

# Lotus

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1 2

## LIVING AS A HERO

*Being a hero is about being committed to the journey of life in the highest possible sense.*

BY LORNA CATFORD AND MICHAEL RAY

1 7

## EMPOWERING YOUR LIFE WITH CHOICES

*When we live each day as if it's our first, our lives are transformed.*

BY BRYAN ROBINSON

2 1

## EXPERIENCING ABUNDANCE

*We cannot measure abundance by what we accumulate. Abundance is an experience of the heart  
a wind that blows through us like a flute.*

BY WAYNE MULLER

2 6

## OH SOMALIA, WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO YOU?

*Death from starvation awaits the Somalians.*

BY SALLY FRIEDMAN

2 8

## DAYDREAMING

*Daydreaming makes it possible for us to keep the important threads of our lives in view even while  
we are not actively occupied with them.*

BY ERIC KLINGER

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## TRANSCENDING WHO WE ARE WHAT WE DO

*The urge to transcend is expressed as a yearning to transform our routine, habitual responses to ones  
that come from the depths of our spirit.*

BY JOHN JAMES AND MURIAL JAMES

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## TOUCHING NATURE

*A photographic exhibit inspired by dreams.*

BY DAVE DEVRIES

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**LOOK DEEPLY WITHIN**

*By looking deeply into ourselves, we develop mindfulness.*

THICH NHAT HANH

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**TV SOCIETY'S TOXIC MEDIUM**

*Institutions use television to train human beings in what to think, what to feel, and how to be in the modern world.*

BY JERRY MANDER

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**RESOLVING CONFLICT BY COCREATING**

*Creative problem solving through cooperation.*

BY THOMAS CRUM

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**LOVING ME, LOVING YOU**

*An Interview with Brenda Schaeffer, on loving relationships.*

INTERVIEWED BY MARY NURRIESTEARN

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# Lotus

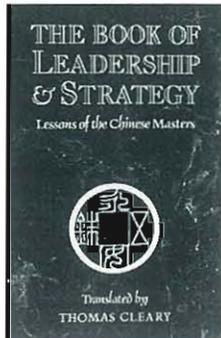
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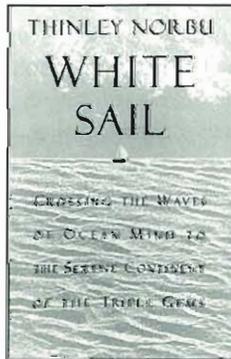
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We chose the name *Lotus* because it is one of the most sacred symbols from antiquity. The seeds of the lotus contain, even before they germinate perfectly formed leaves, the miniature shapes of what one day as mature plants they will become. This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

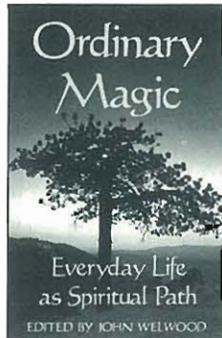
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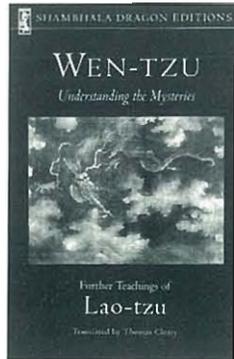
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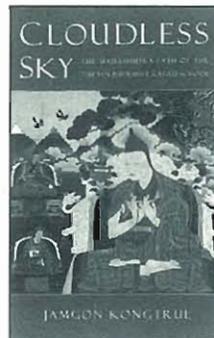
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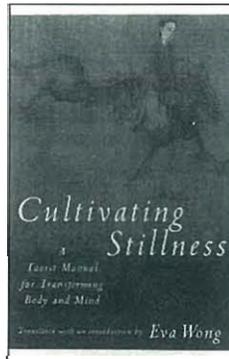
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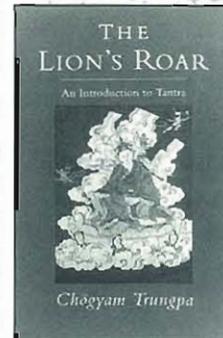
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## From the Editor...

"LET US BEGIN." These words are familiar and powerful for me. They remind me that every moment is an opportunity to begin anew; to make changes, to know ourselves more fully, and to live with compassion and intention. There is no better time for beginning than the present. One of our readers said it so well in a letter to the editor. She read an article in *Lotus* "Life is a Journey, Struck is a Detour" over a weekend and quit her "dead end" job to enroll in college the following Monday.

In my work as a therapist, I watch people accept their self-worth, improve their relationships, and become more responsible. Some clients say they are on a spiritual path. Others want to change the script of their life. Some simply want their lives to be better. Whenever people respond to the innate urge to evolve, I am reminded of the symbolism of the lotus flower.

The lotus is a flower with deep symbolic meaning. The plant was held sacred from ancient times by the Hindus, Egyptians, and Buddhists. It was revered in China and Japan and was adopted as a Christian emblem by the Greek and Latin Churches. Christians later replaced it with the water lily.

The lotus plant grows up through the water, has its root in the mud and spreads its flower in the air above. The root embedded in the mud represents our physical being, the stalk passing up through the water typifies our urge to become, and the flower floating on the water and opening to the sky signifies our spiritual being.

As a sacred symbol, the lotus seeds are a reminder of the sacred core within us. The lotus seeds are like the human essence. They contain, even before they germinate, perfectly formed leaves, the miniature shapes of what one day as mature plants they will become. This is a reminder of our own vast potential to develop into whole human beings.

Our goal with *Lotus* Journal is to support and encourage personal and spiritual transformation. Most of us reach adulthood as incomplete persons, many are also wounded. It is our task (if we choose to grow) to overcome our past and free ourselves from our family's and society's conditioning so that we can become autonomous and healthy.

Lotus links spiritual and personal growth as a healthy personality and spiritual nature are interdependent in their evolution. A healthy personality requires a strong connection with its inner spiritual essence before it can manifest its deepest self. For us to be whole, to truly live, is to have a responsible, conscious personality capable of manifesting our deepest spiritual nature.

Let us strive to be the grand men and women we were meant to be.

Let us begin. Now.

*Mary NurrieStearns*  
Mary NurrieStearns  
Editor

We appreciate your encouraging notes, telephone calls and letters. We value open dialogue with our readers and welcome your ideas, reactions and suggestions.

# Letters



The following are some letters from our readers. Telling stories of transformation empowers and reading them inspires. Thank you for sharing with us.

## THOUGHTS ON THE SHADOW

When I mentioned to my sister—my identical twin sister—that I was thinking about writing a letter to *Lotus*, a letter in which I would work hard to search out deep feelings and express them, she said to me, “Oh, you can do that *easily*; we were always good at writing.”

I snarled at her in response. She had *gigged* my shadow.

Thoughts on the shadow have been swirling around in my mind since I read the article, “Our Shadow Side,” in the summer issue of *Lotus*. Once more, my on-and-off intrigue with the concept was revived. And once more, I realize how difficult it is just to define the concept—at least for me at this point in my life.

To begin with, there is the confusion about identifying and separating what is in my shadow and what is in my sister’s. Until we were grown, my sister and I (who looked very much alike) shared the same shadow. We split personality traits but we concurred on the shadow. In retrospect, I realize it wasn’t very satisfactory for either. As we were leaving our teenage years and finishing college, I became very itchy about absolving this relationship. I felt stifled and longed to grow ... into what I didn’t know. Although my sister also wanted out, her impetus was not as strong because she seems to need to be part of a pair.

Off we went, each on her own, evolving a personality, value system, philosophy; and at middle age, when we pulled these traits out for inspection, we found that they were pretty much the opposite. My sister, however, still likes to see us as being alike. On the other hand, I see us as being entirely different. Hence the shadow confusion.

For example, in my desire to put aside the skinny, awkward appearance we had shared in youth, I began to study modern dance, a difficult but fascinating hobby which I enjoy to this day. In the process, over the years, I carved a well proportioned body, developed a strong sense of rhythm and began to enjoy a self confidence I hadn’t known. Into the shadow space

went a whole bag of physical awkwardness and embarrassments.

Spurred on by my enthusiasm, my sister enrolled in dance classes. But something was always wrong. At first there were bad teachers. Often she did not have time. Then, she began to wound herself. Pulled tendons, strained muscles, great fatigues would result. When she broke both wrists from a fall in aerobics class, we both realized the truth. I think my sister’s physical shadow contains exhibitionistic women who wear too tight clothes and for no good reason jump up and start to dance when they hear music. Just recently, she said to me, “I think women should dress to disguise their figure faults.” I growled, “I think they should dress to enhance their good points.”

When our shadows creep out and stare bald-facedly at one another, I do believe we experience a mutual enlightenment. For we have conveniently projected our discarded qualities upon each other. In times of distress, as I ask myself, “How can she be that way?” I have only to realize “that way” is a quality in my own shadow. The same is naturally true with her, and upon occasion when we have decided to rage at one another, it is a regular shadow boxing match.

As I mull over this unusual state of affairs, my two shadows, my own and my sister, it amuses and intrigues me. I do hope the next time I confide to her about a special project planned and she reassures me, “We were always good at that,” I have the presence to chuckle a little—instead of snort.—*Florence Eubanks, Tablequah, Oklahoma*

## COMMENT ON LIFE BEYOND THERAPY

Let me thank and congratulate you on creating an inspiring and timely journal. *Lotus* is an oasis in the vast media desert of propaganda and pop-psychology.

I would like to express my reaction to statements made by Anne Wilson Schaefer in the interview entitled “Life Beyond Therapy, Living Your Process.” Ms. Schaefer calls some therapeutic techniques such as “getting feelings out,” dream interpretation and breathing exercises “disrespectful” and “rape.”

Since each person’s process is unique, it seems ironic that Ms. Schaefer can dismiss any helpful technique so vehemently.

Speaking from my own experience and “living my

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## *Letters*

process," each of the techniques that Ms. Schaefer mentions has been extremely healing and empowering. Each technique, breathwork, dreamwork, and physicalization of emotion, along with the sensitive guidance of therapists, has given me different media through which to access and heal in my process.

When I began the healing journey I was at a loss. I had no vocabulary of feelings. A lifetime of shutting down and numbing out left my feeling, senses so atrophied that it took the very techniques Ms. Schaefer calls "rape" to get my process moving. The breathwork allowed me to quiet myself physically to let the feelings and suppressed memories surface. I credit concentrated breathwork as the most empowering and liberating tool I have found.

Tools. The techniques are tools. An artist cannot sit and stare quietly at a canvas or block of stone and call it creative process. And since we become our own brilliant creations, any tool that can lead to inspiration and healing is valid. The trick is, however, to see the tools as tools, the guides as guides. The paint is not the painting, but there is no masterpiece without the medium.

I feel that Ms. Schaefer's broad and violent dismissal of these techniques is disrespectful to all of us whose processes have been accessed and enhanced through them.—*Diane M. Santarella, Edison, New Jersey*

### *I QUIT MY JOB*

I love your magazine. You know the Zen saying "When the student is ready, the teacher appears." When I read Sidney Simon's article on "Getting Unstuck - The Ten Reasons We Fear To Change," it hit me. I'd been wanting to quit a "dead-end" job and go back to school full-time. (I am fortunate I am not a single parent and had that option.) The following Monday, I quit my job. I am going to school full-time in the psychology field and have never been happier. And every time the checkbook balance doesn't look too good, I reread the article and know I did the right thing.—*Pat Halleck, Alpena, Michigan*

### *DISHHEARTENED*

I am very pleased with *Lotus*. Every issue has articles which address my needs and interests and which open me to new avenues of exploration.

I am writing, however, because I would be interested to know if you have considered including any articles on alternative education. As an elementary teacher, I am very disheartened because I have found an educational system which ignores the inner needs of children. In fact, I'd even go so far as to say that the educational system subverts those needs. In addition, most of what is labeled as reform is really more of the same old stuff.

I'm wondering if you've come across anything concerning educational change which is fresh and spirited and which has as its base the individual empowerment of the child. If so, I'd be very excited to read it. In the meantime, my compliments. —Carol A Kather, Cheektowaga, New York

**A LIFE RAFT IN A LONELY SEA**

The two issues I've received were and are like a life raft in a lonely sea. After years of abuse, phobias, isolation, depression, etc.; two and one half years ago I started to get my life together at age 41. As I started the process of healing, I turned to activities like gardening, walking my dog, and pruning trees. I turned to authors like John Lee, Robert Bly, Anne Wilson Schaefer, James Hillman,

Francis Vaughn, and David Whyte.

*Lotus*, you seem to have many of these. I will be looking forward to each issue of *Lotus*. Thanks for putting together so many of the things (articles, authors, readership) that I need.

Thanks! For such a great magazine and all the efforts you make to put it together! —O. Madlock, Buckner, Arkansas

**TO HARD TO READ**

I am a recent subscriber to your recently started "Lotus" magazine, and I must say it is fantastic!! I am thrilled that such a wonderful magazine is born. I commend you and your staff for a great job in helping to transform people's lives.

There is only one comment that I have wanted to make since pick-

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ing up the first copy and just have not had the time to do. I am 42 years old and do not yet require bi-focals for reading, but do wear contacts for correction. As I am sitting up in bed with my reading lamp I can't help but wonder why the type print is so small and fine that reading it is more of an extra effort than it should be. I also enjoy photo-copying and sharing special articles with my friends, and even the copies make it so obvious that there is much more "white" contributed to the page than typeface, and the print is so fine. It sure would be easier reading if the typeface were just a little larger or bolder. I am almost distracted by the wide white margins and the wide white spaces between the type lines.

I would appreciate your consideration of experimenting with larger prints, because I want to enjoy your magazine until I am almost blind and someone will have to read it to me.

Congratulations on a great effort and project.—  
*Karen S Brady, Houston, Texas*

EDITORS NOTE: *Thank you for your suggestion. With this issue we have increased the size of the type.*

#### F L O W E R   A N D   S Y M B O L

I love your magazine and just read Vol 1, No.3. It would be helpful for me as a subscriber to know the month and year rather than the way it is identified currently. I'm sure there must be a reason for this but it is "confusing" to me when some magazines use that format.

In your letters to the editor in this issue, a woman said she was impressed with why you called the Journal *Lotus*—so I looked for anything throughout the magazine to see if that was part of each issue's agenda. When I couldn't find it, I wrote to a friend who had recommended this magazine and she couldn't find it even in issue #1—then her friend who subscribes said she thought that was in the pre-publication advertising but she threw it away.

So, could you either rerun that in a future issue, or would it be possible to send me a copy of the story of the plant based on why you call this Journal *Lotus*? I think it's a great name and am familiar with the lotus as a flower and symbol of enlightenment. I would appreciate any further insights.—*Sharon Warren, Rio Verde, Arizona*

EDITOR'S NOTE: *Your friend was right. In the charter subscription advertisement we discussed our choice of Lotus as the Journal name. Please refer to the "Letter From the Editor" in this issue where we have reprinted this discussion. Lotus is printed 4 times yearly (September, December, March, and June).*

# Lotus

Journal For Personal Transformation



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BE MINDFUL

I began reviewing my first copy of *Lotus* this week and was pleased to see the resurgence of a shared perspective that focuses on peace, mindfulness, and compassion. It is in that vein that I also encourage the editors to be mindful of the misuse of the generic "he" throughout Vol. 1, Number 4, (see "The Journey For Meaning"; "Love and Forgiveness"; and "Ecstasy").

Judging from the tenor of those articles the authors in no way meant to be exclusive, however, the failure to adapt their writing to reflect inclusion ("he or she", or the arbitrary assignment of he and she throughout the article) would go far to exemplify the spirit of compassion and higher consciousness.—*Nancy Morgan, Walnut Creek, California*

EDITORS NOTE: *This is a question that has come up in every issue for us. Do we stick with so-called proper English using "he," "him," or "she," "her," or use "they," "them," "he/she." We have felt in the past that the tone of the articles we publish are clearly not biased. What do you think?*

FEEL LIFTED UP

Thank you for such a wonderful publication. Your magazine was suggested by a friend and I am extremely grateful that I chose to subscribe. All of the articles are so helpful and really seem to speak to my

journey. When your magazine arrives I always feel lifted up knowing that I have another opportunity to internalize readings that will add to my process, enlightenment, and unfoldment.

Thank you for a truly great gift and "may the force be with you."—*Dan Semrad, Lincoln, Nebraska*

I HAVE BEEN STARVING

Thank you for making *Lotus* possible! I have been starving and not realized how much until I read many of the great articles in your magazine.

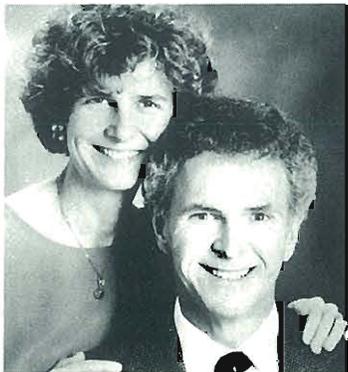
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*Lotus* has brought me so much enlightenment and increased awareness in my relations with others and myself. Thank you.—*Cherrill C Ellis, Fairbanks, Alaska*

LIGHT ON ISSUES

The purpose of this card is twofold. First, I must tell you how much I enjoy your publication. Its articles have shed much light on issues I deal with in my



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A BANTAM HARDCOVER 

**CONSCIOUS  
LOVING  
THE JOURNEY TO  
CO-COMMITMENT**

A WAY TO BE  
FULLY TOGETHER WITHOUT  
GIVING UP YOURSELF

*Gay Hendricks, Ph.D. &  
Kathlyn Hendricks, Ph.D.*  
Foreword by John Bradshaw

Letters

life and have helped to clarify others which I have often struggled with.

