to do," when it should more often be "Will someone please tell me what to do?" A life story cut off from the stories of others is likely to be both untrue and sterile. Healthy stories free us from excessive self-absorption and "I did it my way" self-centeredness.

Healthy stories free us both from the lies we tell ourselves and from the lies others tell about us. In Alice Walker's *The Color Purple*, Celie is told, directly and indirectly, that she can never be more than a servant to an abusive husband because she is black, female, friendless, stupid, and ugly. It is a story she believes until another character, Shug, tells her a different story about herself. Braced up by this new story, Celie sees herself and the world differently, acts differently, and thereby changes her world.

Meaningful freedom is not freedom *from* something, but

A satisfying story is one that is true not only to how the world is on the outside, but to how we are inside. It is emotionally and spiritually true. We do not have to divide ourselves to live it. We do not have to suppress something we know in our emotions to be true. Such emotional congruence is not a sufficient test by itself, because we know our emotions can support lies, but it is a necessary test.

freedom to *do* something. Broken stories trap us in repetitive, destructive acts—or make us passive; healthy ones free us to change ourselves and the world. The latter encourage us to see ourselves as characters with meaningful choices, and motivate us to act accordingly. Nothing is more energizing than the feeling that one has something important to do. Nothing is more enervating than the feeling that nothing is worth doing.

One test, then, of our life story is whether it frees and motivates us to act. It should create for us a world where meaning is possible, and we have a role in bringing it about. Healthy stories are the enemies of passivity, paralysis, and cynicism. What, specifically, we do as a result of this freedom is unpredictable. It is more likely to be something small than something big. Most significant acts in the world are small ones. It is the accumulation of small acts, in individuals and in communities, that changes reality.

Another mark of healthy life stories is grace. Grace is getting better than you deserve—or giving better. Grace breaks the one-to-one link between performance and reward. It is essentially a religious idea, growing out of the notion of a creator with a parent's love for the creation. But it can be a powerful force in anyone's life.

Sacred writings are filled with stories of grace. In the Bible, David refuses the opportunity to kill Saul, the man who is trying to kill him; the forgiving father welcomes back the prodigal son; Christ on the cross prays for forgiveness for his crucifiers. The Bible's central story, in fact, is the story of grace.

The giving and receiving of grace should be part of any healthy life story. It is intimately linked to those other qualities of healthy stories—truth and freedom. If the stories I live by are unfettered with falsehood, and if they free me from preoccupation with self so I can act in the world, then I am more likely to be a source of grace to others and, therefore, to receive grace from others.

Grace is the ultimate act of empathy. It is possible on the human level only to the degree that we can imagine ourselves in other people's shoes. Such an act of imagination is a story act. It is being able to see oneself as a character in another's story, and acting in accordance with that imaginative perception in one's own. Grace is more than empathy, but empathy is its starting point. Because I know keenly my own need for receiving better than I deserve, I can imagine your similar need and can use my freedom to fulfill that need.

Grace is therefore a communal act. Only as we feel connected to others will grace flow back and forth. Even the simple, everyday orthodoxy of conversation—"I know how you feel," "That must have hurt," "I would have done the same thing," the nod of the head—are formulas of empathy that may contain flashes of grace.

Lastly, healthy life stories are hopeful stories. Every story worth living contains the possibility of a desirable outcome. If it is true that we are most drawn to stories of people in trouble, it is also true that our continuing interest depends on the possibility the person will survive that trouble, perhaps even triumph over it. Ultimately, both fatalism and cynicism are boring.

Hope is not mere wishing. It is a reasonable expectation based on past experience. We do not have to bury our heads in the sand to be hopeful; we need only draw reasonable conclusions from the outcome of other stories. If others have made it through circumstances similar to our own, then so might we. If others testify to finding a plot to their lives, then so might we. If others have found a meaningful end to their stories that validates the middle, then so might we. Discovering these aspects of others' stories depends, of course, on hearing them—which brings us back to the importance of community and sharing stories.

Though there is sometimes a tension between the requirement that a healthy life story be hopeful and that it also be truthful, there need be no contradiction. The basis for hope is not naive optimism, but a knowledge of other stories that give evidence that courage, perseverance, and faith are at least as strong as evil and misfortune, and often stronger.•