I enjoy Lotus so much I want to share it with a friend. Which brings us to my second purpose. Please send me information on giving a subscription to someone as a gift. I'm sure there was a card in the magazine but I must have thrown it away.—Lois J. Clifton, Anchorage, Alaska

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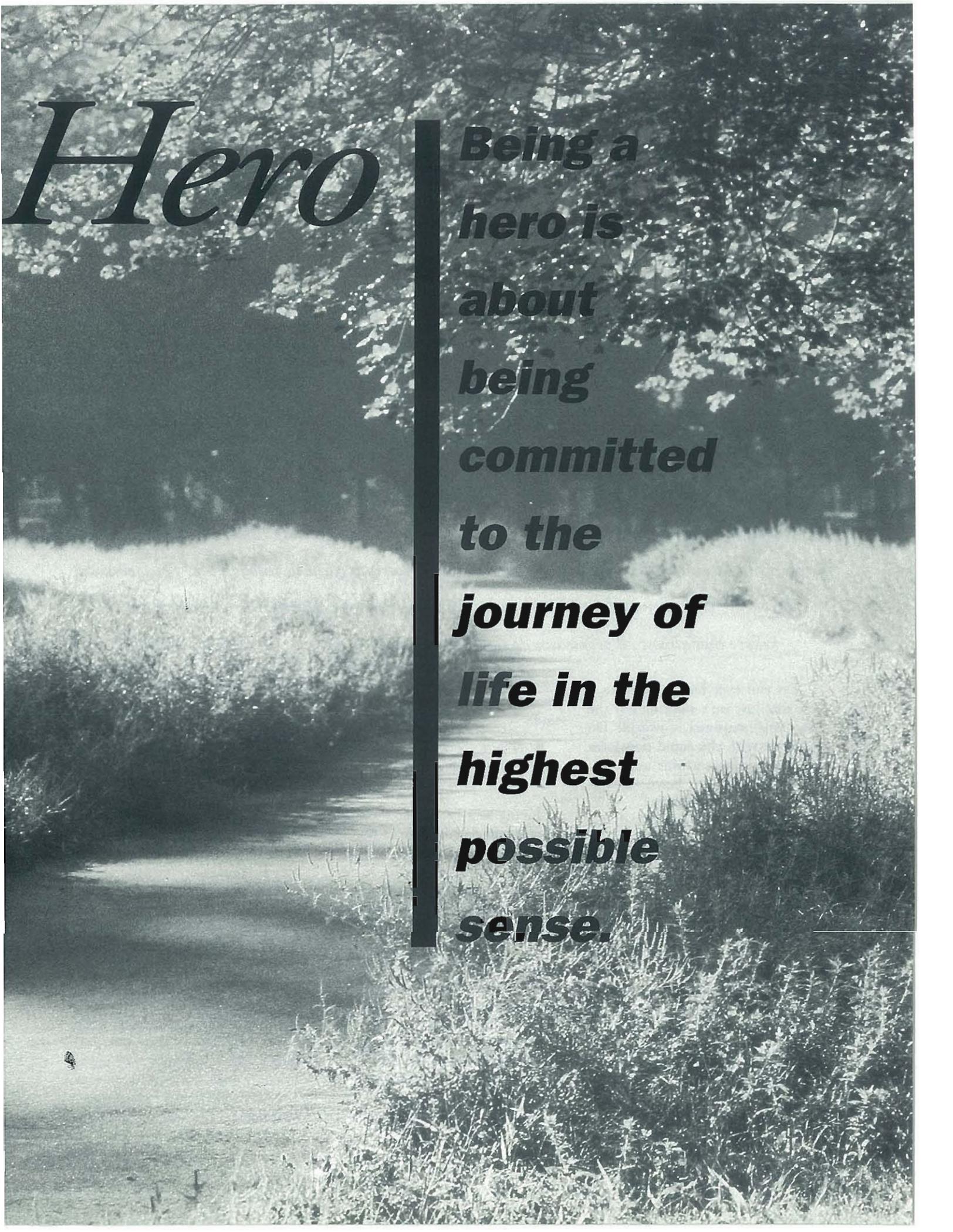
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*Living as a*





*Hero*

**Being a  
hero is  
about  
being  
committed  
to the  
journey of  
life in the  
highest  
possible  
sense.**

L O R N A C A T F O R D A N D M I C H A E L R A Y

Lorna Catford, Ph. D., teaches at Stanford University's Graduate School of Business and is a Professor of Psychology at California State University at Sonoma. Lorna is a licensed therapist in private practice, specializing in using the hero's journey as a framework for creative problem-solving. She lives in Forestville, California. Michael Ray, Ph. D., is the first John G. McCoy-Banc One Corporation Professor of Creativity and Innovation and of Marketing at Stanford University. He lives in Santa Cruz, California.



Does your life seem to be successful and yet sometimes you have a secret feeling that it could be more deeply fulfilling? Do you ever yearn for a greater sense of flow or harmony or have a hunch that there's more to journeying from birth to death on this planet than what you have yet experienced?

achieve it. You know that life is more than reaching a particular goal; it is a journey to the tops of mountains, down into seemingly bottomless pits, and up again.

All of us are on a journey, charting a direction for our life, whether we are aware of this or not. By being conscious about your path rather than a specific destination or goal, you can live

Houston, and of others has shown how the pattern of the hero's journey as demonstrated in myths, fairy tales, and folk stories provides an archetypal map for transcending the barriers we find on our path. Their work acknowledges that humans are whole and complex beings, existing simultaneously in the external world of everyday responsibilities and also

*We use the term hero to refer to a man or woman who as defined in Webster's dictionary is a "central personage taking an admirable part in any remarkable action or event." As we see it, the "remarkable action" is simply the ability to call on our creative spirit to guide us through life. Thus, everyday heroes are those men and women who have found and are manifesting their creative spirit. We believe that almost all people can do this if they open their eyes and hearts to the possibility.*

Do you ever feel trapped in a life that just isn't working out the way you imagined it would? Do you ever wish you could transform your daily frustrations and conflicts into glorious heroic adventures with happy endings?

Or is your life going well for you, except in one specific area? Perhaps you ache inside for a meaningful relationship or your work responsibilities threaten to destroy your personal life or you haven't found a pursuit of true importance that makes your life feel worthwhile.

If you can identify with any of these very normal human situations, then you know the feeling that Peggy Lee once sang about, "Is that all there is?" You know that the glitter of a long-sought objective can tarnish once you

every day with greater joy, intuition, will, strength, and compassion.

W H A T I T M E A N S  
T O L I V E A S A  
H E R O

Living as a hero is not without its ups and downs. This is the nature of the path of the everyday hero. In fact, it is in order to deal with these vacillations that you need to be heroic. But how do you learn to do this?

The secret is in the journey itself. With the hero's attitude towards resolving challenges, you can use everything that happens to you in life as a lesson to move you more deeply into the flow of creativity and all of its benefits.

The pioneering work of poet Robert Bly, of mythologist Joseph Campbell, of psychologist Jean

(even if we don't always pay attention to it) in the subtle inner dimensions of the human psyche. Living a creative life can be likened to the journey of the mythic hero who might start out quite unheroic, but in the process of traveling down a road full of trials and having to attain new heights of sensitivity, skill, or wisdom becomes transformed.

The hero's journey, as we will be using it here, refers to our inner transformation and the subsequent transformation of our outer lives when we learn to activate our hidden creative resources and connect with transcendent sources of support. As we become heroic in this sense we learn to view our challenges differently and they subsequently lose their hold over us. Bly, Campbell, and Houston each emphasize the point that since

*Concerning all acts of initiative and creation, there is one elemental truth—the ignorance of which kills countless ideas and splendid plans; that the moment one definitely commits oneself, the Providence moves, too. All sorts of things occur to help one that would never otherwise have occurred. —Goethe*

metaphor and story are the language by which we understand our psyche and its relation to our practical, daily experience, there is tremendous value in thinking in terms of the hero's journey as we deal with our own challenge of living a creative life.

The true hero meets challenges in a special way. Being heroic is being passionately committed to some course of action. If you look at the high points in your life, you'll see that many of them came from situations that initially seemed impossible or even terrifying. Consider for instance your first date, first job, first high-dive, or the first time you were able to stay up on a bike. You made a commitment to do them. The heroic nature of that commitment draws support.

Being a hero is about being committed to the journey of life in the highest possible sense. It is about trusting that we can find a path that will take us beyond what seem to be bottomless pits to the top of Mount Olympus, the realm of the mythical gods. It is about discovering our human divinity—that powerful, creative source that we each have within us—and living by it.

Being a hero is not the same thing as being in conflict and competition with others. Instead, the hero of whom we speak is a peaceful warrior, embodying both the so-called feminine qualities of sensitivity and nurturance on one hand and the masculine ones of assertiveness and strength on the other. The path of the everyday hero is, as one of our friends calls

it, the path of detached involvement. When you travel it, you certainly revel in the challenges of life and the joy of the process but you are not attached to the outcomes, not saddled with getting credit for them—even though you probably will get credit for more and more positive ones.

Having searched for and found his or her inner creativity, the hero can see it in others and therefore is the ultimate team player. Community in the truest sense of the word comes about with people who are on this hero's journey in life.

#### WHAT IT MEANS TO LIVE CREATIVELY

If you are like many people, you might shy away from the word *creative* when it is applied to yourself. In this society we seem to use that word only for people who are geniuses or who are involved in the arts. But what we are talking about is something you've already experienced many times in your life, even if you haven't experienced enough of it to feel it is a fundamental part of your journey. It is something everyday something quite *ordinary*. It is the creativity of real life and real living.

You've experienced creativity if you've ever looked into the face of a newborn baby—particularly if you've raised that child's parent. You've been creative when you've dealt successfully with a difficult client or found a perfect gift for someone you love. Creativity is what you experience when you hit a perfect golf or tennis shot—not

because of where the ball lands or whether you win but because of the feeling and experience of hitting the shot.

You are being creative when you are in what psychologists call *flow* and athletes call the *zone*—so absorbed in what you are doing that for the moment everything outside the process you are engaged in disappears: the surfer on the wave, the skier on the slope, the singer in the song.

Creativity is waking up in the morning and being excited about what is ahead of you that day. You are being creative when you are making a contribution, serving the world in ways that are important to you or when your work is something that you love so much that, even if you were being paid a great deal to do it, you would be secretly willing to pay for the privilege of doing it.

You've acted creatively in the past when you've made worries and fears disappear, when you've made appropriate decisions confidently, when you've been easily productive, when you've felt connection and interrelationship in communication with others, when your life has felt most meaningful and full of growth. These are the times when you have experienced the true rapture of life.

In sum, you are fully creative whenever you are operating from your soul, your self, or your inner essence—from the highest, most complete part of yourself, the part you are thinking of when you sense you have much more potential than you have shown the world. This aspect of you can and

does manifest infinite intuition, will, joy, strength, and compassion. Creativity is a gift that everyone receives at birth. We can show our gratitude for this gift by recognizing it and therefore increasing its power. Bringing out your own unique brand of creativity into your life and the world can be the most significant thing you'll ever do.

Right now in this age of high tech, our machines, businesses, service professions, and the quality of life itself are all made what they are by humans. If we don't like what we have made or feel we have much farther to go, we can only create a better life for ourselves and the rest of humanity by calling on our human resources to resolve these challenges. Like King Arthur's knights in their search for the Holy Grail, our journey is enlivened by the fact that the quest is never over and consists of endless adventures that can enrich us personally and deepen our understanding of life and ourselves. It is the only worthwhile path in today's world.

#### HOW GOES YOUR BATTLE?

Now that you've embarked on this journey, you must recognize the most essential aspect of both creativity and of life itself: challenge. Out of challenge come all the higher aspects of life. The fuel of creativity is a special sort of battle.

What are you battling?

*Whatever stands in the way of leading a rich and fulfilling life.*

Why are you battling?

*To be creative. To be your highest self.*

Where is the battlefield?

*Everywhere.*

When do battles occur?

*Every moment.*

How do you battle?

*The hero battles not with aggression*

## *The path of the everyday hero is the path of detached involvement.*

*and competition but with honor,  
courage, compassion, and grace.*

What weapons do you have?

*You have your inner essence with its qualities of intuition, will, joy, strength, and most importantly the wisdom of compassion, which affirms that you have this creative resource within you and allows you to see it in others.*

In the traditional mythic journey, the hero is aided by magic. What "magic" can you employ? Have faith in your creativity, suspend negative judgment, practice precise observation, and ask penetrating questions.

What treasures do you seek on this path? Knowledge of your life's purpose, nourishing relationships, stress-free living, personal and professional balance, and true prosperity in your journey. The five challenges in life are your quests for these five treasures.

PURPOSE: What activities give you a sense of meaning in your life?

LOVING RELATIONSHIPS: With whom do you have mutually supportive, satisfying relationships?

TIME AND STRESS: Do you have enough time to do what you want without being stressed out? What is your issue related to time and stress?

BALANCE: How content are you with the personal and professional

sides of your life? Would you change?

PROSPERITY: What makes you feel valuable? Why do you deserve prosperity?

Perhaps you're already seeing the five challenges in your life in a more heroic way than before. In the past, the battle to find one's purpose had to do with getting a job that paid well and had the approval of family, friends, and society. Now, people are looking for something different: work that is personally meaningful to *them*, no matter what others might say. As psychologist Jean Houston says in her seminars, the question is not, What is my work? (or job title). The question is, What is my Work? with capital W indicating a higher purpose in life.

Finding a satisfying relationship also used to be seen in terms of finding someone who meets the approval of family, friends, and society. But as a hero, your challenge is to recognize that love emanates from you, not just from other people. As meditation master Gurumayi Chidvilasananda has said, "There is enough love in the individual human heart to fill the universe." Finding and thriving in a relationship starts with seeing this love in yourself. Then you can experience that connection with others as a way to live a creative life.

The battle with time and stress used to be dealt with by learning time-management techniques. But now, even some of the most prominent proponents of those approaches acknowledge that they don't work in the long run. The new challenge is to live in the present moment in all you do. Instead of adding techniques, the battle is about stripping away worry, criticism, and the rattling of your mind so that the essence of your hero can come through.

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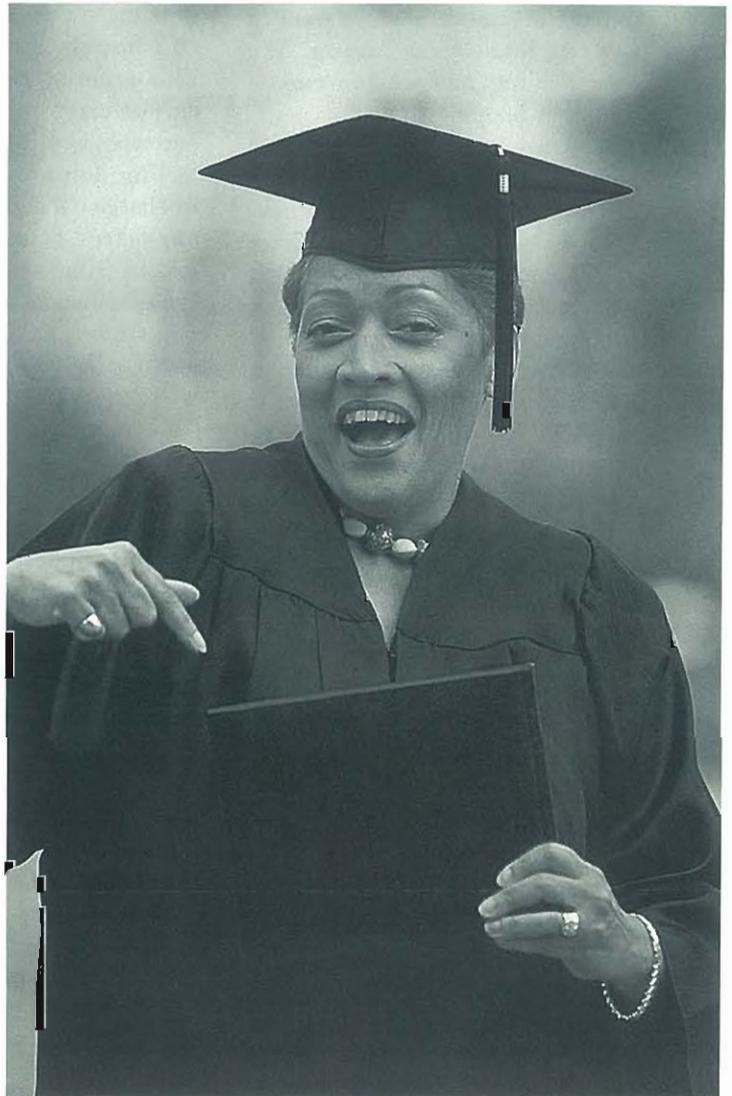
*Man does not simply exist, but always decides what his existence will be, what he will become in the next moment.*

—Viktor Frankl

# Empowering Your Life with Choices

During his three grim years of confinement at Auschwitz and other Nazi camps, Viktor Frankl lived through brutal treatment. He was separated from his family, deprived of food, stripped naked to be subjected to the harsh elements, and robbed of all human dignity and respect. Still, through all the suffering and degradation, he always saw choices for himself and made them each day. Starving and freezing to death, he chose to relive in his mind a more pleasant moment with his loving wife or to recreate the memory of a warm spring day in a meadow. He sought meaning in his personal tragedy, and his power of choice helped him survive the holocaust, giving him renewed satisfaction and purpose in life.

Frankl's experience is an inspiration to all of us. No matter how difficult things seem, we *always* have choices. We can always decide what we think, how we feel, and how we will act in a situation. The event does not make decisions for us. We either let it make our choices or make our own independent of it. As we increase our choices, our lives are enriched. This is the *Principle of Choice*.



*If somethings not working, do something about it. If that doesn't work, do something else. Persist with another course of action, until eventually you solve your problem. Eliminate sameness and welcome change in your life.*

Bryan E. Robinson, Ph.D., is a author, consultant and trainer in the recovery field and a professor at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. He is the author of "Soothing Moments: Daily Meditations For Fast-Track Living" and "Work Addiction: Hidden Legacies Of Adult Children," plus eight other books.



There is a well-known saying, "Misery is optional." There's no reason for us to be unhappy if we don't want to be. What's done is done. Problems and mistakes of the past can never fully be erased but we can choose how we want to live our lives in the present. We have options and we can choose misery or happiness.

Perhaps we never knew we had a choice before. Those of us who discover that we have chosen misery for the first part of our lives can choose happiness for the next half. It doesn't fall in our laps. It takes effort and self discipline. It takes a willingness to be open to new ways and a desire to grow. It takes hope and faith and some courage, too. But we always have options of how we experience life.

Blessings often come to us in disguise. With patience we can see pain, loss, and disappointment in their proper perspective. We can always find good in the bad when we look for it. Good and bad are all in the eye of the beholder. When we follow the Principles of Choice, we heal ourselves by changing the way we look at the world. We don't look through rose-colored glasses but we no longer see it as bleak and bewildering either. We have a better sense of balance between the two. We see more beauty than flaws, more hope than despair. We see

blessings and constructive outcomes, even in loss and disappointment.

We learn that it is we who can create a happy life, simply by the mental outlook we take. We know that on days when we are down and all hope seems to be gone, it is not the world but our mental attitude that needs changing. We know we cannot change the world, but we can change our view of it and thus erase the depressive and hopeless feelings. This grain of knowledge empowers us to change our whole existence from feeling helpless to being in charge. We can change our lenses to enthusiasm and fulfillment when our vision shows us dread and emptiness. Our lives are transformed with each new day as we change our lenses.

#### CRACKS IN THE PAVEMENT

When he first set foot into the foreign country, the tourist was awestruck by the beauty and cultural diversity. But after a week, he was fed up with what he saw. The uniqueness of the architecture was marred by the graffiti which he hadn't noticed before. The beauty of the towns and countryside soured as he began to pay attention to garbage in the river and cracks in the pavement.

Many times as an experience becomes familiar to us, we lose the fresh outlook we once had. Too few of us keep the enthusiasm we began our jobs with or the exhilaration we had when we started a family. Turning



dislikes into preferences and negativity into positiveness can literally transform our mental outlook.

If we could view our lives through the fresh eyes of a foreigner, would we see the drudgery of another day's work or the excitement of what we do? Would we zip through the day with our heads stuck in computers or newspapers or would we hold conversations with the fascinating people with whom we come into contact? Would we yell and scream at the ones we love the most or forgive and love them as they are without trying to change them?

When we live each day as if it's our first, our lives are transformed. We get a deeper appreciation for who we are and for what we have. We gain a stronger bond for co-workers and loved ones who per-

**We always have the power to choose how we will think, feel and behave no matter how hopeless our lives seem to be.**

*Choice. It's one of the greatest words ever created. Think about it. It's a wonderful resource and all of us have it available to us. It's up to each and every one of us to create the kind of life we want. The one thing no one can take away from us is the power of choice, no matter how hopeless our lives seem.*

haps we take for granted. Let's ask ourselves, "Do we look for cracks in the pavement or pay attention to where the road takes us?"

#### ACTING VERSUS REACTING

Many of us have spent a great deal of our lives being angry at

walks away. My past reactions have been to lash out at her, which only makes her angry at me and me angrier at her. On some days I would alter my approach to "get her." When she'd snatch the prescription, I'd clench it tightly to make it harder for her to take. That would get her attention to

thinking to make choices about how we behave. We react when we respond in predictable ways without conscious choice. Through reacting we are controlled by people and events. When we think and then act, we make conscious choices that put us in charge of our lives. A kind word diffuses a

#### GOOD LUCK? BAD LUCK? WHO KNOWS?

*There is a Chinese story of an old farmer who had an old horse for tilling his fields. One day the horse escaped into the hills and when all the farmer's neighbors sympathized with the old man over his bad luck, the farmer replied, "Bad luck? Good luck? Who knows?" ✻ A week later the horse returned with a herd of wild horses from the hills and this time the neighbors congratulated the farmer on his good luck. His reply again was, "Good luck? Bad luck? Who knows?" ✻ Then when the farmer's son was attempting to tame one of the wild horses, he fell off its back and broke his leg. Everyone thought this very bad luck. Not the farmer, whose only reaction was, "Bad luck? Good luck? Who knows?" ✻ Some weeks later the army marched into the village and conscripted every able-bodied youth they found there. When they saw the farmer's son with his broken leg, they let him off. Now was that good luck? Bad luck? Who knows?*

*From Anthony De Mello Sadhana, "A Way To God" (Doubleday, 1978)*

store clerks, angry because their lines move too slowly, they never give us eye contact, or because they are old and indifferent. Actually I have come to realize that clerks are great dumping grounds for the public to deposit their addictive waste. Many times we are poised for them to say one cross word or to arch one eyebrow in the wrong direction. Then we pounce!

I include myself here. On regular visits to my local pharmacy, I encounter a clerk who has an unfriendly business as-usual air about her. She never looks at me. When I smile and ask, "How are you today?" she doesn't respond. She literally snatches my prescription out of my hand. She still hasn't looked at me. And she

make her look at me. It still seemed to annoy her and her annoyance further irritated me. We were both caught in a negative cycle of reactions which threw us out of charge of our lives.

Some of us glide through life reacting to life's random events through stimulus-response like rats in a maze. We respond in predictable ways without thinking about our choices. Our spouse, lover or roommate curses us and we curse back. A co-worker makes a disparaging remark and we return the insult. A neighbor calls us an ugly name and we return the childish comment.

Healing teaches us to *act* with the gift of human reasoning, not to *react* like rats in a maze. We act when we use our new ways of

sour attitude. Calm in the face of hysteria has a soothing effect. Compliments reverse aspersions. In each case our behavior turns the tone of the situation completely around.

Once I began to realize that I had some say-so over my actions, I began to make more conscious choices about how I wished to think, feel, and behave in all situations. One day when the pharmacy clerk persisted in her usual obstinate behavior, I smiled and asked, "How are you today?" She kept her eyes focused on the cash register and said nothing. I smiled and repeated, "How are you today?" She gruffly commented, "I'm fine," still not making eye contact and dumping the change into my

*When we live each day as if it's our first, our lives are transformed. We get a deeper appreciation for who we are and for what we have.*

hand. I continued to smile and walked away.

Changing the clerk's behavior was no longer my goal. Instead I focused on changing *my* behavior by untangling myself from the addictive interaction and choosing my actions—regardless of hers. Whether I felt good or bad that day did not depend on the sales clerk being nice to me. If I wanted to enjoy my day, it was up to me to enjoy it, regardless of the circumstances in which I found myself. Rather than getting caught in her swirl of addictive behaviors, I stood back and let her be. But most importantly, I chose not to participate in the addictive interactions. Whether she yelled at me, ignored me, or smiled at me no longer mattered because my behavior would be the same regardless. I learned that I have the power to act consistently with my own thoughts and feelings no matter how the situation bends and sways.

We can become emotionally paralyzed from life's problems. We feel powerless to do anything about them. We don't know which direction to move and are too immobile to make a move anyway. So we just mope around, moaning about how terrible things are and hoping they will improve. But situations do not get better on their own. We do not get something for nothing. Only self-action can change the negative course of our lives.

#### MAXIMIZING OUR CHOICES

Choice. It's one of the greatest words ever created. Think about it. It's a wonderful resource and all of us have it available to us. It's up to each and every one of us to cre-

ate the kind of life we want. The one thing no one can take away from us is the power of choice, no matter how hopeless our lives seem. No matter how horrendous

*Healing teaches us to act with the gift of human reasoning, not to react like rats in a maze. We act when we use our new ways of thinking to make choices about how we behave. We react when we respond in predictable ways without conscious choice.*

our yesterdays, we can *choose* to transform them into happy and fulfilling todays and tomorrow. Few of us realize that we have an abundance of choices and most of us do not know how to exercise them. Increasing choices available to us can transform our lives.

We can spend the rest of our lives agonizing over our addictive childhoods. Or we can use the unfortunate experiences as opportunities to change our lives and improve the quality.

Many of us choose to continue living in misery and bemoaning the horrible things that happened to us. We fault our addictive pasts as the reasons for our discontent. But we don't have to. If we want to get somewhere, we don't sit down. We take action and move. We take the path that is open to us. Spiritual growth often means

leaving ourselves vulnerable, facing the risk of criticism and going against the fear.

Healing comes from action, not lethargy. Nothing ventured, nothing gained. Setting boundaries, taking risks, making choices, going with the fear, being optimistic—all are healing actions. We can risk being called "silly," being contradicted or being criticized but the risk makes us stronger. We can dare to heal ourselves by taking a new course of action. Take a new approach to solving old problems. Stop using old ways that don't work. Stop going back to the same people for the same rejections.

If something's not working, do something about it. If that doesn't work, do something else. Persist with another course of action, until eventually you solve your problem. Eliminate sameness and welcome change in your life.

If we could look under a microscope at the way we live, we would see how we put limits on our lives. We sometimes unintentionally limit ourselves out of a need for security. The more choices we have in life, the scarier it can be. So we eliminate choices by patronizing the same restaurants, holding the same jobs, following the same daily routines, and keeping the same close-knit friends.

Sameness limits our lives and growth as human beings.

We can eliminate sameness from our lives by getting out of the rut in which we find ourselves. We can take a different route home from work, eat lunch with new people at work whom we don't know as well, or face a new challenge that previously frightened us. By eliminating sameness,

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WAYNE MULLER



*Experiencing*  
*Abundance*

*We cannot measure abundance by what we accumulate. Abundance is an experience of the heart, a wind that blows through us like a flute.*

Wayne Muller is a therapist and graduate of the Harvard Divinity School. He is the founder of Bread for the Journey, a nonprofit organization serving families in need. He lives with his family in Santa Fe, New Mexico.



Once during a retreat, Marty began to feel very sad. Growing up with a father who was loud and domineering, Marty had developed a habitual reluctance to express his feelings. Yet his wife had recently left him and at that moment Marty was beginning to feel the sadness of missing her. I went over and placed my hand on Marty's chest and asked him to breathe slowly into his heart. He began to cry. I asked him to give voice to the feelings there. As the tears came, he said, "It feels like there's never going to be enough for me." When he spoke those words, it seemed he was telling me the truest thing he could say about his life. I asked him to repeat those words a few times. With each repetition, he opened more and more, touching that painful sadness, feeling the desperate grief of a child who never had the love he needed.

Raised in fearful desperation, we are convinced that sufficient love and care lie forever beyond the boundaries of our life story. A deep sense of scarcity infected our hearts; just as we learned to fear that there would be no place of belonging for us, so did we also learn to fear there would never be enough loving care. Regardless of how loving or generous our parents intended to be, it sometimes may have felt to us as if there were never enough to go around—not enough care, not enough attention, not enough touching, safety, playfulness, or love. We came to believe that even care was in short supply. It was something used

sparingly, not to be wasted, nothing we could count on.

As children, we first learned about scarcity and abundance in the marketplace of family affection. Raised with the belief that there would never be enough for us, we calibrated our dreams according to what we assumed we would never have. We simply stopped asking for love, care, and affection. There was just too little available for us.

Here we have a pivotal dilemma as children. If there is not enough care to go around, then we must choose—who gets to be cared for, you or me? If there is so little love, who gets to have it? In a family where care is rationed like water in a lifeboat, who drinks first from the cup? And who decides?

When love is scarce, it feels impossible for everyone in the family to be cared for. If I take it myself, I will feel mean and selfish, hurting everyone else. On the other hand, if I give the love to you, I may not feel cared for. Thus, we give birth to the scarcity contract. I will care for you if you promise to care for me. We pass a thimbleful of care back and forth forever, never being filled, rarely feeling loved.

When we grow up feeling that love is swiftly depleted, any caring relationship inevitably requires us to choose—which of us will be cared for? We have no sense that there is enough for everyone, no memory or experience that teaches us there is enough to fill the hearts of all who ask, enough to fill us up to spilling over. Care is never something shared—there is not enough for that. Love is either given or taken. And we all keep score.

Our fearful sense of scarcity sometimes drives us to latch onto anyone or anything that comes our way, just so we will have some-

thing in our lives. Barbara, raised in an alcoholic family, stayed with her husband for ten years and even though she was miserable in her marriage, she was convinced she would never find anything better. "I just want too much," she would tell me. "I can settle for this, I know I can." For her, happiness was a dream and she felt unworthy of wanting more than she had. "To want more than this is just stupid," she told me.

Our feelings of scarcity become so chronic and habitual that they influence the way we approach major decisions in our lives. Confronted with important choices, we fear the wrong turn will bring disaster, cutting us off even further from any possibility of care and abundance. Every new choice invites the possibility of getting even less than we have now, so we must be very careful to make the right decision. But if we begin to let go of fear, we come to see that regardless of which path we choose, either one may lead us to care, to abundance, to God. The spirit of love and creation is not so scarce that we will be forever lost if we make the wrong choice. Whatever we choose, wherever we go, there will be some doorway, some opportunity, some person or situation that may bring us what we need.

#### WHAT IS ENOUGH?

Jesus spoke often of abundance:

*Ask, and it will be given to you; seek, and you will find; knock, and it will be opened to you. For everyone who asks receives, and whoever seeks finds, and to whomever knocks it will be opened. Who among you, if your child asks for bread, will give him a stone? Or if he asks for a fish, will give him a serpent?*

*If you then... know how to give*

*good gifts to your children, how much more will God give good things to those who ask?*

Parents know how to give the gifts of bread and fish to their children when they are hungry. But there are times when a child needs more than bread or fish, when the child aches for love, or kindness, or safety—things difficult to name, impossible to ask for. What of the deep yearnings of the tender heart for those things that never came, things our parents could never provide? Where do we knock, how do we seek what we were never given? And what can we ask for without feeling selfish?

When we are convinced how little is available for us, we feel confused about how much is enough. How much can we ask for, what can we hope for? When we resign ourselves to a life where love and joy will never come in abundance, we reduce the depth and breadth of what is possible for us, making our lives small and sparse. "Ask and you shall receive" rings hollow in the heart that has grown to expect less and less. There will never be enough for us; why bother asking at all?

As we reduce the perimeter of our dreams, we become less able to name what we truly need. Are we truly able to ask for what we really want or can we ask only for what we can expect to receive? Our requests are tempered by our belief in scarcity. Since there is so little to go around, we learn to do without. But this is not a serene acceptance of whatever we are given. Underneath it all we are angry and hurt, we feel cheated and deprived.

Some of us try to rectify this feeling of scarcity by becoming more aggressive in asking for what we want, trying to create abundance by demanding that we get what we deserve. When we were

small, there was not enough to go around, so we gave our part away. Now that we are getting stronger, we want our part back. But this strategy, while moderately effective, can still have an edge of des-

*Many of us  
still wait at the  
doorstep of  
childhood  
for the  
understanding,  
acceptance, love,  
and approval  
that never came.*

peration behind our request that reveals a lingering conviction that there is still not enough to go around. We have not come to believe in abundance, we have simply changed our response to scarcity. Instead of giving what little there is to you, I am going to keep it for myself.

This is not an act of abundance, it is still an act of fear. Learning to ask for what we want—while giving us a sense of power in our lives—can subtly mask the fact that we have yet to believe that there really is enough for us. Rooted in a theology of scarcity, we still have not touched that place where we truly believe there

is enough care, nurture, and love for everyone.

Many healing therapies understandably begin by helping us to practice listening to the quiet needs within us, needs that have remained unnamed and unspoken. Then we learn to speak those needs and desires in the company of others, asking for what we need and want. As we name those inner needs, advocating the desires of our heart, we begin to heal ourselves, correcting the old injustices and negotiating for what we never received.

But getting everything we want is not the culmination of our healing, nor does it necessarily spring from a sense of abundance. The mind, given free reign, will perpetually generate a lifetime of wants and desires, always wanting more and more and is never fully satisfied. An experience of abundance is not dependent upon the number of things we can accumulate. It does not matter how many jobs, lovers, compliments, dollars, or houses we manage to acquire to prove to ourselves there is finally enough for us. The practice of abundance is not about how much we can get; the experience of abundance arises when we feel that whatever we have is enough.

Brother David Steindl-Rast, a Benedictine monk who has studied Oriental and Western spirituality, says that abundance:

*"is not measured by what flows in but by what flows over. The smaller we make the vessel of our need... the sooner we get the overflow we need for delight." Many of us shape the "vessel of our need" out of fear and habit. We rarely examine with mindfulness and care what we truly need to be happy and serene. When we are raised in scarcity, our impulse is to heal ourselves by wanting and getting more and more. If we can have now*

*what we couldn't have then,  
perhaps we will be fulfilled.*

However, when we begin to examine the nature of our wants and needs, we find we may increase the possibility of feeling abundant by actually allowing some of our desires to fall away. The Buddha said that our endlessly multiplying desires are the source of all human suffering. The more we want, the more we experience suffering when it does not happen. We all have wants and needs; but, if we expect those wants to be always satisfied, we will inevitably be disappointed. As we carefully check the proliferation of our desires, inviting the "vessel of our needs" gently to become smaller, we open ourselves to abundance. G. K. Chesterton said:

*"There are two ways to get enough. One is to continue to accumulate more and more. The other is to desire less." Henry David Thoreau put it another way: "I make myself rich by making my wants few."*

When Jesus said, "I have come that you might have life and have it abundantly," he was not promising his followers that they would always get everything they wanted. He was speaking of the abundance that comes when we can recognize what is available to us with different eyes, with an open mind and heart. If we hold onto the frustrated wants of childhood, still aching for the love that mother or father or family never gave us, then we endlessly postpone our capacity to be filled in this moment.

Many of us still wait at the doorstep of childhood for the understanding, acceptance, love, and approval that never came. Whatever we were given was not enough, not what we needed, not what we hoped for. Yet as we end-

lessly wait for our childhood wants to be fulfilled, we miss the abundance of this breath, this living instant. What of the care the earth has for us now, the beauty available in the light of morning, in the sunset, in the color of the sky? There is great care available in the feel of grass beneath our feet, deep nurture in the water that cools our lips, tremendous nourishment in the air that fills our lungs. As we sit with the habitual yearnings of an unfulfilled childhood, waiting for Mom and Dad finally to care for us in the way we dreamed they would, we can feel only the scarcity of what we have lost forever. But if we can begin to let go of the disappointments of childhood, we are free to wade into an ocean of care, nurture, and love that may be available to saturate every moment of our life.

Abundance can blossom as we shift our perception. "If your eye is full of light, your whole body will be full of light," said Jesus. Love and abundance arise when we pay attention with freshness and curiosity to what we have already been given. When we are always looking at the places where love never came, we tend to feel an overwhelming scarcity. But when we open our eyes to the fertile garden of the present moment, we may feel the earth itself hold us in her love, as in this poem by Wendell Berry.

*Like a tide it comes in,  
Wave after wave of foliage and  
fruit,  
The nurtured and the wild,  
Out of the light to this shore,  
In its extravagance we shape  
The strenuous outline of enough.*

Sometimes when we sit down to eat a rich meal, nothing tastes quite the way we like it and we feel dissatisfied. Other times, at the end of a fast or a long meditation, a small piece of bread and a sip of cool water can taste like a

feast. Which is abundance, the grand meal or the bread and water? Or is it the mindfulness we bring to what we are given that helps determine our wealth?

Thich Nhat Hanh, a loving Vietnamese Buddhist master, suggests we can use our shifting perceptions to shape our experience of wealth and poverty:

*A human being is like a television set with millions of channels. If we turn the Buddha on, we are the Buddha. If we turn sorrow on, we are sorrow. If we turn a smile on, we really are the smile. We cannot let just one channel dominate us. We have the seed of everything in us and we have to seize the situation in our hand, to recover our own sovereignty.*

#### WHAT BELONGS TO US?

Our feelings of scarcity and abundance are complicated by the concept of ownership. We are taught to believe that certain things belong to us and other things do not. This piece of land, this spouse, this child, and this food belong to me. Those other things belong to you. What belongs to me I call "mine"; what belongs to you, I call "yours."

But what if nothing really belongs to any of us? Mahatma Gandhi said that when we buy and sell anything, we are simply contributing to the illusion of ownership. In the Old Testament, God instructed the Hebrews to observe a Sabbath day of rest and contemplation, a day to think about the multitude of gifts and blessings they had received from God. The Hebrews were also required to take a Sabbath year—a year when no one could plant, sow seed, or harvest crops. During this year, everyone had to rely on whatever food grew in the fields on its own. This was to remind the Hebrews that it was not their

work alone but God and the earth that fed them.

Further, every seventh Sabbath year—every forty-ninth year, the Year of Jubilee—all lands that had been sold or confiscated were returned to their original owners, and all debts were canceled. It was just like the end of a game of Monopoly, when everyone gave everything back and had to start over. This way, the Hebrews would be reminded that nothing really belonged to anyone. It was all on loan from God.

Many spiritual traditions recommend owning as little as possible. After the death of the Buddha, it was decided that monks would be prohibited from keeping food overnight. Each day they had to beg for that day's food, reminding them to be dependent on whatever came from God. Similarly, when the Hebrews were in the desert on the way to the promised land, God fed them with food from heaven called manna. It was forbidden to keep manna overnight, inviting them to trust that God would feed them anew each day. One day's food was all that was needed; to demand more was to mistrust God's care.

Many years ago an American tourist paid a visit to a renowned Polish rabbi, Hofetz Chaim. He was amazed to see that the rabbi's home was completely empty, a simple dwelling furnished only with a few books, a single table, and a bench.

"Rabbi," asked the tourist, "where is your furniture?"

"Where is yours?" the rabbi responded.

"Mine?" asked the puzzled American. "But I'm only passing through." The rabbi smiled. "So am I."

We cannot measure abundance by what we accumulate. Abundance is an experience of the heart, a wind that blows through

us like a flute. There is nothing to hold onto—who can hold onto music? It floats in the air. Our treasures are in the eye, the ear, in the heart that feels the wonder of things. "Where your treasure is," said Jesus, "there will your heart be also."

A few years ago I was visiting with Padre Pedro Ruggiere, a Maryknoll priest working with the poor in Pamplona Alta, a barrio on the outskirts of Lima, Peru. He was showing me around the village, and all the children ran to greet us and grab our hands as we walked, shouting, "Hola, Padre" and laughing with delight. Everyone loved this priest who had lived and worked beside them through illnesses and childbirths, poverty and oppression.

Padre Pedro and I walked to Mass one Sunday morning, through the dusty streets, past the open sewage and refuse that filled the byways of the barrio. The church was a half-demolished concrete shack with broken glass on the floor and a single table in front for the altar, and no other furniture. People from the village crowded in, singing and playing Peruvian pipes and drums. When everyone was settled, Padre Pedro shared the parable of the mustard seed.