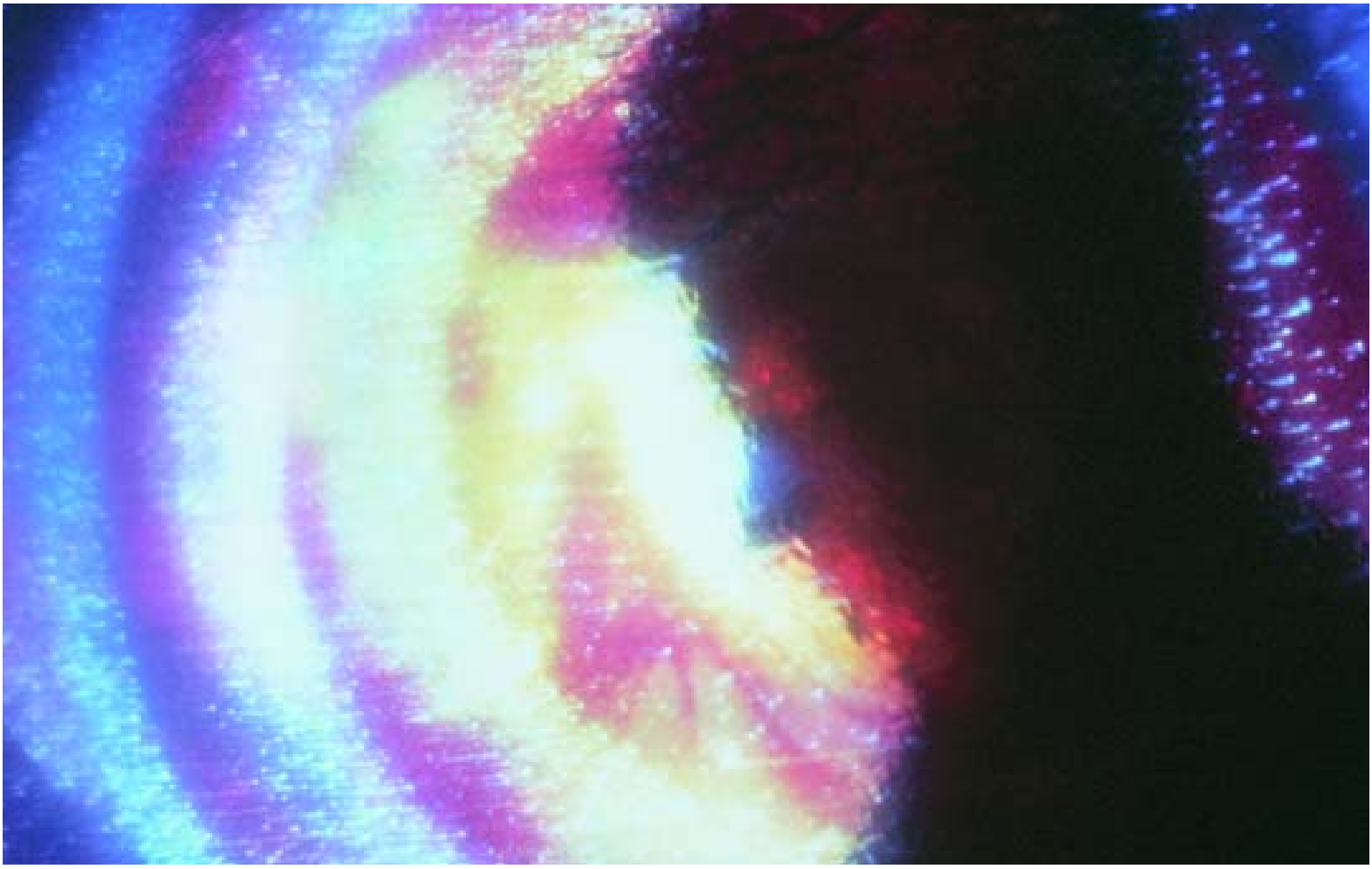

IMAGE BANK/GEOFFREY GOVE

# Plugging Energy Leaks That Hold You Back

LEE MILTEER

*It's not that we all don't have great ideas, projects we want to get done, people we want to help; the problem is that we have no energy to do the extra things in life that we would like to do. We, as human beings, have only so much life energy we can use in any given day. Our lives are changing at a rapid pace, and it feels as if we have too many people, responsibilities, necessities, pulling us in a thousand different directions every waking hour. It's no surprise that we feel stressed out and fatigued.*

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The problem isn't just our life style; it's also how we use our existing life energy. We all have something I call energy leaks—those self-defeating behaviors that drain our energy by creating anxiety. Energy leaks occur when we use our mental or emotional energy on our thoughts, worries, doubts, fears, and grudges. When we cannot maintain our energy level, we cannot learn new skills, adapt to new procedures, and assimilate changing directions.

An energy leak that almost everyone has is wasting life by trying to live in the past or the future. How many times have you caught yourself saying things like: *I can't wait till 5 o'clock*, *I can't wait 'till Friday*, *'till my vacation*, *'till I get married*, *'till the kids get in school?* When we daydream of the future or spend a lot of time comparing how the past was better, we are actually stealing from our current life energy to be in the present.

Have you ever caught yourself thinking: *Things used to be so much better; being a kid was so great, when I was younger?* The problem in doing this is that you're stealing from the one true resource that can't be replaced—*Now*. All you have is this moment in time. Our present time is so precious, yet we act as if it were okay to waste the only thing you really own in life: the present.

Your time and energy should be at the top of your list of most precious resources. It's the steps you take in the present which will allow you to manifest whatever it is that you want in your future. The bottom line is *your point of power is always in the present.*

## Excess Baggage

A most damaging energy leak is holding on to angry feelings—bearing a grudge. As an example, Tammy is a friend of mine; she and her husband had just moved into their first home when she found out she was expecting their first child. The new house needed a complete paint job, so Tammy's father offered to come over and help her paint. After two weeks of hard work in close quarters, Tammy and her father began to get on each other's nerves. One day they had a raging fight where both of them said some very nasty things to each other. Her father ultimately left the house angry and refused to come back and finish painting. They haven't spoken to each other since the big blowup, leaving Tammy so upset that she bursts into tears at the mere thought of her father. Tammy's husband wants her to call her father for a reconciliation, but she remains adamant that it's his place to call her. After all, she is expecting her first child, and he deserted her in the middle of this huge painting job, even though she recognizes the blow up was really over a misunderstanding and nothing to argue about. She stubbornly maintains

that she is right. The problem here is that she would rather be right than have peace in her family—and this energy leak of worrying about the rift in her family is creating unhappiness for her.

No matter who you are, you have some type of similar story from your own life. So many times, we hold onto our righteous feelings, even when it hurts us. We are too stubborn to give in and admit that we are 50 percent of the problem. The amount of life energy that is consumed by clinging to who is right drains us from seeing other solutions and reconciling with the people we care about.

### Worry Leaks

Worry is a useless emotion. Since your brain doesn't have enough information to worry accurately, you're making it up, and most likely, it's 100 percent worse than reality could ever be. If you have unhealthy emotions of imagined fears or worry, the body responds with a tense feeling of nervousness, stress-related illness, fatigue, lack of energy, and loss of creativity. Ever heard this saying—"the fearful die a thousand deaths, the brave only one"? When you live under fear of what might happen, you are so physically exhausted that you are unable to be creative and cope with normal challenges or emergencies that might happen. Make a vow to yourself today to cross a bridge only as you come to it.

You must take back your power in life by staying in the present and dealing with the realities. You are not a victim of circumstance; you make your own internal environment. You are the creator of your life by your thoughts and actions. Your subconscious mind will produce whatever you ask for; just as a computer doesn't care what information you put in, it will act on that information. We must stop letting worry control us.