*"The kingdom of God is like a grain of mustard seed," he began, "which, when sown upon the ground, is the smallest of all the seeds on the earth; yet when it is sown it grows up and becomes the greatest of all trees and puts forth large branches so that the birds of the air can make nests in its shade." "A mustard seed is so small that if you are not careful, you may drop it, even lose it. We must take care of the small things for they may grow to be the most wonderful."*

Padre had lived with these people for a long time and he knew their poverty and their despair. But he also knew about their

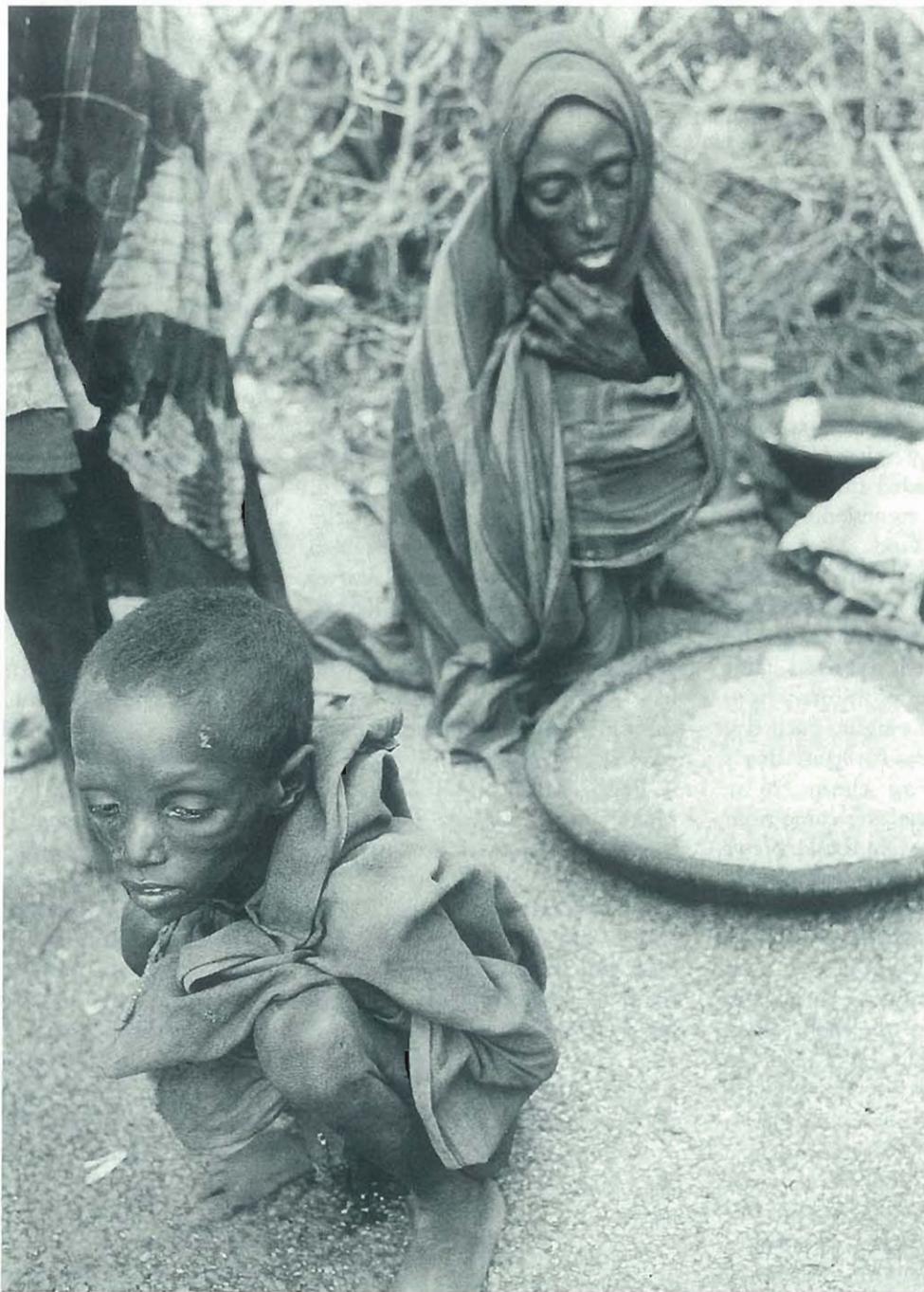
courage and their joy, and he knew that the well of spirit from which they drank was deep and rich. He also knew that in spite of terrible poverty, injustice, and want, there lived in that community, in that makeshift church, a tremendous sense of abundance.

As I was leaving to come back to the United States, a young boy presented me with the cross from around his neck. He said I should have it because I had come from such a long way to be with them. I wept as I thanked him, feeling unworthy of the gift, humbled by the generosity of one who had so little.

What is enough for us? How will we know we are cared for? What do we seek as a sign? Many of us feel that since we were not given enough as children, it is up to our parents to somehow tip the scales by giving us more love or a full apology or some reparation for what we never received. But there is love available for us here and now, in the smallest of things, if we would only look. If we hold our parents hostage, refusing to feel loved until it comes directly from them, we may miss the gifts that are possible in our lives in this very instant.

Thus, we begin to cultivate a practice of abundance as we empty ourselves of the unfulfilled wants of childhood. There are other seeds, other places where we may seek love, grace, and sustenance. Our parents were never meant to be the only source of our care and abundance. There is a passage in Ecclesiastes that says, "Keep sowing your seed morning and night, for you never know which will grow—perhaps it all will."•

*From "The Legacy of the Heart: The Spiritual Advantages of a Painful Childhood." Copyright 1992 by Wayne Muller. Printed with permission from the publisher, Simon & Schuster.*



A.P./Wide World Photo

SALLY FRIEDMAN

# *OH SOMALIA\*, WHAT HAVE WE DONE TO YOU?*

*\*Cambodia, Yugoslavia, South America.*

**T**he world turned its face away until your existence spilled into our collective consciousness. People can no longer turn their faces away because the shock of our neglect means bodies lie dying on your land and it is unbearable. We have allowed you to sit and starve. The gruesomeness of our disregard is eating a hole in an already assaulted humanity.

I saw you on the news again today. It had been a while but Lady, I saw you there. You're a mother like me. I have a toddler too. If you had been born in the U.S., we may have been friends. Maybe our children would have been starting pre-school together. Your little boy's eyes might have smiled in his inquisitive and tenacious play. Maybe we would have talked together about the unending supply of energy our little ones have, we'd have laughed at their innocent and funny way.

You would have chased after him in the grocery store and scolded, "Stop throwing grapes!" You may have thought nothing about it each night when you washed his dinner remnants down the drain. Maybe your boy would be unburdened of the immense suffering he was indifferently born into.

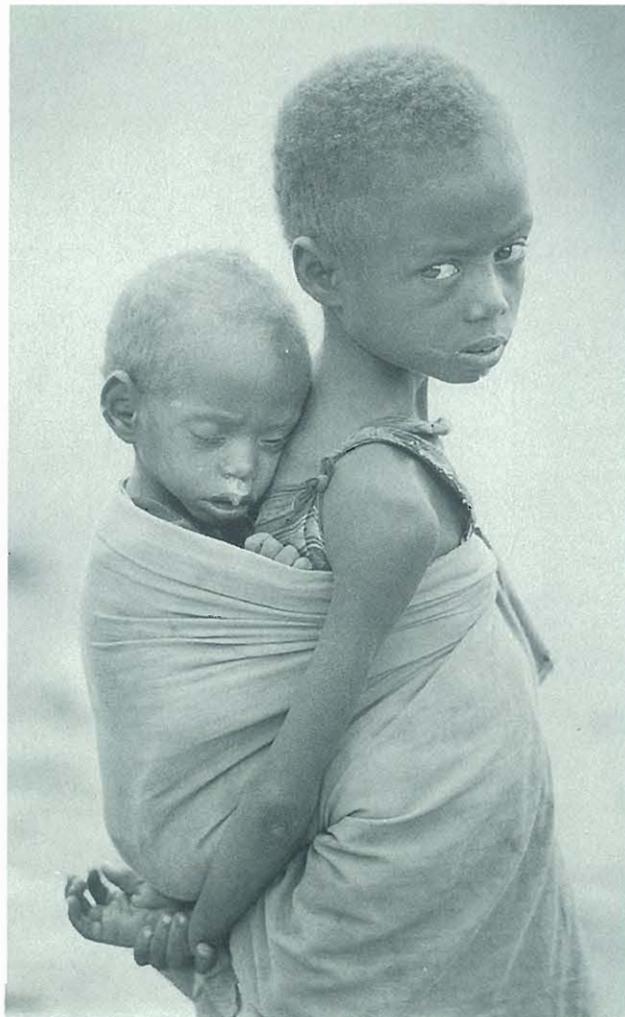
If I had been born in Somalia, maybe I would be sitting next to you. It could easily have been me sitting in the dirt with my baby's life being siphoned away. How do you not cry each time you touch your boy's body and all you feel are his bones? When you're hungry, how do you ignore your own pain while you tend to your child who cannot understand why life makes him suffer so? If I sat next to you and I looked in your eyes, I would be your friend. Because dear woman, when the camera went by I saw dignity in your eye. I saw your tortured soul gleam faintly through your eyes.

You scooped up your boy when the camera invaded your dismal space. Sitting in the dust with little on your starved and frail body, you didn't even look sorry for yourself. You quietly held him close knowing he was withering away. You moved quickly to cover his bottom with a cloth. Before he was shielded from the world's eyes, I saw the little bit of flesh he had left, sort of yielding and falling away from his small skeleton. He looked unnourished and unfirm and unhealthful. An opaque glimmer of life fought to show through his eyes. Truly his young soul was barely clinging to life. I watched you and I cried while you covered your boy's eyes. This is so far away from a child's endless energy supply.

And still, today this mother waits in the dirt

maybe wishing she could feel a breeze. She holds her baby and his life between her heart and her knees. She must pray to God for each breath that she takes. Secret moments must come when she wishes for her baby's death. She must fear if she dies first, her boy will be alone and he'll cry for her. And his loneliness must scare her as much as their slow starvation must hurt.

Lady, I do imagine I know you from your pain. You could have easily been me and I could have been you. See really my friend we're all one - we're the same. Oh Lady, your sad image is branded in my brain. Lady in Somalia, what is your name? •



AP/Wide World Photo

**Starving Somalians in Baldoa, Somalia.**

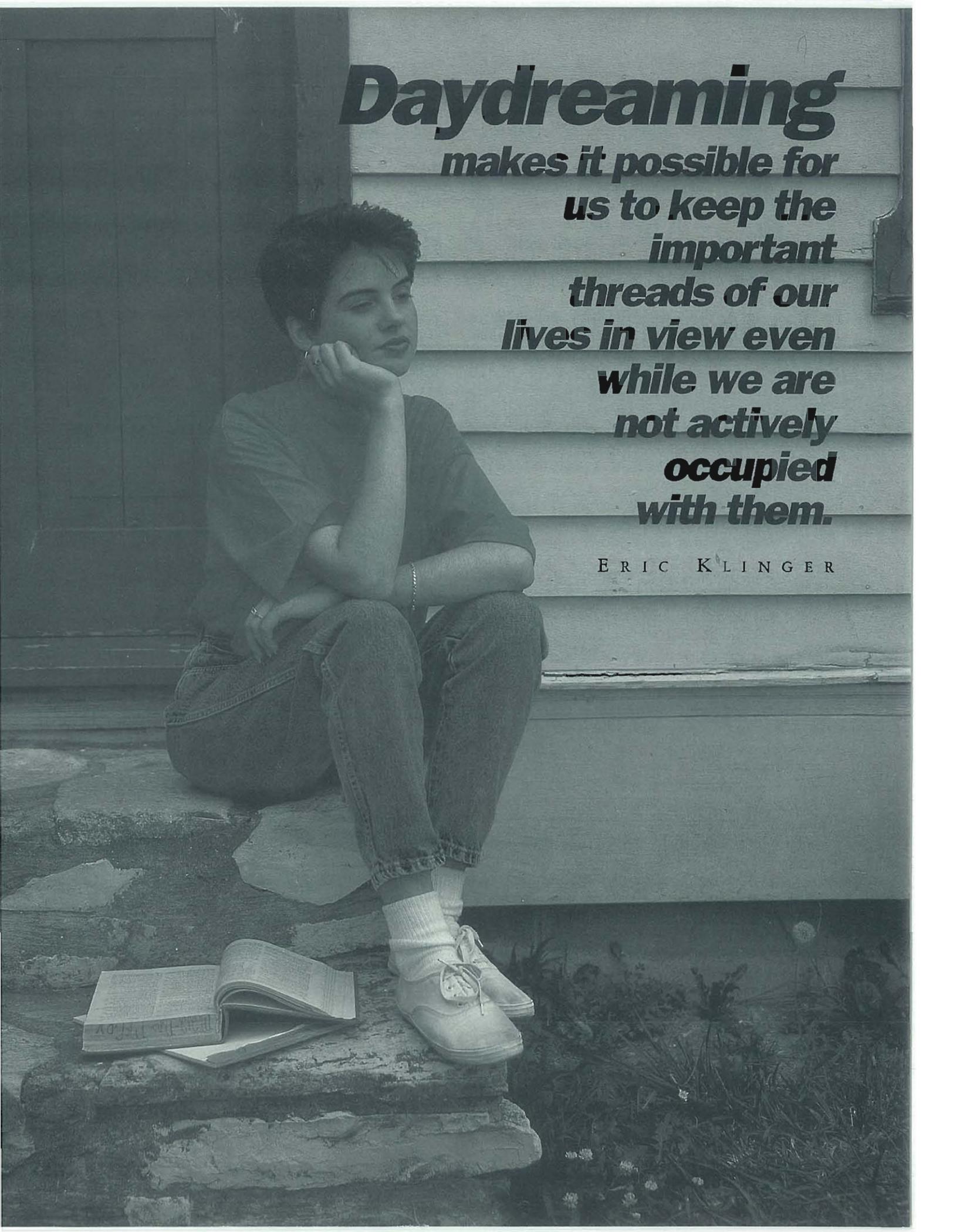
*Sally Friedman is a freelance writer who lives in Phoenix, Arizona.*



# ***Daydreaming***

***makes it possible for  
us to keep the  
important  
threads of our  
lives in view even  
while we are  
not actively  
occupied  
with them.***

ERIC KLINGER



*He who passes not his days in the realm of dreams is the slave of the days.*

—Kahlil Gibran

*Imagination is not a talent of some men but is the health of every man.*

—Ralph Waldo Emerson

*Eric Klinger, Ph.D., is a professor of Psychology at the University of Minnesota, where he has led ongoing research into various aspects of daydreaming for the past three decades. He is a fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Psychological Association and the author of two prior books on fantasy and inner experience.*



Daydreaming—that bane of puritan taskmasters, that near-synonym for wasting time—turns out to be a fundamental human quality, a part of the brain's machinery for fostering human survival, and a major personal resource. Daydreaming, ironically enough, helps us to get the most mileage out of our brain power. It does it by fitting into the interstices of our consciousness, into the spaces left by our other activities; and in this way it does its work while piggybacking on other activities.

Those spaces would go to waste, except for the fact that our brains seem designed to fill them. Whenever our minds are not fully occupied, they cut out from whatever we are doing and spontaneously start working on other concerns sometimes realistically, sometimes fancifully. This switch-over process seems to be automatic—involuntary and under most circumstances even irresistible. It assures that whenever we are not using our full brain capacity for the task at hand we will be using it for something else. And what goes on in our minds under those circumstances—what our brain fills those spare spaces with—mostly qualifies as daydreaming.

This process of switching into daydreaming makes it possible for us to keep the important threads of our lives in view even while we are not actively occupied with them. While steeped in work, we think now and again about family issues and relationships; we remember that we need to call someone about a party and we imagine making the call; we remember that we need to get the car fixed and we catch a mental glimpse of the car or the repairman; we remember that Thursday is the last day for mailing our tax forms, and we see them and our files scattered about the desk and imagine the reading lamp lit late into the night as we labor to finish by the deadline. While eating dinner, we go over things that happened at work or that will be coming up tomorrow and we play them through our minds, sometimes in brief flashes, at other times in whole scenarios.

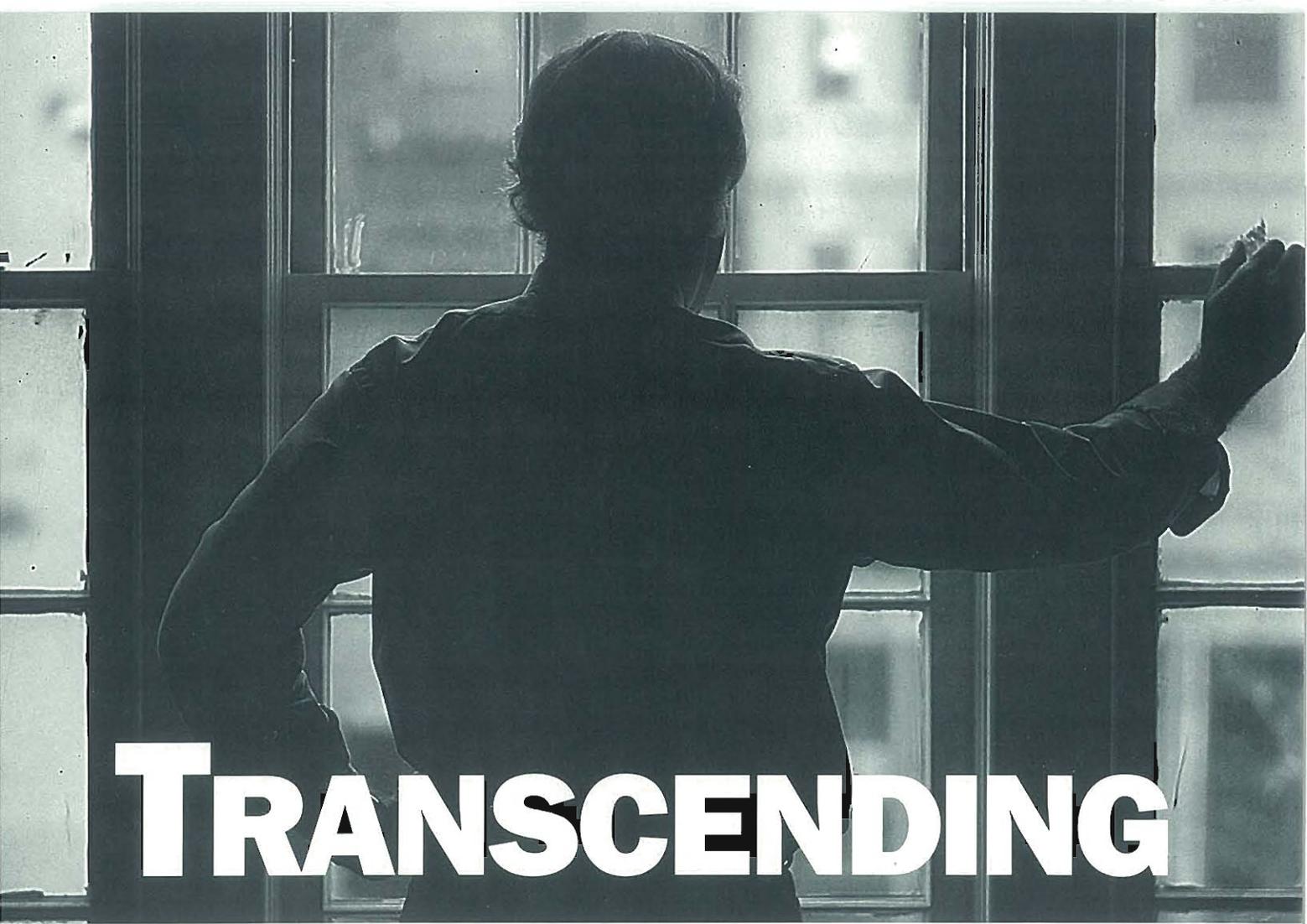
Most likely, this switching process is a part of our capacity for interruption, without which we would never have made it into the twentieth century. If we attended simply to that which we have undertaken to do, our ancestors digging roots would have missed the sounds that betrayed a rhinoceros starting a charge, a boulder starting to roll, an enemy gang sneaking up, or a lover walking by. The capacity for interruption is a priceless asset. The switch into daydreaming is probably a specialization of that gift; but, in daydreaming, instead of reacting only to cues outside us, we also react to those that well up inside us; and instead of them sending us into action, they send us into imagined action.

The switch into daydreaming is highly selective. Our minds gravitate toward daydream topics that stir our feelings and those tend to be about things we value highly, consider accessible, have become committed to doing something about, and do not yet feel completely sure of. They may be things about which our feelings remain unresolved—that we have not finished scrutinizing or have not yet made our peace with.

What daydreaming does with these topics is to contemplate them—review those that lie in the past, which enables us to draw remaining insights and lessons from them, and rehearse those that lie in the future, which lets us assess prospects and dangers and try out different approaches while there is still time to reconsider goals and tactics. Looking at the past, we might try out different scenarios of what might have been, a kind of mental Monday-morning quarterbacking that lets us learn from mistakes and missed opportunities. We also assess how satisfying our experiences have been, which helps us in choosing objectives to pursue thereafter. Looking into the future—or into alternatives to our present lives—we explore the limits of reality, sometimes going far beyond them, as a way of probing possibilities including possibilities for what we want or for circumstances more gratifying than our immediate realities. In effect, we are exploring alternative goals preliminary to setting them.

As a mental resource, daydreaming is a kind of inadvertent tool and like any tool, its purposes are specialized. Although it is

TURN TO PAGE 77



# TRANSCENDING

WHO WE ARE

WHAT WE DO

JOHN JAMES AND MURIAL JAMES

**T**

*he urge to transcend who we are and what we do is a continuing desire of the human spirit. To transcend is to rise above or pass beyond a human limit, to move beyond the everyday dimensions of life and its usual limitations. The word transcend comes from the latin transcendere, trans- meaning over and scendere meaning to climb. Therefore, when we transcend something, we climb over it. We go beyond or rise above real or imagined limitations.*

Muriel James is the co-author of "Born to Win" and other books that have sold more than four million copies. John James is co-author of "Are You The One For Me?" John is also director of the James Institute, an education, counseling, and professional training center in Lafayette, California. A mother and son team who work independently and occasionally together, both are psychotherapists and clinical trainers, theologians and ordained clergy, educators and consultants.



The urge to transcend is experienced in many ways, often as a yearning to expand ourselves and our potentials. These potentials include our qualities and capabilities that are latent and still-to-be-discovered, or that we are aware of but have not expressed, or that are partially developed and can be improved. The desire to transcend ourselves—whether physically, intellectually, emotionally, or otherwise—is a powerful motivator we all experience.

We want to transcend physical limitations. When weak, we want to be strong; when sick, we want to be well; when imprisoned, we want to be free. We want to transcend intellectual inadequacies. When confused, we want to be able to think more clearly. When feeling ignorant, we want more information. And when intellectually stimulated, we want to learn even more and put what we know into action. It is also part of human nature to want to transcend emotional problems. When sad, we want to be happy. When unsure, we want to feel confident. When lonely, we want to be loved; when alienated, we want to be reconciled.

We also want to go beyond restrictive cultural barriers. When forced into a role, we want to be ourselves; when held back by

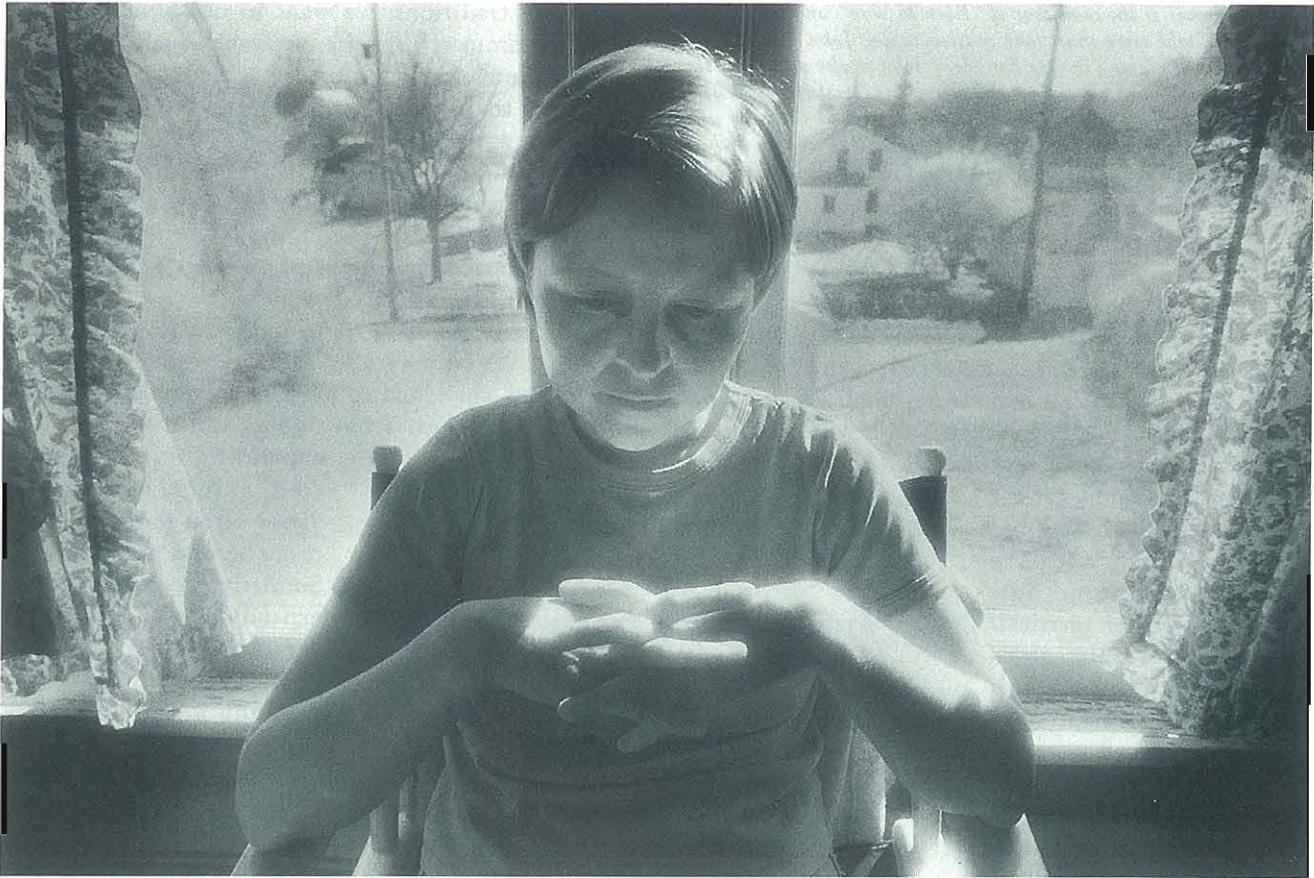
restrictive traditions, we want to do as we choose; when discriminated against, we want equality. When blending into a new culture, we want to retain some of our old traditions; when new to a community, we want to be accepted.

In addition, it is natural to want to transcend spiritual frustrations. When doubting, we want to have faith; when seeking we want to find; when despairing, we want hope; when in chaos, we want peace; when fragmented, we want to be whole.

The desire to expand our understanding of life is the same. We may want to learn a new idea or update an old one, challenge commonly accepted beliefs or embrace new ones. Transcending old mind-sets by expanding our information, values, and world views often motivates us to go beyond the familiar. Similarly, we may want to expand our lives by doing something that adds to the quality of life. In planting a tree or a garden, we may feel as if we are transcending the world of asphalt and concrete, of alarm clocks and highways, getting back in touch with nature and the heartbeat of life.

The urge to transcend is also expressed as a yearning to transform our routine, habitual responses to ones that come more from the depths of our spirit. This happens when we appreciate the good that surrounds us, whether it is listening to the voices of children on a playground, watching the patterns of the rain rush down a window, or enjoying the brief encounters we have with different people throughout the day. Transcending the ordinary may also occur when we go somewhere that is peaceful and quiet. Calm reflection can overcome the tendency to see things piecemeal rather than as part of the whole,

*Whatever the catalyst,  
the call to transcend  
our old selves feels both  
necessary and  
disquieting. There is a  
natural tendency to  
resist the call and hold  
fast to the security and  
predictability of the  
status quo. This  
tendency is reinforced  
by others who want us  
to stay as we are.*



David DeVries

*The desire to overcome any kind of separation or alienation and to recover a sense of oneness—whether personal or interpersonal, whether with the cosmos or with God—is the prime motivator in a spiritual search for unity.*

and we may feel a sudden appreciation of the oneness of everything.

The urge to transcend ourselves and our environments continually motivates us to go beyond barriers and limitations, whether real or imagined. Awareness of this urge can emerge at any time and often comes unexpectedly. Walking down a busy city street or along a quiet river bank, driving down the freeway in commuter traffic or watching TV at home, we may become aware of barriers we face in trying to live happily and work purposefully. Listening to a favorite piece of music or enjoying a quiet meal alone, we may become aware of the frustrating aspects of a relationship and yearn for ways to transcend them. Awareness may come in the middle of a meeting or while grocery shopping when we may wonder about what we'd rather be doing instead. Even while on vacation or lying sick in bed, we may recognize barriers we need to transcend if we want to express ourselves more fully and find a sense of oneness with life.

#### THE SEARCH FOR UNITY

*To feel whole is to feel "at one" and undivided; it is to experience, at least for a moment, a unity and harmony with*

*life. It is to feel at peace with ourselves and others and to have a sense of our place in the larger scheme of things. This experience of unity affirms that life is worth living and that loneliness, grief, and other heartaches can be transcended.*

The crisis of our time is the lack of a sense of unity and consequent feelings of fragmentation and alienation. Many people feel at odds with themselves, wanting "this" but doing "that." Or they may feel scattered and unfocused at times, without a sense of personal direction, following a path of convenience rather than one with heart. Yet, in the midst of this, they may also hunger to "get it all together" and know a sense of peace and clarity.

We also experience the crisis of fragmentation in unsatisfying relationships that lead us to conflict or alienation. When we are alienated from friends or family, isolated from people in general, we may feel disconnected, angry, indifferent, or lonesome. We may yearn to cross the bridges that separate us from others.

Feeling separated from the universe may also lead to a search for unity or oneness. Being cooped up in an office all day without sun or fresh air stifles the

mind as well as the body. Not spending enough time outdoors or living in a city and never being in touch with nature can also lead to deep discomfort.

For some people, feeling alienated from God or the spiritual dimension of life is most painful. It is like the "dark night of the soul" when little comfort is to be found.

The desire to overcome any kind of separation or alienation and to recover a sense of oneness—whether personal or interpersonal, whether with the cosmos or with God—is the prime motivator in a spiritual search for unity. This search takes many forms. The individual searches for a oneness within. The lover searches for oneness with a beloved. The nature lover searches for oneness with the universe. The religious person searches for oneness with God. For many who search for oneness these quests often overlap. When we search for oneness and transcend the real or imagined barriers that keep us apart, we discover the principle of inseparability that things do not exist in isolation.

This principle of inseparability is central to most religious traditions. Christianity for example uses the metaphor of the human body to highlight this belief. "Just as the body is one and has many members and all the members of the body, though many, are one body... If one member suffers, all suffer together; if one member is honored, all rejoice together." An old Hasidic saying puts it differently, "All souls are one. Each is a spark of the original soul, and this soul is inherent in all souls.

This principle is also at the roots of Hinduism which points to the essence from which all

*An ancient Buddhist  
saying speaks of being  
open. When the eyes of  
an ox or mule are  
covered, it will go  
around and around  
turning a mill wheel,  
but if its eyes are open,  
it will not go around  
in circles. With  
awareness, we can  
open our eyes to the  
millwheel circles we  
follow and become free  
to choose new paths.*

apparent plurality or diversity of the world arises and leads to compassion. This is true for Taoism as well which understands that "all things are one in Tao" and that a "still-point" exists when there is no separation between "this and that."

This same principle of inseparability is what humanitarian John Gardner calls the wholeness incorporating diversity. "Today," he writes, "we live with many faiths. We must nurture a framework of shared secular values (justice, respect for the individual, tolerance, and so on) while leaving people free to honor diverse deeper faiths that undergird those values.

This principle of inseparability unites us, as no one can live entirely alone. We need our children as much as they need us as parents. What would life be without relatives, spouses, or friends? We need to share the long journey of life with them. Similarly, the people we work with are dependent on our efforts and cooperation, and we are likewise dependent on them. Further, the global economy has made us realize that we are inextricably linked and in some way belong to each other. This is also what author and Nobel Peace prize-winner Alexander Solzhenitsyn meant when, after surviving the prison camps of the Gulag Archipelago, he wrote of his lifelong search for the oneness of a world community. He believed that this oneness already existed because of growing unity among people united in hope and danger through the international press and radio. This oneness, he said, is so tangible that "a

wave of events washes over us and in a moment half the world hears the splash."

This oneness that we share also extends to our earth and the environment. Acid rain, deforestation, global warming, and massive oil spills are calamities that remind us of our inseparability and interdependence. In similar fashion, knowing that everyone on earth lives by the warmth of the same sun and stands at night looking at the same moon and stars reminds us of our shared reality. The words of Chief Seattle, a Native American, point to this profound unity we share with all life.

*Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every meadow, every humming insect. All are holy in the memory and experience of my people... This we know: the earth does not belong to man, man belongs to the earth. All things are connected like the blood that unites us all. Man did not weave the web of life, he is merely a strand in it.*

#### SACRED OR PROFANE

Appreciation for the unity of life is the primary religious experience according to Mircea Eliade, a professor of the history of religions. It arises from an awareness that the universe and the earth are sacred and that the holy is manifested in everything. When the world is experienced as sacred, places become special—the place where one was born, or fell in love, or had a transcendent experience—and may even

*Personal evolution is not easy and often requires an inward journey of heroic proportions. The heroic adventure is the search to understand one's relationship with life. It is a response to a call to know ourselves and to understand our relation to the holy. During this journey, we find powers within ourselves that have been hidden or ignored. This new understanding of ourselves and the holy becomes the cornerstone for further personal evolution.*

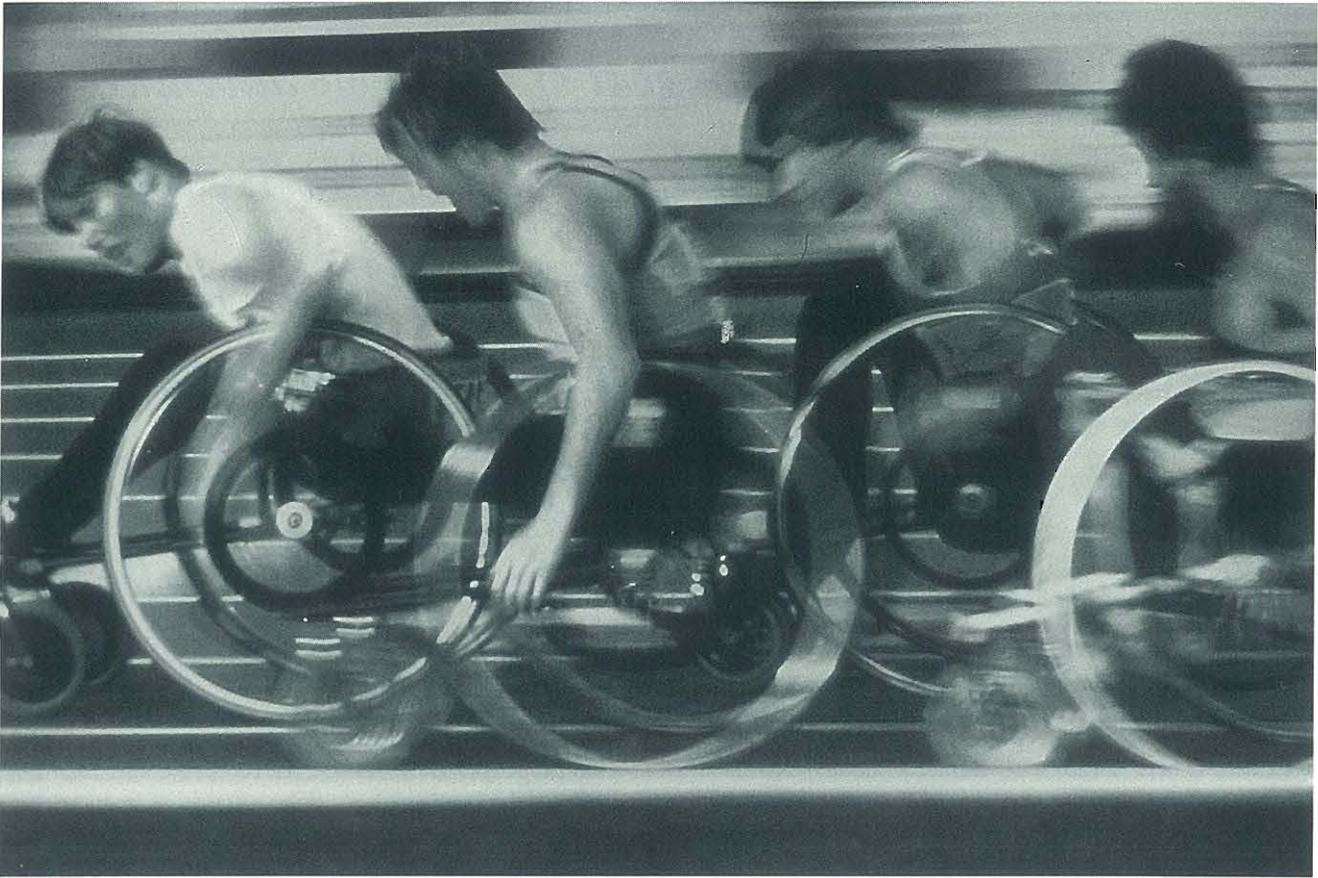
seem holy. The tree is no longer just a tree; it is a living monument to the magnificence of life. The mountain is no longer just a mountain; it is a special place because of the moment of illumination or peace.

Eliade proposed that there are two existential ways of addressing the world—as sacred and as profane. Everything—from food and dance to music and words to pets and people—may be objectified and treated simply as objects to be used or abused or may be recognized as manifestations of the holy.

To treat something as profane is to show indifference and irreverence toward it. Treating anyone we encounter—whether rich or poor, educated or not, professors or service station attendants, secretaries or executives, spouses, parents, children, or friends—as if they exist only to serve a function is to deny their basic sacredness and to miss the opportunity to be at one with them.

The same is true if we profane the earth by littering and using materials that are not biodegradable or recyclable. Ignoring the mistreatment of animals and endangered species is to profane another part of life and to lose a part of ourselves, for as an old Jewish tale advises, "Do not tell yourself in your heart of hearts that you are ... more admirable than the worm, for it serves its Maker with all its power and strength."

On the other hand, to treat people, places, and things as sacred is to treat them with honor and respect, to recognize that there is a potential within them that can be brought out and enjoyed. In doing so, we find a greater value and sense of oneness with life.