Samuel Johnson observed: "The fountain of content must spring up in the mind, and he who hath so little knowledge of human nature as to seek happiness by changing anything but his own disposition, will waste his life in fruitless efforts and multiply the grief he proposes to remove."

### Guilt Leaks

Our society has conditioned us to feel guilty. It's a learned emotional response. We have been taught to believe that if you feel guilty, it shows that you're a good person who cares. Guilt is a neurotic behavior that our society has come to accept as normal. It has nothing to do with caring. It's pure manipulation to control other people. Since the pain of guilt makes us feel so bad, we will do just about anything to please others so we do not have to feel guilty.

By feeling guilty in an attempt to show that we are sorry for our actions and really care, we are in reality simply getting into a very unresourceful state of mind and beating ourselves up in an attempt to change what is now history. The past is a locked door, and whatever occurred cannot be changed. Your regret doesn't make things any better. Feeling guilty has never fixed any problem. Guilt simply holds you prisoner of the past and immobilizes you from taking resourceful action in the present. The more you dwell in the guilty state of mind, the less creative you can be in dealing with your responsibilities of the present. Now is all you have in life—the future is created by the choices and steps you take today.

We choose how to use our life energy. To really be a fully functioning person, you must learn from the past, not whip yourself because of it. Mistakes should be treated like a speck of dust in the eye: you identify the problem; instead of condemning yourself or feeling guilty for having it, you quite simply just get rid of it. The sooner you do, the sooner you will be free from the problem.

### Grudge Release Levers

Many people ask how it could be in our best interest to forgive someone who has betrayed, humiliated, abused, or rejected us? Over the centuries, religious leaders have counseled us to turn the other cheek; today's mental health professionals emphasize that forgiveness implies that you're responsible for your own emotional needs.

Since you only have so much mental, physical, spiritual, and emotional life energy, if you spend it holding onto negative or angry feelings, whom do

you really hurt? Yourself, of course. When you are plotting revenge, going over what you would like to say in your mind, you drain positive creative energy that could be used in a more resourceful way, such as getting some projects done or having fun. You never hurt the person you are holding the grudge against. You end up hurting only yourself because of the time and energy wasted.

Food for thought—is it possible to reframe this situation in your mind? Remembering that people do the best they can with the knowledge they have, you can choose to forgive them. That doesn't mean you agree with what they did. Maybe the bottom line is that they didn't really mean to hurt you. According to Sidney and Suzanne Simon's book, *Forgiveness: How to Make Peace with Your Past and Get on with Your Life*, "Forgiveness is a by-product of a long process of healing, and only after you acknowledge, work through, and let go of hurt can you lead a full life." They went on to say, "Forgiveness doesn't mean condoning what someone did, or forgetting it, or absolving that person from responsibility. Forgiveness doesn't mean they get off scot-free. It means you get off scot-free: you do it for yourself."

To forgive someone doesn't mean you have to write or call or even go to see them. All you have to do is forgive and release them in your mind. Every time you think of that person, do a pattern-interrupt on yourself and say to yourself that you forgive and release them, and then send them positive thoughts. The advantage of using this type of approach is that the next time you see them or someone else brings up their name, you'll no longer have that negative emotional reaction. You've raised your standards of living and given yourself the leverage to create emotional management for yourself; you achieve this by forgiving them and letting go of the emotional baggage you've been carrying that needlessly drains you of energy.

According to mental-health professionals, taking responsibility for your own feelings by choosing to forgive can boost your self-esteem and your ability to feel in control of your destiny. Studies have shown that when people are able to forgive and let go of their hurt and/or anger, it can open the way to resolving seemingly unconnected problems such as compulsive overeating, drugs, alcohol abuse, and depression. You have everything to gain and nothing to lose but self-pity, anger, and resentment if you give yourself permission to forgive and release. Being 100 percent responsible for yourself extracts you from the perspective of being a victim. The act of forgiveness gives *you* the peace of mind. I love the old saying, "The best revenge is living well!"

### Forgive Yourself

We are really toughest on ourselves and usually expect to be perfect. If you live your present life by comparing yourself to the mistakes of the past, you only undermine your confidence level. What you focus on expands for you. If you focus on and relive your mistakes or failures, you are simply reinforcing why you cannot succeed in the present. *Never reinforce the negative!* Instead, spend your life energy focusing on what you *can* do.

Everyone has a few skeletons in their closets. When I look back on some of my mistakes, recalling the times I've hurt people and said or done the wrong thing, I have to acknowledge that I was doing the best I could at the time with my knowledge, skills, and resources. It's clear I made mistakes, but I can't continue beating myself up in the present, futilely attempting to change history with my bad feelings or guilt. I must have the courage to face myself, accept the learning experience, and *move on*. I also want to remind you that your entire life will be a matter of making mistakes and failing from time to time. The point is to forgive yourself, learn the valuable information, and *move on*. This one act of releasing the past, and not letting it use up any more of your life energy, will free you to be more at peace with yourself. Releasing that stored-up negative energy that has been clogging up your system will open your creative channels of energy to become more productive.•

IMAGE BANK/WEINBERG CLARK

# Death and Dying

STEPHAN RECHTSCHAFFEN

*"All this time, I thought I was learning to live, when all along I was learning to die." So said Leonardo da Vinci, and we are likely to read his words, smile knowingly, think to ourselves "how wise"—and be glad that they don't really apply to us. We're right: They don't. Most Westerners run from even "talk" of death. True, we cry at movies like "Terms of Endearment" when dying is unrealistically romanticized; we weep at funerals, cheer when the "bad guys" die on television, and shudder at newspaper accounts of catastrophes, though we soon get over it. But as for the thought of our own death, while we know in our mind that death is inevitable, we expend untold energy denying it, sensing somewhere in our untrustworthy heart that we are immortal.*

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We deny death because we are afraid of it. This fear is so deeply ingrained that it, above all other factors, keeps us from being fully in the present. When we are alive, our death exists in the future. If we spend our days worrying about death, we essentially live in the future. In that sense, death robs us of life before we die.

It takes attention to hold off death. We plan. We become anxious. We busy ourselves so we do not have to think about it. And we lose contact with present time and present place where wonder and joy—and not death—exist.

"But I'm not afraid of death," people have told me, "only of some terrible disease like cancer, or some awful injury."

Yes. But probably they are afraid of death, as well. Actually, fear heightens our experience of disease or pain or death, whether it be our own or a loved one's. If we can face calamity directly, then we will experience it as a part of life. When it comes to death, we must recognize that its mystery is unfathomable.

Ram Dass tells of a student who went to a Zen master.

"What can you tell me about death?" the student asked. "Nothing," the other replied. "I'm a Zen master. Not a dead Zen master."

One way to come to the feelings of death is through meditation. Indeed, Philip Kapleau, author of the brilliant *The Wheel of Death*, points out that meditation itself is a "dance" of death, for ultimately death is both the end and the beginning.

I remember with awe an elderly man in my class doing his first meditation. He seemed shaken when it was over, and I asked him why.

"I'm afraid of death," he said.

He had immediately come to a place where he was alone, by himself, facing universal issues. It was remarkable to me that in such a short time he could reach this place that most of us hide from, avoiding any consideration of our true fears. He was overwhelmed, and I empathized with him, having undergone an equivalent experience.

My own fear of dying stems from childhood. When I was eight or nine, my grandfather died, and the words "really" and "forever" buzzed in my head. He was *really* dead; he would be dead *forever*; never to return to spend time with me. I couldn't sleep for months. If death had happened to him, it would happen to me. I would really be dead. I would be gone forever.

Until children understand the concept of time, they cannot conceive of death. Knowledge of death is the prime cause of a child's loss of innocence. Until faced with an understanding of death, children are intrepid daredevils. That is one of the reasons we must watch them so carefully.

It is in the realm of death that the Western concept of linear time is most destructive. In cultures in which people live in circular time, they do not fear death; they look upon it as a blessing. In Bali, for example, funerals are celebrated like births, with equivalent joy and ceremony. For the Balinese, death is simply part of the continuum of birth, life, death, and rebirth. As Voltaire said, "After all, it is

no more surprising to be born twice than it is to be born once."

The Sufi mystic Jalal ud-Din Rumi, perhaps the greatest of the Persian poets, wrote:

> *I died as a mineral and became a plant,*
> *I died as a plant and rose to animal,*
> *I died as animal and I was a man.*
> *Why should I fear?*
> *Was I less by dying?*

Death is in our lives, and we must recognize that as an unalterable fact. Recently, the six-year-old daughter of a friend was killed on a camping trip in the Adirondack State Park. My friend and his son and daughter had spent an idyllic few days there, close to nature and close to one another.

As they were leaving, they crossed a highway that cut through the park, and the girl was struck by a car traveling sixty miles per hour. She died instantly.

The tragedy was unspeakable; my friend and his son will have to struggle terribly to get through their grief and guilt. But taken objectively, one can see how difficult it is to make a time shift in a world where the slow rhythm of nature clashes with the speed of modern society's most familiar totem, the car.

In the middle of nature, the pace of society intruded in a most horrendous way. (Which is not to say that nature itself can't be cruel, violent, full of death.) Death sometimes has no meaning except that it exists; it can be expected or unexpected, and to live life in fear of death denies life itself.

Death does not exist in the present moment. In the now, there is only life, with its range of emotions and myriad feelings, its universal bounty.

In my time shifting workshops, I try an exercise. I ask the members to imagine the next six months. It is a time of perfect health and physical well-being; there is plenty of money and, if they choose, they do not have to do another day's work.

At the end of the six months, they will die.

How would they spend those months? I ask. What would their priorities be? I put on a peaceful, beautiful piece of music and let them imagine those six months and their feelings about them.

For most workshop participants, it's an extraordinarily disturbing exercise, and I've been touched by the seriousness and the sadness etched on their faces. Many of them have not come face-to-face with imagined death in so direct

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a fashion, and their initial reaction is one of shock. Almost always, they take a minute or so before they begin writing, and then they often quickly cross out what they had started to write, pause, think some more, and begin to write again, obviously with greater seriousness.

Some start without much depth: "I'd tell my boss off, get good and drunk, and then decide what I'd do;" "I'd have sex with a hundred women, without ever worrying about AIDS"—that sort of thing.

Then the answers get more thoughtful. The most common is, "I'd take a long trip with the person I love, visiting all the places in the world I want to see."

But that, too, gives way to deeper sentiments, and when I go around the group, asking for answers, then I hear about solving relationship problems with a loved one, spending time with the children, and not changing anything because life is good. But by far, the most common is, "I'd spend all my time with the people I love."

Yes. Human relationships count most when the prospect of death looms before us, and the exercise clearly points that out. The most dramatic responses are from people who have an estranged relationship with a loved one.

Joe began speaking about his father and how upset he had been about their argument over money; they hadn't spoken for two years. The thought of his imminent death made Joe realize he wanted to heal the rift before dying. So during the exercise, he made amends with his dad. When he shared this with the group, all of a sudden he realized, "Why am I waiting? I need to resolve this now!"

We are all in the process of dying; we just don't know when it will happen. Why not resolve issues and express our love now, before it's too late?

Senator Paul Tsongas once said, "No one on his deathbed ever said, 'I wish I had spent more time at the office,'" and that attitude is reflected here.

It's wonderful that so many people are able to say that they wouldn't do anything differently. Isn't this something we all aspire to? What is more satisfying than contentment?

Long after the participants have gone home, I'll get letters telling me how the exercise forced them to look closely at their lives and, in many cases, made them alter their priorities. What they're doing is mapping out time for themselves, time in the present with the people they love.

Facing death squarely means being squarely in the moment. And the ultimate moments are spent with a loved one, not with a boss.

This, fundamentally, is what our life is about.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, in her book *On Death and Dying*, brought this country face-to-face with the fact of death. She told us we did not have to run, could not hide, and could approach death with equanimity, even calm.

Even though the book caused a tremendous stir, and several later works by different authors expanded on her themes, only some people listened then, and not enough people are listening now.