*To transcend is to rise above or pass beyond a human limit, to move beyond the everyday dimensions of life and its usual limitations.*

#### THE NEED FOR OPENNESS

Openness to all that is and all that could be is an important quality that can make transcendence possible. It is that wonderful feeling of being free of restrictive boundaries or limitations. *To be genuinely open is to be open-minded and open-hearted.* When feeling like this, people walk with a bounce that expresses the freedom they feel. Their faces often glow and their eyes sparkle as they anticipate the possibilities ahead. They feel free to think, to speak out, and to move ahead openly without fear. They do not hide or pretend to be other than who they are.

Openness has two important aspects—receptiveness and responsiveness. *To be receptive is to be open-minded and unprejudiced.* It is to be open to whatever could happen without concluding ahead of time, "This is the way it's going to be." When receptive, we are not constantly wrapped up in our feelings or preoccupied with past or future events. We are not constantly turning something over in our minds; there is some open space between our thoughts. We have trust and confidence in the positive potential of the moment. This kind of receptiveness is often seen in

people who are sitting peacefully and looking relaxed instead of looking harried and ready to run off to do something else.

The second aspect of openness is responsiveness. *Responsiveness is the willingness to embrace the positive as it occurs.* To be responsive is to be sensitive to others and to reach out to them rather than hold back. Martin Buber once wrote: "There are no gifted or ungifted; there are only those who give and those who withhold." Responsiveness is the willingness to give instead of withhold.

Responsiveness requires a willingness to risk, to be vulnerable, and yet to reach out anyway. It is to be open-hearted and open-minded, looking for positive opportunities instead of expecting disappointments. This responsiveness is often shown in kindhearted people who go out of their way to respond to others in need. Because they are open to the whole human race they don't prejudge on the basis of race, nationality, or socioeconomic background. To the responsive person these things are not barriers but windows of opportunity.

A healthy balance of receptiveness and responsive-

*According to Campbell, the goal of the heroic adventure is to discover that life is merciful and tolerable. By this he means that life is more good than bad, that even pain is a necessary part of existence, and that each person has the ability to tolerate and even enjoy the adventure of life. With this comes the realization of wholeness, the holiness of living, and oneness with God.*

ness to others is essential. Balance makes possible the dance of life and the sharing of that experience with others.

As we become more aware of the value of openness to others, we also need to be receptive and responsive to ourselves. To be receptive is to listen to ourselves and our yearnings and to be aware of how we hunger for opportunities to experience and express the urges of the human spirit on a path with heart.

This was true for Wilma Rudolph who transcended the limitations of polio she had as a child. "Around age nine the braces came off and now I can't remember which leg I wore my braces on. Once I discovered I could run, I spent all of my extra time running." Rudolph went on to win three gold medals in track and field events in the 1960 Olympics. She remembers that she used to ask God, "Why was I here? What was my purpose? Surely it wasn't just to win three gold medals."

Each of us has a unique pattern of being receptive or rejecting of our inner yearnings. Some people pay close attention to the inner messages that come from their bodies; others pay closer attention to their feelings or to what they think. Yet sooner or later the various pieces that they have ignored call out for attention pleading or shouting, "Notice me. I'm here. I'm part of you."

When we pay attention to what we have put aside or ignored, then we can consciously decide what to do. A healthy goal is to be open to all parts of ourselves, learning ways to feel at one rather than fragmented or scattered.

Some people however are *too* receptive and take in anything that comes along from outside or from within. They don't maintain sufficient self-regard to filter out the good from the not-so-good. They become emotional mirrors of other people.

On the other hand, those who lack receptivity push away and close off possible opportunities. Being too focused on a task or a relationship, they miss out on what is going on around them. Or being too sure of their opinions and points of view, they close off other people and their understandings of life.

Similarly, to be too responsive is to miss the point. We can give all and save nothing for ourselves and end up exhausted and sick. Or we can be so oversensitive to emotions that we have no energy left for thinking or acting. In contrast, to be unresponsive is to be cold and distant, to seem aloof and uncaring. A healthy balance of receptiveness and responsiveness to ourselves and others leads to openness that becomes fertile ground for transcendence.

In addition to being open to ourselves and others, we need to be receptive and responsive to the process of life. This can be seen in people who do not despair when times get tough. When trying to transcend family problems, they stay open to each other. When trying to transcend on-the-job problems, they stay open to various options and other interpretations rather than making judgments about who is wrong and who is right.

As we become more receptive and responsive to ourselves and others, we open up to the possibility of transcendence in all spheres of our lives. An ancient

Buddhist saying speaks of being open. When the eyes of an ox or mule are covered, it will go around and around turning a mill wheel, but if its eyes are open, it will not go around in circles. With awareness, we can open our eyes to the millwheel circles we follow and become free to choose new paths.

### THE HEROIC ADVENTURE

Personal evolution is not easy and often requires an inward journey of heroic proportions. According to mythologist Joseph Campbell, the heroic adventure is the search to understand one's relationship with life. It is a response to a call to know ourselves and to understand our relation to the holy. During this journey, Campbell believes we find powers within ourselves that have been hidden or ignored. This new understanding of ourselves and the holy becomes the cornerstone for further personal evolution.

The most common stimulus for beginning an inward journey is a gradual awareness that we are outgrowing our old ways of feeling, thinking, and behaving. The beliefs, ideals, relationships, or emotional patterns we counted on for so long no longer fit with what we experience as reality. Something inside, almost like a gyroscope, tells us that our life is out of balance and we feel compelled to do something about it.

Another stimulus is when some person or event awakens us from the trance of daily routines. Meeting people who live with a strong clarity of purpose and generosity of heart, we may become aware of our own inner poverty and wonder about the source of their strength. Or we may blunder into an experience that reveals unsuspected beauty in life that we do not understand and sparks our curiosity.

Whatever the catalyst, the call to transcend our old selves feels both necessary and disquieting. There is a natural tendency to resist the call and hold fast to the security and predictability of the status quo. This tendency is reinforced by others who want us to stay as we are. Campbell believes it is our reluctance to respond that is the first "dragon to be slain."

When restlessness and attraction to the call over-

come our fear of the unknown, we cross the threshold of adventure—leaving the comfort of the familiar for the challenge of the unknown.

In doing this, we inevitably meet with frustrations, temptations, and uncertainties that are difficult to understand. Things may get worse rather than better. Trials and tribulations may increase rather than get resolved. As the old saying goes, "When it rains, it pours." In fact, challenges may seem so great that

even the most heroic of us may begin to wonder if we should have left well enough alone.

During this ordeal, Campbell believes that some form of guardian spirit may appear and offer help. It may be a teacher, therapist, or friend who points the way. It can be a spiritual leader or even an imaginary guide who helps us traverse the path of the inward Journey.

If we are willing to stick with the process and search for the lessons to be learned, a metamorphosis begins to take place. Just as the pupa emerges from the cocoon as a butterfly, we begin to transform in some meaningful way. We evolve. Free of some restrictive mind-sets, we see the world with clearer eyes, think of people differently, and open our hearts and minds

with compassion and gratitude.

According to Campbell, the goal of the heroic adventure is to discover that life is merciful and tolerable. By this he means that life is more good than bad, that even pain is a necessary part of existence, and that each person has the ability to tolerate and even enjoy the adventure of life. With this comes the realization of wholeness, the holiness of living, and oneness with God.

### FAITH IN CRISIS

To have faith is to have confidence in the trustworthiness or truth of a person, idea, or thing, even if this confidence is not based on logical or material evidence. Simply put, to have faith is to believe in something even when it can't be proven. In this way, faith is according to poet Rabindranath Tagore, "like the bird that feels the light and sings when the dawn is still dark."

*The urge to transcend  
is also expressed as a  
yearning to transform  
our routine, habitual  
responses to ones that  
come more from the  
depths of our spirit.*

When used in a religious context, faith usually means accepting a religious doctrine or believing in God. The way we feel about religious faith is often very strong. Some people accept what they have been taught without question and feel offended if others do not believe as they do. Other people struggle hard to understand religious beliefs and sometimes enjoy questioning and exploring their faith. Still others do not have such beliefs in God or a benevolent universal order and sometimes wish they did or reject those who do.

Faith pervades our lives, whether we think of it in religious or nonreligious terms. We have faith that our cars will not break down on the freeway or that our children will return home safely from school. We trust that our friends will stick by us in hard times and that someone will be there to wipe away our tears or encourage us to take charge of our lives. And, unless in deep despair, we have faith in our abilities to find hope, to be self-determined, to understand life, create something worthwhile, connect with others in meaningful ways, and generally enjoy life.

At one time or another, however, many of us experience a crisis in which we question or lose faith in our beliefs. We may have believed that we could live "happily ever after" and then find out that life doesn't go that way. We may have had faith in our abilities to move mountains or the equivalent and find our abilities to be inadequate. We may have trusted and had faith in someone and been let down. Events can be so unnerving that we doubt much of what we have staked our lives on. When this happens, we may question the wisdom of our beliefs and wonder, "Is this really the way I want to live?" Or we may feel discouraged and moan, "I don't know what to believe anymore." When old explanations no longer seem adequate and new ones are not yet in sight, this can feel like a spiritual crisis.

Four major faiths sprang from the lives of people who also went through spiritual crises. The story of Moses tells that he went through a crisis when he killed an Egyptian who was beating a Hebrew laborer. To escape retaliation, he fled to a tribe of sheepherders, married, and had children. Then one day he experienced God telling him to return to Egypt to free the Hebrews. Moses protested because he felt inadequate for the task and doubted the wisdom of God's choice. However, excuses were not acceptable, so he ended up doing what he felt called to do.

Buddha's first spiritual crisis came with his dissatisfaction with life. Although he was a wealthy prince, he became aware of the emptiness of wealth, so he left all his earthly comforts to live a life of asceticism as a beggar. After long meditation and enlightenment,

Buddha concluded that asceticism is not always necessary. What he found is necessary is doing good instead of evil and maintaining mental discipline and tranquillity that can lead a person to intuitive wisdom and peace.

Among the many spiritual crises that Jesus had was the one at the end of his life when he was being crucified. According to the New Testament story, he first experienced himself as forsaken by God. When he transcended his doubt as he was dying, he was able to affirm his faith with "Father, into thy hands I commit my spirit."

Muhammad, in his spiritual crisis, meditated for extended periods of time in caves near Mecca. An orphan from a poor family, he married a rich widow and had seven children by her. He also began to believe in the goodness of Allah and the responsibility to respond with gratitude and humility. However, when Muhammad began to preach about this, he became a threat to those who preferred the old gods. He was forced to flee and only after many years was he able to return to Mecca and rid it of idols.

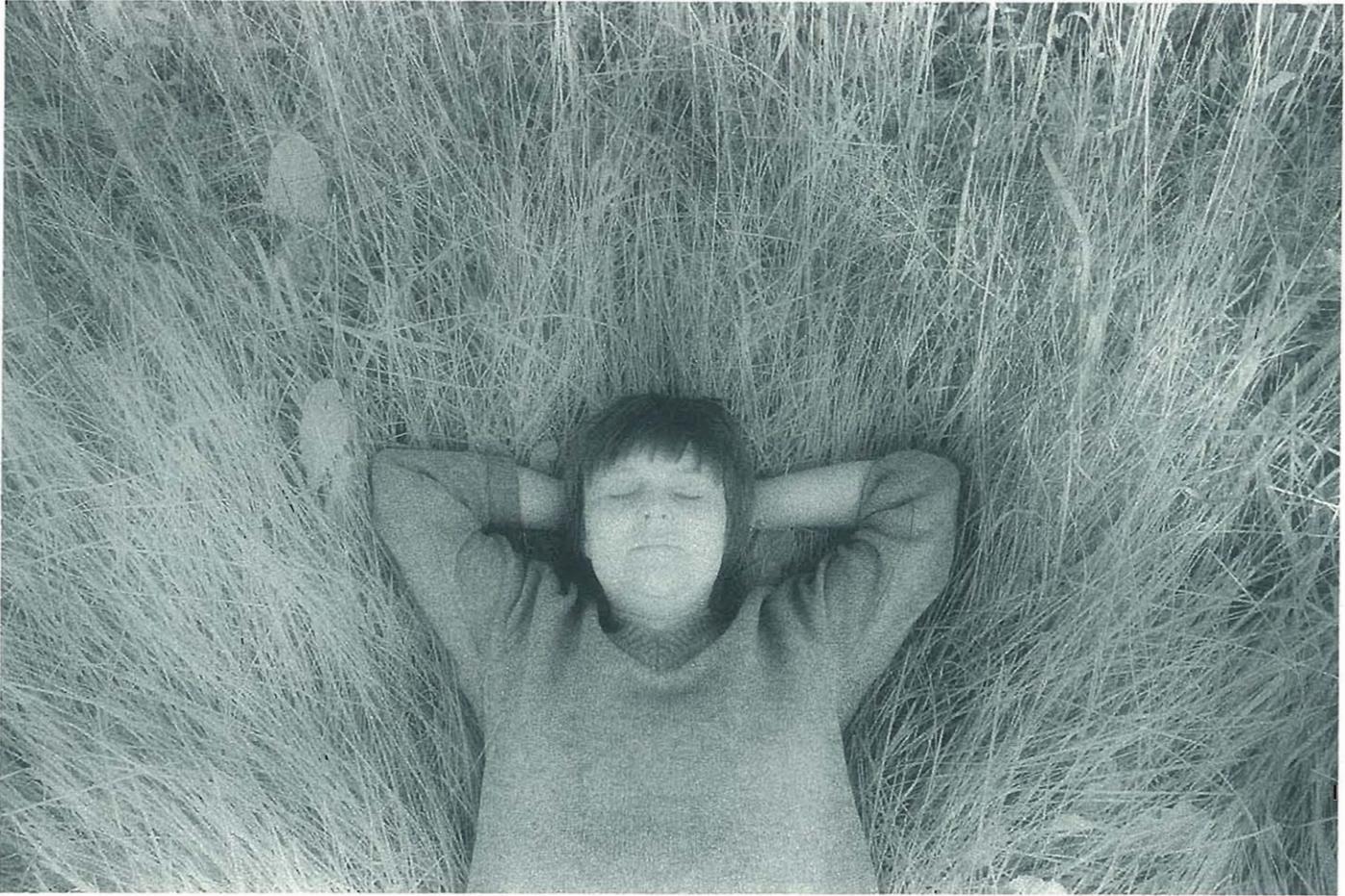
In struggling to transcend everyday problems or crises in our own lives, we may, like Moses, discover the need to face life courageously even when feeling inadequate. Or like Buddha, we may learn that taking time to reflect on what is important can help resolve spiritual crises and answer questions about the meaning of life and faith. Or we may, like Jesus, reaffirm our faith in the midst of suffering, pain, and even death. Perhaps like Muhammad, we will discover that reaching a spiritual goal may take many years and that others may be resistant or even hostile to our goals but that the journey is worth the effort.

The spiritual crises that we confront challenge us to clarify what we believe in and what we are committed to doing. When we respond to the challenge and find our paths that have heart, we are likely to discover that our faith in life is strengthened and our passion for life released. We will find ourselves in touch with the incredible powers of the human spirit—the powers to live with hope, courage, curiosity, imagination, enthusiasm, caring, and openness to whatever is and to the good that can be. ♦

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# TOUCHING NATURE



*The freshness of the morning, the softness of the air, the fragrance of the grass, speaks to me.*

D A V E D E V R I E S

My work has long been inspired by dreams and an attempt to give form to my personal (and the collective) unconsciousness. I view the photographic process as a collaboration between myself, the subject and the ultimate viewer. Together we seek to discover the right combination of position, light and gesture that has the power to awaken and resonate with some previously unidentified inner need. The communication process is only complete when the resulting image is projected upon the mind of the viewer and the experience is identified and shared.

*Dave DeVries is a photographer who has exhibited widely throughout the United States, Canada and in Europe. He is currently a Professor of Communications at California State University, Fullerton where he also heads the photography program. The poem that accompanies the exhibit is adapted from a poem by Chief Dan George.*



*The beauty of the trees, the trail of the sun, the  
rhythm of the sea, speaks to me.*



*The faintness of the stars, the dewdrop on the flower,  
and the life that never goes away, speaks to me.*

*And my heart soars.*

# Look Deeply Within

T H I C H   N H A T   H A N H

*When we look deeply at a flower, we can see that it is made entirely of non-flower elements, like sunshine, rain, soil, compost, air, and time. If we continue to look deeply, we will also notice that the flower is on her way to becoming compost. If we don't notice this, we will be shocked when the flower begins to decompose. When we look deeply at the compost, we see that it is also on its way to becoming flowers, and we realize that flowers and compost "inter-are." They need each other. A good organic gardener does not discriminate against compost, because he knows how to transform it into marigolds, roses, and many other kinds of flowers. ✦ When we look deeply into ourselves, we see both flowers and garbage. Each of us has anger, hatred, depression, racial discrimination, and many other kinds of garbage in us, but there is no need for us to be afraid. In the way that a gardener knows how to transform compost into flowers, we can learn the art of transforming anger, depression, and racial discrimination into love and understanding. This is the work of meditation.*

*Thich Nhat Hanh is a Vietnamese Zen master, poet, and peace advocate. He is the author of "Being Peace," "The Miracle of Mindfulness," and many other books. He presently lives in a small community in southwestern France, where he teaches, writes, gardens, and works to help refugees worldwide. He travels regularly throughout North America and Europe to lecture and lead retreats on "the art of mindful living."*



According to Buddhist psychology, our consciousness is divided into two parts, like a house with two floors. On the ground floor there is a living room and we call this "mind consciousness." Below the ground level, there is a basement and we call this "store consciousness." In the store consciousness, everything we have ever done, experienced, or perceived is stored in the form of a seed or a film. Our basement is an archive of every imaginable kind of film stored on a video cassette. Upstairs in the living room, we sit in a chair and watch these films as they are brought up from the basement.

Certain movies such as Anger, Fear, or Despair, seem to have the ability to come up from the basement all by themselves. They open the door to the living room and pop themselves into our video cassette recorder whether we choose them or not. When that happens, we feel stuck and we have no choice but to watch them. Fortunately, each film has a limit-

ed length and when it is over, it returns to the basement. But each time it is viewed by us, it establishes a better position on the archive shelf and we know it will return soon. Sometimes a stimulus from outside, like someone saying something that hurts our feelings, triggers the showing of a film on our TV screen. We spend so much of our time watching these films and many of them are destroying us. Learning how to stop them is important for our well-being.