Americans see death as a kind of failing or disgrace, like bad breath or body odor. No *strong* person would die, we seem to say. And so the strong deny it or run in terror, pretending that death is *not* a fact, not a certainty. At the same time, of course, they do everything possible to prolong life, even when that life is submerged in pain or hopeless senility.

When we deal with the dying, we're adept only at dealing with the *business* of dying. We build more and more sophisticated instruments of "salvation," an end-care technology that costs billions of dollars to save—what? Lives?

Yes, lives, but surely not the kind of life any of us wishes for.

Partly, I believe, this lust for machines stems from doctors' own fear of death, a kind of subconscious belief that by prolonging life in others, it will prolong their own lives. Too, if they substitute a machine for human contact, then they won't get "infected" by their patients; death will pass them by.

Thus the use of machines obviates for the medical establishment the need for human contact.

This is the most tragic facet of our need to prolong life: the fact that we'll do anything to save the

patient, rather than take into account the patient's human needs and desires. I've witnessed dehumanization in hospitals, doctors as callous as prison guards, and all because of their own fear of death.

We tend to praise the "impersonal" physician. If he got involved with all his patients, how could he maintain his objectivity, his sanity? What would his own life be like if he became "emotional" with each of the people under his care?

So we laugh at movies and books that show doctors joking about their patients and about death. But the impersonal physician is limiting his own life, not protecting it, and the laughter I've heard in emergency rooms is hollow.

Many of us have had direct experience of the loss of a loved one and know how difficult it is personally to face the death of someone close. Underlying this discomfort is the fear and pain surrounding our own death, for we know that it is inevitable. Our discomfort, like the physicians', comes from our uncertainty about what is in store. At the same time, the more we can directly face the experiences of loss that come into our lives, however unwanted, the better prepared we will be for our own death. If we can feel someone else's physical and/or emotional pain, we will be better able to deal with our own.

Attention to the psychological and emotional needs of the dying is a relatively new phenomenon in American society, particularly for its non-religious members. The hospice movement, until recently bitterly criticized as "warehousing" the dying, or "despairing" in its attitude, is now seen as the humanitarian effort it has always been.

Many health care professionals, doctors included, have come to realize that "taking care" of a patient goes well beyond looking to his physical comfort, or prolonging his life.

Joan Halifax, a dear friend and Buddhist shaman, has described the immense *mutual* benefits of simply being with a dying person, with no agenda and no time constraints—just two people coming into the moment. Her work with the dying is an outgrowth of her personal commitment to being mindful. Being with someone who is dying means being stripped of the social niceties that surround our usual interactions.

Ram Dass has described the same phenomenon. He has worked with the dying for many years, and has made society more aware of their concerns. Psychologist Marsha Greenleaf, who counsels the dying both in hospitals and in her office, writes of the vital importance of giving the dying their voice, letting them determine the manner and method of their death according to their psychological needs.

An old friend, Wavy Gravy, has made a career of dressing as a clown and visiting the terminally ill in children's hospitals. To me, this is an act of tremendous courage, but to him it offers enormous spiritual rewards.

In my early years as a doctor, I counseled people that having cancer was an *opportunity* for the patients, since it often forced them to resolve relationships, to bring their affairs in order, and to strive for spiritual peace.

In my heart, though, I didn't believe it. I knew it conceptually, but had no firsthand experience myself or with patients.

Then one day I met a woman with cancer, who described herself as "more alive than when I was supposedly healthy." She became closer to her husband than ever before, she told me, and had joyfully reconciled with the rest of her family. "I started living my life in the present," she explained, "in a way that I had never felt before. This disease has helped me fully appreciate what I have in my life." A devoutly religious woman, she accepted her disease as a "blessing," with all its positive implications.

It's true that facing death has the remarkable side effect of bringing one into the present. If we are allowed to keep our humanness, if we entrain with someone who is fully human, too, then dying is indeed an opportunity for fulfillment, perhaps the greatest opportunity of all.•

DAVID SIRGANY

# Motivate Yourself

RABBI SHONI LABOWITZ

*Your motivation is important to the quality of your life. No one can breathe for you and open your channels to the quality of life that you can receive from God. When you bind yourself to the Infinite Source in every breath you breathe, every word you speak and action you perform, the quality of your life markedly improves and can become miraculous. But when you are not motivated, you will more easily lose yourself in the humdrum of everyday life.*

*Rabbi Shoni Labowitz is a lecturer, spiritual guide, and creator of healing rituals. She has developed Living Waters, a spiritual health spa and is host to a radio talk program. She lives with her husband in Fort Lauderdale, Florida.*

When you are self-motivated, you continually learn, grow, and ascend the spiritual rungs of the ladder of life. With each level, you gain new perspective, expanded views, deeper appreciation, and a more profound love of God, yourself, others, and life in general. Spiritually, when you grow from one rung to the next and desire to grow even more, you are enveloped by the Infinite Source. Yet, if you think that all you have learned or are able to learn at this moment is all that you need, you will receive only the surface layer and travel no further into the depths of the mysteries of that knowledge. When you are self-motivated, each thing you attain becomes the doorway to newer and more glorious insights. You are the soil in which God plants the seed, and the caretaker of the crop that is harvested.

It is not always easy to keep yourself motivated and positive toward growth. Motivation requires all the insights you have been given along the path of Strength. It takes focusing on your dreams, visions, and desires for holiness and making them happen. It takes perseverance and persistence, even when you may not have the enthusiasm you'd normally welcome. It takes courage not to give in or give up, and self-discipline to make your life count for something in measure and volume, beyond yourself. It takes a sincere desire for freedom to be yourself. The more you empower others to empower you and the more you praise God in all you see, the more quickly your heart will open to the fervor and joy of living in union with God.

As you act with valor and become self-motivated, you affect not only your life, but the lives of all whom you touch and those who are yet to be. Now is not the time to slouch. If you need to, take time to rest, and go silent, first. Then, muster up your strength to move forward toward your goals and upward toward your ordained destiny. There is work yet to do, tasks yet to fulfill, paths yet to travel, joys yet to celebrate, and ecstasies yet to absorb in the glorious splendor of the spiritual lifestyle. •



Heart Seed

Woman Gathering
v6n1 p74

# Book Reviews

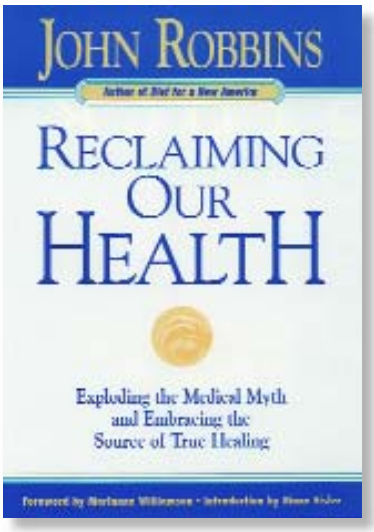
BARBARA NEIGHBORS DEAL

Transformation can happen on many levels—body, emotions, mind, and spirit. These book reviews examine two very different approaches to transformation in the area of health care, healing, and making responsible choices for one's health. Both decry the current state of the caregiver/patient relationship in this country, and both offer strategies for improvement, recognizing that the source of true healing and health lies within each of us.

Herbert Benson, a medical doctor solidly within the allopathic (Western conventional) medicine worldview, suggests that beyond judicious use of pharmaceuticals and medical procedures/surgery, the patient can activate the "Relaxation Response" and employ faith and belief to bring healing and maintain health.

John Robbins stands outside the medical community and calls into question many of the treatments we take for granted—ike radiation and chemotherapy for most forms of cancer that may or may not extend life, but do so at great cost, both in dollars and in suffering.

Both authors call for a new kind of caregiver/patient bonding, in which the ticking clock and insurance reimbursement issues play a lesser role, while compassion, listening, and partnership in the journey toward wellness come to the fore.




***Reclaiming Our Health; Exploding the Medical Myth and Embracing the Source of True Healing. By John Robbins. Published by HJ Kramer, 1996. 416 pages. Hardbound. $24.00***

John Robbins, heir to the Baskin-Robbins fortune, turned away from a life of wealth and corporate power to call America to better dietary choices, right relationship with the environment, and a stance of compassion toward the world. His first book, *Diet For A New America*, became an international bestseller; the health of the people of this country would be well served if *Reclaiming Our Health* does the same.

"Hospital brochures don't usually mention this, but the number of Americans who die each year from infections they picked up in a hospital is greater than the number who died in either the Korean War or the Vietnam War, and more than four times the number killed in automobile accidents each year." With such startling statistics, Robbins takes on the medical establishment, asking questions like why our per capita spending on health care is the highest in the world, yet 24 countries have lower infant mortality rates than the United States. The book is packed with meticulously researched statistics, woven into a narrative that the AMA will likely blast, but many physicians (those who see themselves as partners in the healing process) and patients will welcome. He sounds a clear call to consumers of medical care to wake up from what he

describes as the medical myth, and reclaim responsibility for our own choices in maintaining wellness and health care. "Like most people in our society, I grew up believing in the medical myth. I grew up believing that health comes from the doctor, the drug store, and the hospital. I never suspected that illness might be a messenger, or that our experience of our bodies, whether well or ill, could provide us with self-understanding… I never imagined that the source of true healing lay within each of us…"

Buying into the myth has led to a focus on medical intervention instead of prevention. Such intervention comes, Robbins contends, from a health care system that is patriarchal, with doctors as dominators who must be obeyed. "The medical establishment will only get off its pedestal when we get off our knees." A cooperative partnership between health care provider and patient is needed, and the implications are far greater than just in medicine: "The same forces and tensions that are at work in our medical system are active in every aspect of society, and in each of our individual lives. Wherever they appear, the dominator and partnership tendencies bespeak an ancient and ongoing dialogue between fear and love."

The first two sections of the book focus on women's health care—pregnancy, childbirth, "intervention" in menstrual cycles, PMS, reproductive difficulties, and menopause. Robbins traces the evolution of health care from the Middle Ages, when women held the secrets of healing, herbs, and as midwives brought new life into the world. The term "witch hunt" is something of a cliche today; Robbins brings to life the horror that actually occurred over a 300-year period in Europe, when "more than one million midwives and healers were executed for the crime of helping other women." A continuum of persecution stretches to our time, when midwives and alternative health practitioners are prosecuted, and at times terrorized, forced to leave "doctoring" to the predominantly male medical monopoly.

> I highly recommend "Reclaiming Our Health." It's a well researched exposé on how the AMA has successfully suppressed other forms of medicine that they view as competition.
> —Rick NurrieStearns

The American way of hospital birthing is critically examined—a natural function treated as a high-tech medical intervention, "requiring" fetal monitors, medication, and a Cesarean in almost one out of four births. Alternatives are explored, including the use of midwives and attended home births.

Robbins also examines children's health care, questioning the rush to Ritalin (about 5% of American children are on this drug), exploring the question of vaccinations, and suggesting "hugs, not drugs."

In several challenging chapters, current modalities of cancer treatment are examined, as are the implications of waging a "war on cancer" instead of promoting the body's natural inclination to heal itself. On radiation: "…with the few exceptions I noted earlier, there is no proven benefit to survival, and the treatment often causes exhaustion, weakness, and nausea." On chemotherapy: "The inescapable fact that researchers could never manage to circumvent was that the amount of chemotherapy necessary to kill every last cancer cell in a human body was almost invariably lethal to the body itself." Contrasting cancer care in other countries with our own, Robbins explores alternatives to current treatments.