Traditional texts describe con-

We may be in the habit of manifesting seeds of anger, sorrow, and fear in our mind consciousness; seeds of joy, happiness, and peace may not sprout up much. To practice mindfulness means to recognize each seed as it comes up from the storehouse and to practice watering the most wholesome seeds, whenever possible, to help them grow stronger. During each moment that we are aware of something peaceful and beautiful, we water seeds of peace and beauty in us and beautiful



**Thich Nhat Hanh, center, at a recent Mindfulness retreat.**

sciousness as a field, a plot of land where every kind of seed can be planted—seeds of suffering, happiness, joy, sorrow, fear, anger, and hope. Store consciousness is also described as a storehouse filled with all our seeds. When a seed manifests in our mind consciousness, it always returns to the storehouse stronger. The quality of our life depends on the quality of the seeds in our store consciousness.

flowers bloom in our consciousness. The length of time we water a seed determines the strength of that seed. For example, if we stand in front of a tree, breathe consciously, and enjoy it for five minutes, seeds of happiness will be watered in us for five minutes, and those seeds will grow stronger. During the same five minutes other seeds, like fear and pain, will not be watered. We have to practice this way every day. Any seed

that manifests in our mind consciousness always returns to our store consciousness stronger. If we water our wholesome seeds carefully, we can trust that our store consciousness will do the work of healing.

dinner and get a good night's sleep. In the morning, while you are brushing your teeth, his name just pops up. "Oh yes, that's his name." This means that during the night while your mind con-

sciousness ceased the search, the store consciousness continued to work and in the morning it brought you the results. Healing has many avenues. When we feel anger, distress, or despair, we only need to breathe in and out consciously and recognize the feeling of anger, distress, or despair, and then we can leave the work of healing to our consciousness. But it is not only by touching our pain that we can heal. In fact, if we are not ready to do that, touching it may only make it worse. We have to strengthen ourselves first and the easiest way to do this is by touching joy and peace. There are many wonderful things but because we have focused our attention on what is wrong, we have not been able to touch what is not wrong. If we make some effort to breathe in and

out and touch what is not wrong, the healing will be easier. Many of us have so much pain that it is difficult for us to touch a flower or hold the hand of a child. But we must make some effort so that we can develop the habit of touching what is beautiful and wholesome. This is the way we can assist our store consciousness do the work of healing. If we touch what is peaceful and healing in us and around us, we help our store consciousness do the work of transformation. We let ourselves be healed by the trees, the birds, and the beautiful children. Otherwise, we will only repeat our suffering. One wonderful seed in our store consciousness—the seed of mindfulness—when manifested has the capacity of being aware of what is happening in the present moment. If we take one peaceful, happy step and we know that we are taking a peaceful, happy step, mindfulness is present. Mindfulness is an important agent for our transformation and healing, but our seed of mindfulness has been buried under many layers of forgetfulness and pain for a long time. We are rarely aware that we have eyes that see clearly, a heart and a liver that function well, and a non-toothache. We live in forgetfulness, looking for happiness somewhere else, ignoring and crushing the precious elements of happiness that are already in us and around us. If we breathe in and out and see that the tree is there, alive and beautiful, the seed of our mindfulness will be watered and it will grow stronger. When we first start to practice, our mindfulness will be weak, like a fifteen-watt light bulb. But as



Thich Nhat Hanh, center, at a recent Mindfulness retreat.

Our bodies have a healing power. Every time we cut our finger, we wash the wound carefully and leave the work of healing to our body. In a few hours or a day, the cut is healed. Our consciousness also has a healing power. Suppose you see someone on the street you knew twenty years ago and you cannot remember his name. The seed of him in your memory has become quite weak since it has not had the chance to manifest in the upper level of your consciousness in such a long time. On your way home, you look throughout your basement to find the seed of his name but you cannot find it. Finally you get a headache from looking so hard so you stop looking and listen to a tape or a compact disc of beautiful music. Then you enjoy a delicious

soon as we pay attention to our breathing, it begins to grow stronger and after practicing like that for a few weeks, it becomes as bright as a one-hundred-watt bulb. With the light of mindfulness shining, we touch many wonderful elements within and around us and while doing so, we water the seeds of peace, joy, and happiness in us and at the same time, we refrain from watering the seeds of unhappiness.

When we start out, the seeds of unhappiness in us are quite strong, because we have been watering them every day. Our seeds of anger have been watered by our spouse and our children. Because they themselves suffer, they only know how to water our seeds of suffering. When those seeds of unhappiness are strong, even if we do not invite them up from the basement, they will push the door open and barge into the living room. When they enter, it is not at all pleasant. We may try to suppress them and keep them in the basement but because we have watered them so much, they are strong enough just to show up in the upper level of our consciousness even without an invitation.

Many of us feel the need to do something all the time—listen to a walkman, watch TV, read a book or a magazine, pick up the telephone. We want to keep ourselves busy in our living room so we can avoid dealing with the worries and anxieties that are in our basement. But if we look deeply into the nature of the guests we are inviting into the living room, we will see that many carry the same toxins as are present in the negative seeds we are trying so hard to avoid. Even as we prevent these negative seeds from coming up, we are watering them and making them stronger. Some of us even do social and environmental work to

## Guidelines for Compassionate Living

BY THICH NHAT HANH

To realize peace in our daily lives, we need some guidelines to serve as an ethical basis for a happy life.

Violence, racial injustice, alcoholism, sexual abuse, environmental exploitation, and so many other problems compel us to find ways to stop the suffering that is rampant in ourselves and in society. I hope you will reflect on these five guidelines and try to practice them.

**First:** *Cultivate compassion and learn ways to protect the lives of people, animals, and plants.*

Be determined not to kill, not to let others kill, and not to condone any act of killing in the world, in your thinking and in your way of life.

**Second:** *Cultivate loving kindness and learn ways of working for the well-being of people, animals, and plants.*

Be determined to practice generosity by sharing time, energy, and material resources with those who are in real need. Be determined not to steal and not to possess anything that should belong to others. Respect the property of others and prevent profiting from human suffering or the suffering of others species on Earth.

**Third:** *Cultivate responsibility and learn ways to protect the safety and integrity of individuals, couples, families, and society.*

Be determined not to engage in sexual relations without love and a long-term commitment. Respect your commitments and the commitments of others. Protect children from sexual abuse and prevent couples and families from being broken by sexual misconduct.

**Fourth:** *Cultivate loving speech and deep listening in order to bring joy and happiness to others and relieve others of their suffering.*

Knowing that words can create happiness or suffering, learn to speak truthfully, with words that inspire self-confidence, joy, and hope. Be determined not to spread news that you do not know to be certain and not to criticize or condemn things of which you are not sure. Refrain from uttering words that can cause division or discord or that can cause the family or the community to break. Make all efforts to reconcile and resolve all conflicts, however small.

**Fifth:** *Cultivate good health, both physical and mental, for yourself, your family, and society by practicing mindful eating, drinking, and consuming.*

Be determined to ingest only items that preserve peace, well-being, and joy in your body, in your consciousness, and in the collective body and consciousness of your family and society. Be determined not to use alcohol or any other intoxicant or to ingest foods or other items that contain toxins, such as certain TV programs, magazines, books, films, and conversations. Be aware that to damage your body or consciousness with these poisons is to betray your ancestors, your parents, your society, and future generations. Work to transform violence, fear, anger, and confusion in yourself and in society.

*Understand that mindful living is crucial for self-transformation and for the transformation of society. •*

Adapted from "Touching Peace," Chapter eight "Diet for a Mindful Society." By Thich Nhat Hanh, Parallax Press; Berkeley, CA.

avoid looking at our real problems.

For us to be happy, we need to water the seed of mindfulness that is in us. Mindfulness is the seed of enlightenment, awareness, understanding, care, compassion, liberation, transformation, and healing. If we practice mindfulness, we get in touch with the refreshing and joyful aspects of life in us and around us, the things we are not able to touch when we live in forgetfulness. Mindfulness makes things like our eyes, our heart, our non-toothache, the beautiful moon, and the trees deeper and more beautiful. If we touch these wonderful things with mindfulness, they will reveal their full splendor. When we touch our pain with mindfulness, we will begin to transform it. When a baby is crying in the living room, his mother goes in right away to hold him tenderly in her arms. Because mother is made of love and tenderness, when she does that, love and tenderness penetrate the baby and in only a few minutes the baby will probably stop crying. Mindfulness is the mother who cares for your pain every time it begins to cry.

While the pain is in the basement, you can enjoy many refreshing and healing elements of life by producing mindfulness. Then, when the pain wants to come upstairs, you can turn off your walkman, close your book, open the living room door, and invite your pain to come up. You can smile to it and embrace it with your mindfulness, which has become strong. If fear for example wishes to come up, don't ignore it. Greet it warmly with your mindfulness. "Fear, my old friend, I recognize you." If you are afraid of your fear, it may overwhelm you. But if you invite it up calmly and smile at it in mindfulness, it will lose some of its strength. After

you have practiced watering the seeds of mindfulness for a few weeks, you will be strong enough to invite your fear to come up any time, and you will be able to embrace it with your mindfulness. It may not be entirely pleasant but with mindfulness you are safe.

If you embrace a minor pain with mindfulness, it will be transformed in a few minutes. Just breathe in and out, and smile at it. But when you have a block of pain that is stronger, more time is needed. Practice sitting and walking meditation while you embrace your pain in mindfulness and sooner or later it will be transformed. If you have increased the quality of your mindfulness through the practice, the transformation will be quicker. When mindfulness embraces pain, it begins to penetrate and transform it, like sunshine penetrating a flower bud and helping it blossom. When mindfulness touches something beautiful, it reveals its beauty. When it touches something painful, it transforms and heals it.

Another way to accelerate the transformation is called looking deeply. When we look deeply at a flower, we see the non-flower elements that help it to be—the clouds, the earth, the gardener, the soil. When we look deeply at our pain, we see that our suffering is not ours alone. Many seeds of suffering have been handed down to us by our ancestors, our parents, and our society. We have to recognize these seeds. One boy who practices at Plum Village told me this story. When he was eleven, he was very angry at his father. Every time he fell down and hurt himself, his father would get angry and shout at him. The boy vowed that when he grew up he would be different. One day, his little sister was playing with other children and she fell off a swing and

scraped her knee. It was bleeding and the boy became very angry. He wanted to shout at her, "How stupid! Why did you do that?" But he caught himself. Because he had been practicing mindfulness, he knew how to recognize his anger as anger and he did not act on it.

A number of adults who were present were taking good care of his sister, washing her wound and putting a bandage on it, so he walked away slowly and practiced looking deeply. Suddenly he saw that he was exactly like his father and he realized that if he did not do something about his anger, he would transmit it to his children. It was a remarkable insight for an eleven-year-old boy. At the same time, he saw that his father may have been a victim just like him. The seeds of his father's anger might have been transmitted by his grandparents. Because of the practice of looking deeply in mindfulness, he was able to transform his anger into insight. Then he went to his father and told him that because he now understood him, he was able really to love him.

When we are irritated and we say something unkind to our child, we water the seeds of suffering in him. When he reacts, he waters the seeds of suffering in us. Living this way escalates and strengthens the suffering. In mindfulness, calmly breathing in and out, we can practice looking deeply at the types of suffering we have in ourselves. When we do so, we also begin to understand our ancestors, our culture, and our society. The moment we see this, we can go back and serve our people with loving kindness and compassion and without blame. Because of our insight, we are capable of practicing real peace and reconciliation. When you

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# TV

## SOCIETY'S TOXIC MEDIUM

*For most human beings in the Western world, watching television has become the principal means of interaction with the new world now under construction, as well as a primary activity of everyday life. At the same time, the institutions at the fulcrum of the process use television to train human beings in what to think, what to feel, and how to be in the modern world.*

J E R R Y M A N D E R

# *A half-minute of prime time sells for about \$200,000 to \$300,000; during events such as the Super Bowl, the price is more like \$700,000.*

*Jerry Mander is author of "Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television." He was president of Freeman, Mander & Gossage advertising until he quit in the 1970s to devote himself to public interest campaigns. He is now a Senior Fellow at the country's only non-profit ad agency, Public Media Center in San Francisco, and is a director of the Berkeley ecological think tank, the Elmwood Institute.*



Let's start with some 1990 statistics. They are of such monumental importance, and yet are so infrequently discussed that I try to include them whenever I write about television.

•According to the U.S. Department of Commerce, 99.5 percent of the homes in the United States that have electricity have television sets. Electronically speaking, we are all wired together as a single entity. An electronic signal sent from a single source can now reach nearly every person in the country—250 million people across 3 million square miles—at exactly the same time. When such figures first appeared in the sixties, Marshall McLuhan hailed them as a portent of a new "global village," but he missed an important political point. The autocratic potential—the power of the one speaking into the brains of the many—is unprecedented. Its consequences are only discussed adequately in science fiction by such people as Orwell and Huxley. The consequences are also keenly appreciated by those institutions large enough to attempt to control the medium: corporations, government, religion.

•According to the A. C.

Nielsen Company, 95 percent of the U.S. population watches some TV every day. No day goes by without a "hit" of television, which indicates the level of engagement, or addiction, that people feel for the medium.

•Nielsen reports that the average American home has a television on for nearly eight hours per day. The average American adult watches TV nearly five hours per day. The average child between ages two and five watches about three and a half hours per day. The average adult over fifty-five watches nearly six hours.

Consider the situation of the average adult who watches for almost five hours daily. This person spends more time watching television than he or she spends doing anything else in life except sleeping or working or going to school. But if the *average* person is watching five hours per day, then roughly half of the U.S. population is watching *more* than five hours. (In practice, this means watching through most of each weekend, plus three or four hours each weeknight.)

It is hardly an exaggeration to say that the main activity of life for Americans, aside from work or sleep, has become watching television. Television has effectively replaced the diverse activities of previous generations, such as community events, cultural pursuits, and family life.

Ours is the first society in history of which it can be said that life has moved *inside* media. The average person, watching television for five hours per day, is physically engaged with—looking at and experiencing—a *machine*. To that extent, the person is not

relating to anything else in the environment. But the environment of TV is not static, it is aggressive. It enters people's minds and leaves images within, which people then carry permanently. So television is an external environment that becomes an internal, mental environment.

The situation is really so odd that it lends itself well to science fiction descriptions. Imagine, for example, that a research team of anthropologists from Andromeda Galaxy is sent to Earth. Hovering above our country, the researchers might report back to their home base something like this:

"We are scanning the Americans now. Night after night they sit still in dark rooms, not talking to each other, barely moving except to eat. Many of them sit in separate rooms but even those sitting in groups rarely speak to one another. They are staring at a light! The light flickers on and off many times per second [from the AC current]. The humans' eyes are not moving, and since we know that there is an association between eye movement and thought, we have measured their brain waves. Their brains are in 'alpha,' a noncognitive, passive-receptive mode. The humans are *receivers*."

"As for the light, it comes in the form of images, sent from only a few sources, thousands of miles from where the humans are gathering them in. The images are of places and events that are not, for the most part, related to the people's lives. Once placed into their heads, the images seem to take on permanence. We have noted that people use these images in their conversations with other people

and that they begin to dress and act in a manner that imitates the images. They also choose their national leaders from among the images.

"In summary, this place seems to be engaged in some kind of weird mental training akin to brainwashing."

If this is a fair description of the situation in the United States, it is also becoming a description of many other parts of the world. Right

now, about 60 percent of the world population has access to television. In many places where television has recently arrived—remote villages in Africa, South America, Indonesia, northern Canada; places where there are not even roads—satellite communications have made it possible for people to ingest the dominant external society. In grass houses, on the frozen tundra, on tiny tropical islands, in the jungles of Brazil and Africa, people are sitting in their traditional homes of logs or mud or grass, and they are watching "Dallas" and "The Edge of Night" and "Bonanza."

More than 50 percent of the television watched outside the U.S. consists of reruns of popular American-made shows. Satellite communications, introduced as yet another democratic breakthrough for technology, are being used to place imagery of American-style commodity life, American values, American commercials, American-style experi-

ence in the heads of everyone wherever they are. The end result will be worldwide monoculture.

their own; their control is far more subtle. It works in the minds of television producers who, when thinking about what programs to

produce, have to mitigate their desires by their need to sell the programs to corporate backers. An effective censorship results.

While a small number of corporations pay for 75 percent of commercial broadcast time and thereby dominate that

medium, they now also pay for more than 50 percent of public television. During the Reagan years, federal support for noncommercial television was virtually eliminated, leaving a void that public television filled by appealing to corporations. As corporate influence has grown in public TV, so has the quality and length of the corporate commercial tags before and after the shows they sponsor. Whereas public television once featured such messages as "This program has been brought to you through a grant by Exxon," now we see the Exxon logo, followed by an added advertising phrase or two and an audio slogan.

The reason why only the largest corporations in the world dominate the broadcast signals is obvious. They are the only ones who can afford it. According to the present structure of network TV, a half-minute of prime time sells for about \$200,000 to \$300,000; during events such as the Super Bowl, the price is more like \$700,000.



#### FREEDOM OF SPEECH FOR THE WEALTHY

We think of television as a democratic medium since we all get to watch it in our homes. But if it is "democratic" on the receiving end, it is surely not that on the sending end.

According to *Advertising Age*, about 75 percent of commercial network television time is paid for by the 100 largest corporations in the country. Many people do not react to this statistic as being important. But consider that there are presently 450,000 corporations in the United States, and some 250 million people, representing extremely diverse viewpoints about lifestyle, politics, and personal and national priorities. Only 100 corporations get to decide what will appear on television and what will not. These corporations do not overtly announce their refusal to finance programs that contain views dissonant with

# *The average American who watches five hours of television per day sees approximately 21,000 commercials per year.*

Very few medium-sized corporations or businesses, and even fewer individuals, could pay \$200,000 for a single message broadcast to the world.

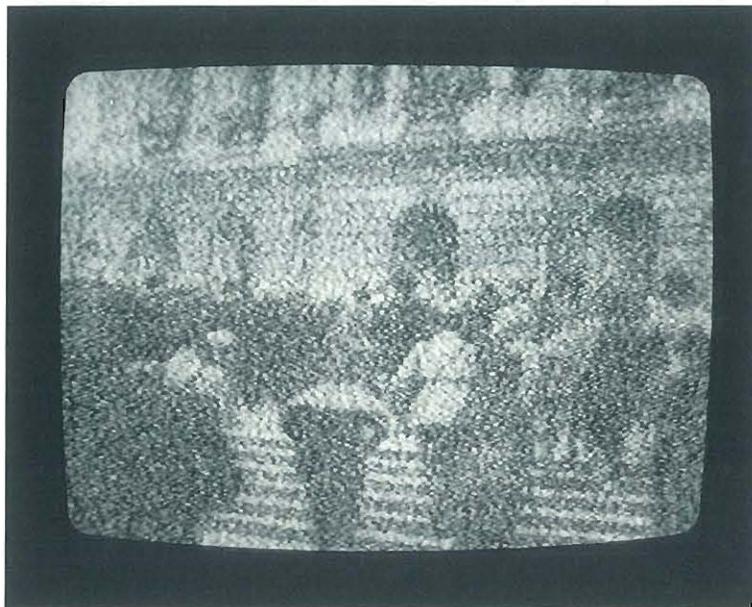
If you and your friends decided that you had a very important statement to make about an issue—let's say the cutting down of old-growth redwoods in the Pacific Northwest—and if you were very fortunate (and rich), perhaps you could manage to raise sufficient money actually to place your message on the airwaves—*once*. Meanwhile, the multinational corporation doing the logging could buy the spot that appears before yours, and the one immediately after, and then three more later in the evening, and then five more tomorrow and the next day and the day after, and so on throughout the month. Some corporations have advertising budgets ranging from 100 million to over one billion dollars per year. Television is effectively a "private medium," for their use only.

That television is a private system in the hands of the largest corporations is difficult for most Americans to grasp. This is because we believe that freedom of speech is an inalienable right that we all enjoy equally. Nothing could be further from the truth. As A. J. Liebling said, "Freedom

of the press is available only to those who own one." Similarly, freedom of speech is more available to some than to others, namely, to the people who can purchase it on national television. This leads to certain kinds of information dominating the airwaves.

The 100 largest corporations

shocking statistic: *The average American who watches five hours of television per day sees approximately 21,000 commercials per year.* That's 21,000 repetitions of essentially identical messages about life, aggressively placed into viewers' minds, all saying, *Buy something—do it now!*



So an entire nation of people is sitting night after night in their rooms, in a passive condition, receiving information from faraway places in the form of imagery placed in their brains, repeated 21,000 times per year, telling them how to live their lives. If the instrument responsible for this activity weren't TV, our familiar companion, then you like the Andromeda scientists

would probably call it a system of mass brainwashing and political control, and would be damned worried about it.