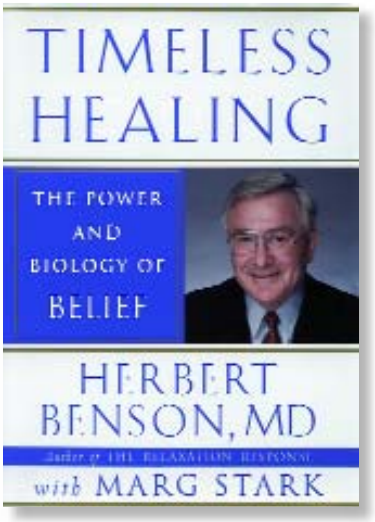
The final section of *Reclaiming Our Health* urges a partnership between physician and patient, and an integration of what works in orthodox and alternative medicine. An example of such integration might be the use of acupuncture as anesthetic in cancer surgery. The last paragraph distills the essence of the book: "It would be a wonderful medical system that reminded us that we each carry a piece of a great and sacred dream inside us. But in the meantime, it is always true that by caring for ourselves and others, we do the essential work of our time: we enhance our connection to all of life,

and our ability to serve all of life. By cherishing ourselves and others, we help to fulfill one of the human spirit's most ancient and beautiful prayers. We help awaken our world from the grip of fear into the celebration of love. May all be fed. May all be healed. May all be loved."

Frequent use of bold type, and unusually descriptive chapter subheadings make the book's nuggets of information much easier to mine. The end matter includes a comprehensive resource guide that directs the reader to information and assistance with alternative health care approaches, diet and lifestyles that support health, consumer advocacy, and resources for those who need conventional medical care. Extensive notes and index make this a very practical handbook for anyone who wants to take responsibility for his or her wellness.

***Timeless Healing The Power and Biology of Belief. By Herbert Benson, M.D., with Marg Stark. Scribner, 1996. 350 pages. Hardbound.***

Dr. Herbert Benson is best known for his pioneering work on the Relaxation Response, in which patients are taught to calm the body by meditation on a word or phrase, "…when the mind quiets down, the body follows suit." In *Timeless Healing*, the Harvard Medical School Associate Professor of Medicine contends that we are "wired for God,", and explores the mind/body interface once again. Benson says he "…became impressed with the human trait to turn to beliefs and faith in times of illness and need, and so I spent more than thirty years developing the findings I present in this book. Practicing medicine and conducting medical research, I've learned that invoking




beliefs is not only emotionally and spiritually soothing but vitally important to physical health."

Benson pictures health and well-being as a three-legged stool, the legs being pharmaceuticals, surgery and procedures, and self-care. While still very much a part of the allopathic medical tradition, Dr. Benson also sees the need for self-care, and for a new relationship of trust and caring between doctor and patient.

The heart of this work is the concept of "remembered wellness," long identified by conventional medicine as the placebo effect, which Benson describes as having three components—belief and expectancy on the part of the patient, on the part of the caregiver, and the belief and expectancies generated by a relationship between the patient and the caregiver. Hoping to rescue the benefits of the placebo effect from its negative implications, Benson's work points to the power of harnessing one's beliefs to bring healing to the body: "…I learned that our systems are nourished or starved according to our expectations. When mobilized for our benefit, this is a magnificent physiologic endowment."

Chapters explore the nature of belief, current mind/brain research, and the role of faith in healing. In a particularly compelling chapter, Benson describes contemporary medicine's spiritual crisis, calling into question the "god of science" and the peculiarly American stance that nature must be conquered and that illness is a war to be won. He acknowledges, "Too often, I'm afraid, an all-knowing attitude is cultivated in physicians. We doctors are not encouraged to appreciate invisible or somewhat intangible aspects of healing, nor are we well prepared to teach patients to care for themselves… by and large, the journey to physician-hood is still a perpetual pop quiz. In a race to provide answers quickly and assuredly, these doctors come to value talking over listening, interrupting over quietude, speed over patience, and action over waiting."

Benson includes an index of audio and video resources to help one learn the relaxation response. The extensive list of references will give readers access to more detailed information on many of the issues he discusses.

Contending that *what* one believes, or believes in, is less important than *that* one believes ("Thy faith has made thee well"), Benson uses many case histories to show the power of belief in the healing process. The last chapter contains what he calls common-sense steps that one can use to live more healthfully. He calls for an overhaul of Western medicine and science to include an awareness of the power of the mind to bring healing to the body. While this is old news to many who have explored meditation, affirmations, and positive thinking, it is a veritable breath of fresh air coming from one within the medical establishment.•

*Continued from page 9*

function of religion.

The term *spiritual* must be seen and used analogously to the term *education*, both of which deal with the evolution of our consciousness. Kindergarten is an early stage of education but would never be used as equivalent to or synonymously with it. Similarly, religion can be used to describe an early, childish stage of the spiritual. Religions tend to keep people in the kindergarten stage of our spiritual evolution, which requires that we go on or transcend to Higher Consciousness, the analog here of higher education. As with higher education, our spiritual evolution requires going through and far beyond, not just continuing, the kindergarten of religion.

Life continually presents us with discontinuities that are the opportunities to go beyond the facile, simplistic, one-size-fits-all reactions of our religious enculturation. This going beyond is much more than rebelling or denying religion. Higher education does not deny kindergarten or any of the earlier stages. The same is true of the spiritual which simply *subsumes* earlier stages and goes beyond them to seek, act on, and explore the discontinuities that signal us to transcend these earlier stages. Such discontinuities take a variety of forms. On the individual level, it may be the loss of a job or relationship, discovering the limits of an idea or of a path taken, or an ineffable glimpse of the spiritual. On a more macro or societal level, discontinuities may take the form of the discoveries of Copernicus, Galileo, Einstein, or Gödel, or of Gautama or Jesus. Note that at both levels, discontinuities are perceived as threats to the established order by most, rather than as opportunities for true growth. At the individual level, what is required at these moments is the most radical openness and willingness to break with the comfortable, the predictable and the controllable, of our everyday lives and minds. This is to embark on the journey to Higher Consciousness through personal transformation.•

## *Interview*

*Continued from page 32*

capacity to hold both in consciousness. It is a paradox, holding the opposites, and yet to live with both is to live a very meaningful life. My observation is that when we are ready to go, and many life threatening illnesses provide a preparation time to go inside and to come to some deep understanding about who we are, that however much we have struggled, when we approach death and there is a sense that we are now ready to go, a sense of serenity and peace is usually present at the moment that we do go.

***PT: Fear subsides.***

JSB: I think that soul makes the transition out of the body when we die, and that is a major moment. My realization of the soul being in the body and going on after the body is no longer was the great lesson of being present when my father's soul left his body. I saw his face light up with joy at that moment, then saw an instant later the body that he was no longer in was worn and discarded; clothes no longer needed to be worn. That experience helped me profoundly know that we are spiritual beings, who for a time come into the material body, go through a life that has potential for suffering and potential for joy. We make choices as to how we respond to the unchosen circumstances that are part of all of our lives. There is something soul shaping about experiencing and reacting to what happens to us in life. That is what the journey is about.•

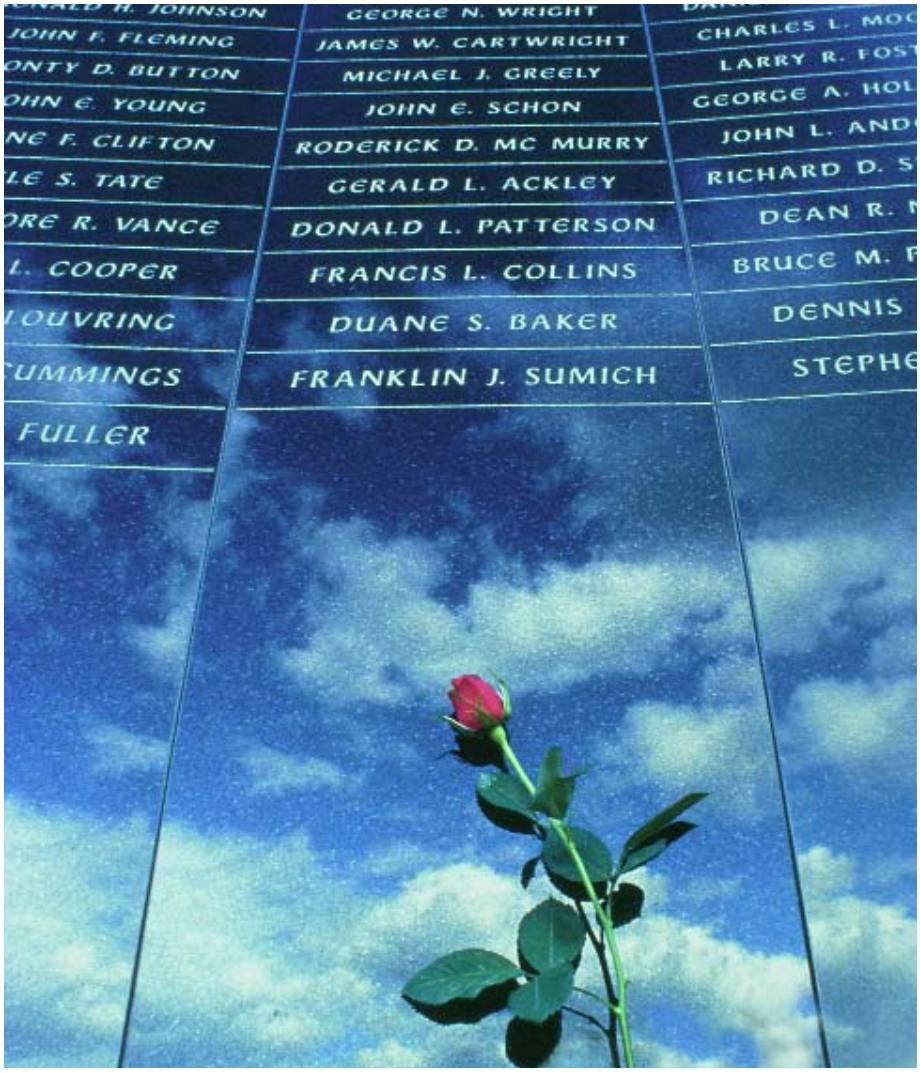
## *Anger*

*Continued from page 41*

our pain. We have to test our anger to see if these feelings are justified. Submitting our anger to this kind of scrutiny, we may find that we have misjudged another's motives or overreacted to an event. Our commitment to being angry may tempt us to nurse our indignation and refuse to acknowledge our mistake.

The reflection forgiveness requires often shows us ways we have contributed to the problem. In few situations is one person solely to blame. Most interactions are conjoint, with each of us part of the painful pattern that develops. But sometimes, casting ourselves as the innocent victim seems safer than risking the self-knowledge that forgiveness demands.

Sometimes, it seems we cannot talk enough or explain enough or regret enough to move beyond anger. The harm has been too heavy, the distance between us now seems too broad to be bridged. These times teach us that forgiveness is more than personal achievement. We learn again its power often comes as gift—a grace that, spent by our anger, we must await in hope.•




# Entering the Twenty-First Century

THICH NHAT HANH

We need to find a way to make use of our suffering, for our good and for the good of others. There has been so much suffering in the twentieth century: two world wars, concentration camps in Europe, the killing fields of Cambodia, refugees from Vietnam, Central America, and elsewhere fleeing their countries with no place to land. We need to use the suffering of the twentieth century as compost, so that together we can create flowers for the twenty-first century.

When we see photographs and programs about the atrocities of the Nazis, the gas chambers and the camps, we feel afraid. We may say, "I didn't do it; they did it." But if we had been there, we may have done the same thing, or we may have been too cowardly to stop it, as was the case for so many. We have to put all these things into our compost pile to fertilize the ground. In Germany today, the young people have a kind of complex that they are somehow responsible for the suffering. It is important that these young people and the generation responsible for the war begin anew, and together create a path of mindfulness so that our children in the next century can avoid repeating the same mistakes. The flower of tolerance to see and appreciate cultural diversity is one flower we can cultivate for the children of the twenty-first century. Another flower is the truth of suffering—there has been so much unnecessary suffering in our century. If we are willing to work together and learn together, we can all benefit from the mistakes of our time, and, seeing with the eyes of compassion and understanding, we can offer the next century a beautiful garden and a clear path.•

JOHN MCANULTY