## *THE TECHNOLOGY OF PASSIVITY*

Economics is not the only reason why television is such a suitable medium for corporate control. Equally important is the nature of the television-viewing experience, how television affects human beings. From a corporate point of view, the effect is beneficial.

Even in the absence of chemical evidence of addiction, the amount of time people spend daily in front

manufacture drugs, chemicals, cosmetics, packaged-processed foods, cars, and oil, and are involved in other extractive industries. But whether you are viewing a commercial for aspirin, cars, or cosmetics, the message is exactly the same. *All* advertising is saying this: Whether you buy this commodity or that one, satisfaction in life comes from commodities.

So we have the most pervasive and powerful communications medium in history and it is totally financed by people with identical views of how life should be lived. They express this view unabashedly. Which brings us to the most

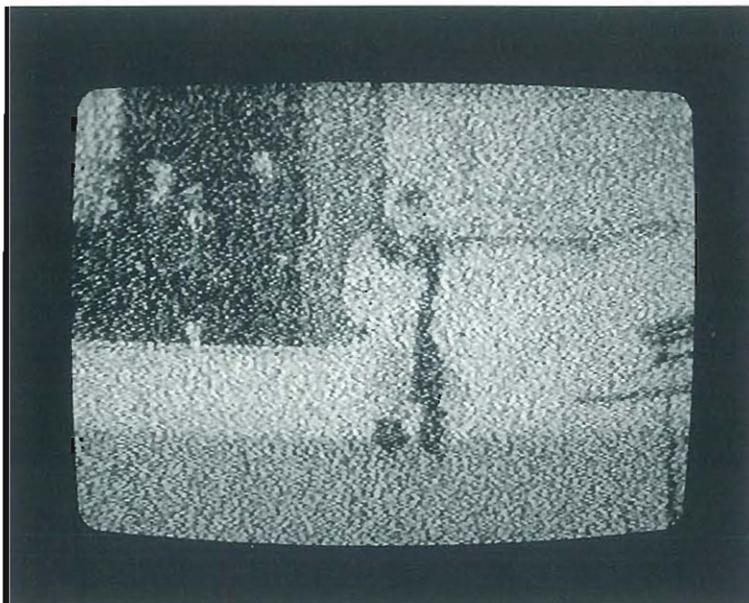
of their TV and the way lives are scheduled around it, ought to be sufficient, *de facto* proof of TV's hypnotic and addictive abilities. In fact, when I interviewed people for *Four Arguments*, interviewees consistently used terms such as "hypnotic," "mesmerizing," or "addictive" to describe their experiences of television viewing. And many used the term "zombie" to describe how their kids looked while watching television.

Eventually, I sought scientific evidence about the validity of these anecdotal descriptions, and found some researchers ready to validate such characterizations.

For example, scientists who study brain-wave activity found that the longer one watches television, the more likely the brain will slip into "alpha" level: a slow, steady brain-wave pattern in which the mind is in its most receptive mode. It is a noncognitive mode; i.e., information can be placed into the mind *directly* without viewer participation. When watching television, people are receiving images into their brains without thinking about them. Australian National University researchers call this a kind of "sleep-teaching." So if you look at your child in front of the TV and think of him or her as "zonked," that is apparently an apt description.

There are many reasons why the brain slips into this passive-receptive alpha condition. One reason is the lack of eye movement when watching TV because of the small

size of the screen. Sitting at a normal distance, the eye can gather most of the image without scanning the screen for it. The image comes in whole. This lack of *seeking* images disrupts the normal association between eye movement and thought stimulation, which is a genetically provided safety valve for human beings. Before modern times, any unusual event in the environment would attract instant attention; all the senses would immediately turn to it, including the vision sense and its "feeler,"



the eyes. But when an image doesn't have to be sought, an important form of mental stimulation is absent.

A second factor causing the brain to slip into alpha-wave activity is that, with the eyes not moving and the screen flickering on and off sixty times per second, an effective hypnosis is induced, at least in the view of psychologists who use hypnotism. Looking at the flickering light of a TV screen is akin to staring at the hypnotist's candle.

I think the third factor is the most important. The information on the TV screen—the images—

come at their own speed, outside of the viewer's control; an image *stream*. One doesn't "pull out" and contemplate TV images, as if they were still photographs or images described in a written passage. If you attempted to do that you would fall behind the image stream. So there are two choices: surrender to the images or withdraw from the experience. But if you are going to watch television (or film) at all, you *must* allow the images to enter you at their own speed. So, the nature of the experience makes you passive to its process, in body and mind. (More complete discussions of this process can be found in *The Plug In Drug* by Marie Winn and Australian National University's *Choice of Futures* by Fred and Merrylyn Emery, as well as in *Four Arguments for the Elimination of Television*.)

Does this problem also exist with other media? Not to the same degree. Take film, for exam-

ple. The nature of the film-going experience is that one usually goes with a friend. That in itself stimulates the mind. And since film is shown in a public place, with other people present, there are many more stimuli and feelings accompanying the experience; a mood envelops the room.

Also, film imagery is much more refined and detailed than television imagery. The TV image, composed of tiny dots, is very coarse compared with film. A lot is lost in the television picture. Film, on the other hand, can bring out great background detail, much better images of nature, much

*Even in the absence of chemical evidence of addiction, the amount of time people spend daily in front of their TV and the way lives are scheduled around it, ought to be sufficient, de facto proof of TV's hypnotic and addictive abilities.*

greater subtlety. The richer the detail of the image, the more involving it is to the viewer. (This comparative advantage for film imagery over TV will only be partially mitigated when "high-definition TV" is introduced in a few years.)

Films are almost always shown on a much larger screen than are television programs, thus requiring considerably more eye movement. And when the film is over, the theater lights come up, people react and finally rise to leave. They don't just sit there as the next stream of imagery invades them. The act of leaving and then perhaps going to a cafe and talking it over, combined with the other elements of film-going, serve to bring the images up from the lower right brain (where images would otherwise reside like dreams) into greater consciousness. The images come out of the unconscious, unusable realms into the conscious, where they can be examined to some extent.

Radio is a medium that does not impose images at all; in fact, radio stimulates the imagination in much the way books do. A situation is described and the listener actively visualizes. This very act suppresses alpha. When watching television, on the other hand, one's own image-making goes into dormancy.

Print medium are by far the

most engaging and participatory of any media. Since there is no inherent time limitation with books and newspapers, they can offer much more complex detail and background than any so-called visual medium. If I should now ask you to imagine a lush green field with a trickling stream, billowy clouds above, two great white dogs lying in the grass, lovers on a nearby hillside . . . you can certainly imagine that scene in great detail and color. You created these pictures in your own mind; they do not necessarily match the image I have in my mind of the same scene. If a similar image were shown on television, it would be flatter than the one you created. Meanwhile you would not be engaged in your own image-making; you would be passive to the process, relatively uninvolved.

No medium is as effective as print for providing information in detail. Since it does not have the limitations of time, it can deliver to the reader whatever it takes to achieve understanding, from one or two sentences to multiple volumes. But most importantly, gathering data from print is an active, not passive, process.

To read successfully, you must apply conscious mental effort. It is impossible to be in alpha level while reading, at least not if you want to understand what you read. We have all had the experience of

reading a paragraph on a page, then realizing that we hadn't actually read it, then having to read the same material a second time. In doing this, we apply conscious effort to the process; we put our brain into a cognitive mode in order to grasp the information.

Also when reading, one has the opportunity to review the material, underline it, write notes in the margin, tear out a page, Xerox it, send copies to friends, and reread at will, fast or slow. The reader controls most elements of the process and can create the conditions for accepting the information. All of this is impossible with TV-viewing. The information must be taken as it comes, without resistance. As a result, researchers at Australian National University described the TV-viewing experience as inherently pacifying. San Francisco brain researcher Erik Peper said, "The word 'zombie' is the best way to describe the experience." And Cornell University professor Rose Goldsen called television viewing "mnemonic learning"; that is, "learning without the conscious participation of the learner." It is sleep-teaching.

So television-viewing, if it can be compared to a drug experience, seems to have many of the characteristics of Valium and other tranquilizers. But that is only half of the story. Actually, if television is

a drug, it is not really Valium; it is speed.

### ACCELERATION OF THE NERVOUS SYSTEM

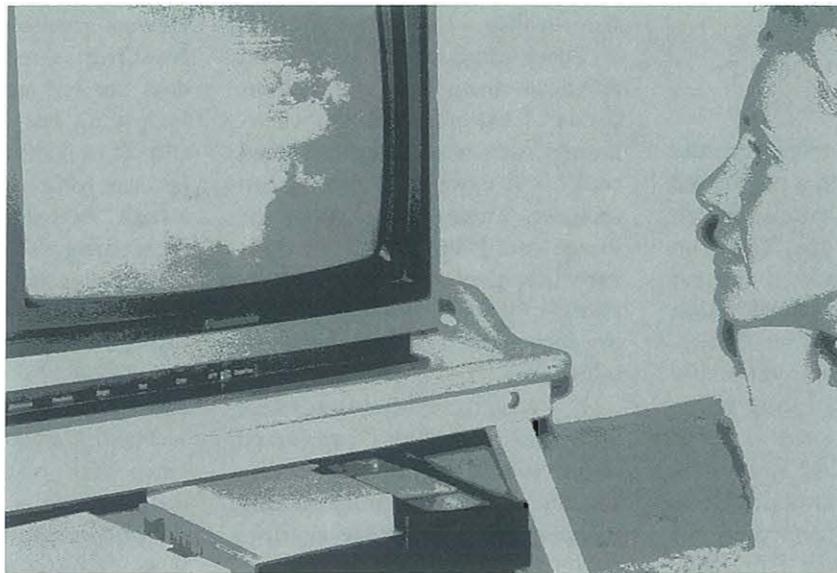
In their famous study of the effects of television, researchers at Australian National University predicted that as television became more popular in Australia, there would be a corresponding increase in hyperactivity among children. I found this prediction alarming because many parents of hyperactive children place their kids in front of the television set where they seem to calm down. Apparently, the opposite effect is what finally results.

Here's how it works. While sitting quietly in front of the TV, the child sees people punching each other on the screen. There is the impulse to react—the fight-or-flight instinct is activated—but since it would be absurd to react to a television fight, the child suppresses the emotion. As the fighting continues, so does the cycle of impulse and suppression. Throughout the television-viewing experience, the child is drawn back and forth on this see-saw of action and suppression, all the while appearing zapped and inactive. When the set goes off, this stored-up energy bursts forth in the disorganized, frantic behavior that we associate with hyperactivity. Often, the only calming act is to again put the set on, which starts the cycle anew.

But there are also more subtle ways that television speeds humans up.

I am a member of the pre-television generation. Until I was in my late teens, there wasn't any television. So as a child, my after-school activities were different from those of the average child today.

I can recall how it felt coming home from school every day. First, I would look in the refrigerator to see if my mother had left me any snacks. I would quickly take care of those. Then, I might play with the dog. I would go up to my



room. I would lie on the living room floor. I would become bored. Nothing to do.

Slowly I would slip into a state that I have lately begun to call "downtime" (not in the computer sense)—a kind of deadly boredom. A bottom of feeling, as it were. It was connected with a gnawing anxiety in the stomach. It was so unpleasant that I would eventually decide to *do something*. I would call a friend. I would go outdoors. I would play ball. I would read.

I think that the downtime I am describing was the norm for kids during the 1940s when life was slower than it is today. Looking back, I view that time of nothing-

ness as serving an important creative function. Out of this nothing-to-do condition some activity would eventually emerge. You got to the bottom of your feelings, you let things slide to their lowest state, and *then* you took charge. You experienced yourself in movement, with ideas. Taking all young people in the country as a group, this downtime could be considered a national genetic pool of creativity.

Today, however, after teenagers come home and begin to slip into downtime with its accompanying unpleasant feeling, they reach for the television knob. This stops the slide. Used this way, television is a mood alteration system like a drug. As the mood comes on, they reach for the drug, just as adults reach for the drink—or the TV—at the end of the day. So television for youngsters, in addition to *being* a drug, can be understood as early training for "harder" drugs.

Obviously, we all have ways of altering our moods. However, I don't think most of us see our TV-watching as a mood-altering device. Understanding it in such terms gives new meaning to the fact that the average young person watches for nearly four hours per day. By reaching for the TV drug, a generation of young people are short-circuiting their own downtime. They are not allowing themselves to live through the pits of their own experience or to feel their own creative response to it. The net result, I think, will be a

generation of young people who are less able to act on their own or to be creative. Educators are already telling us that this is so. This habit may also be depriving young people of the fundamental self-knowledge that dealing with one's feelings produces. And it leaves this new drugged generation feeling that they can't experience life without technological and chemical props. So TV not only trains them for drug dependency, it also trains them for commodity dependency.

#### PERCEPTUAL SPEEDUP AND CONFUSION

When watching television, the viewer is moved into a perceptual universe that is much, much faster than ordinary life. To get an idea of how this works, I suggest that you turn on your television set now and switch to a commercial network. (This is an especially useful exercise to do during prime time when more money is spent on production values.) Count the number of times something happens in the image that could not happen in ordinary life. One moment the camera puts you in front of the image, in another moment you are behind it or above it or rolling around it. Then you are out on the street; then it is tomorrow or yesterday. A commercial appears on the screen with dancers, music, and cartoons. A couple walks on a hillside hundreds of yards away but you can hear them speaking as though you were next to them. Words flash on and off the screen. There are suddenly two simultaneous images, or three. You are looking at a face, then suddenly at hands, then suddenly you are outdoors. Long periods of historical time are jammed together. You move from landscape, to sky, to

humans in rapid succession. Young people are running toward you—*Cut*. Now they are on a beach—*Cut*. Now you are watching beer poured into a glass—*Cut*. Now music is playing—*Cut*. An announcer speaks from somewhere. Now you are in Europe. Now in Asia. There is a war, there is a commercial . . . All of this is jammed together in a steady stream of imagery, fracturing your attention while condensing time and mixing categories of reality, non-reality, and semi-reality.

These image fluctuations and technical changes, as well as hundreds of other kinds not mentioned, are what I have called technical events in television imagery. These alterations of the image could not happen in ordinary life; they are *technical* alterations only possible within moving-image media: films, video, or television.

If you actually counted these technical events as I suggested above, you would find that during commercials—especially during prime time—the image changes at an average of ten to fifteen times per thirty-second commercial. During a regular program on a commercial channel, camera movements or technical events occur about seven to ten times per minute. On public television programs, there are probably three to four camera movements or technical events per minute. (There are fewer on public television than commercial television simply because commercial television can afford more cameras, more edits, and more technology. Similarly, advertisers can spend more than any television program can afford. This is one reason why people pay attention to advertising despite the lack of real content. It is visually more engaging. When people

say that "advertising is the most interesting thing on television," they are not aware they are speaking about the *technology* of advertising.)

This hyperactivated imagery continues for as long as a viewer is watching the screen. For heavy viewers of television it means five or six (or more) hours living within a perceptual universe that is constantly fractured and in which time and events are both condensed and accelerated.

Finally, the set goes off. The viewers are back in their rooms. Nothing is moving. The room does not rise up or whirl around. People do not suddenly flash on and off in front of them. It doesn't become tomorrow or yesterday in a flash. Actually, nothing at all is happening. There is simply the same room as before: walls, windows, furniture. Ordinary life and ordinary feelings and thoughts. Very slow, by comparison. Too slow. Anxiety sets in.

Having lived in the amazingly rapid world of television imagery, ordinary life is dull by comparison and far too slow. But consider how it affects one's ability to be in nature. The natural world is *really* slow. Save for the waving of trees in the wind or the occasional animal movement, things barely happen at all. To experience nature, to feel its subtleties requires human perceptual ability that is capable of slowness. It requires that human beings approach the experience with patience and calm. Life in the modern world does not encourage that; it encourages the opposite. Cars, planes, video games, faxes, Walkmans, television, computers, working and traveling on schedules dictated by assembly lines and offices—we in the Western world have attuned ourselves to rhythms that are outside of

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*There is an old rabbinic tale which goes*

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*And the Lord said to the Rabbi, "Come, I will show you Hell." They entered a room where a group of people sat around a huge pot of stew. Everyone was famished and desperate. Each held a spoon that reached the pot but had a handle so long that it could not be used to reach their mouths. The suffering was terrible. ✦ "Come, now I will show you Heaven," the Lord said after a while. They entered another room, identical to the first—the pot of stew, the group of people, the same long spoons. But, there, everyone was happy and nourished. "I don't understand," said the Rabbi. "Why are they happy here when they were miserable in the other room, and everything was the same?" The Lord smiled. "Ah, but don't you see?" he asked. "Here they have learned to feed each other."*

# *Resolving Conflict by Cocreating*

T H O M A S   C R U M

*Thomas Crum is a aikido martial arts instructor and is founder and president of Aiki Works. He is presently spending his time living, developing, and communicating the Aiki Approach to Living through writing and seminars.*



Cocreation is a natural result of accepting our connectedness to the world around us and recognizing its indisputable interdependence. Cocreation is being open to synergistically creating systems that serve the universe of which you are an integral part and that support your overall vision and deep sense of purpose in life.

Choosing cocreation is an obvious step to take in resolving conflict. We all recognize the value of cooperation. So why do we often forget it when conflicts arise in our lives? There is one simple reason. It takes time, energy, and work to cocreate when there are major differences in a relationship. It's easier to avoid a problem, or "go along" with the opposing viewpoint (secretly resentful, of course), or simply fight it out. Cocreation takes listening and understanding and a commitment to discovering a solution together. It means not having it be just your way, but rolling up your sleeves to create new possibilities.

Somewhere, there is an inventor in his workshop who is brilliant and has an invention he considers excellent. He wants to have it acknowledged and marketed throughout the world. He thinks he needs to do it all. He may have very poor business ability, but because the invention is his, he decides he must market it, he must advertise it, he must do the financial planning and work. His invention takes on such importance that his life becomes a secret mission and he is constantly wary of everyone, thinking them potential enemies out to usurp his plans

and ideas. As a result, he will be lucky if he gets his product off his workshop shelf.

The same inability to understand the power of cocreation can hamper a marketing person who instead of trusting his technicians, and giving them the freedom to explore and to develop, always needs to have them under his control to produce the product he wants.

When the inventor sees that someone with financial ability is actually his financial arm and someone else with advertising ability is his advertising or promotion arm, then he is extending himself beyond his own talents and becoming far richer in ability. When he perceives his support people as an extension of himself, all information gets shared.

With trust, mutual support, and the desire to work with one another, the results people can achieve defy imagination. John F. Kennedy challenged the United States in the early 1960s to put a man on the moon within that decade, and people began working together to produce that common goal. Scientists who considered it impossible enrolled in the effort. They followed the principle of "embracing tiger," which means to accept unconditionally and joyfully conflict as an opportunity to do the extraordinary. Their entire context shifted from "It can't be done and I don't want to be involved" to "In order for this to be done, these are the problems that need to be solved." People working on the moon project were able to accept differences and use them to their advantage synergistically to produce solutions. Instead of seeing opposition to an idea as a deterrent, the moon project workers were able to consider other workers in opposition as actually being on the same team. As team members, they were there

to make sure that the best possible solutions were worked out and that all considerations were handled. The critics became part of the solution rather than part of the problem. Many critics evolved into monitors of quality control.

Scientists, politicians, and the general public embraced a possibility, and their commitment transformed their doubts, their fears, and their limitations. Hundreds of thousands of precise processes came together to accomplish a feat that a few years earlier only a handful of bizarre-minded people had considered possible. In 1969, man walked on the moon.

When we perceive differences in personality and abilities as gifts and as pieces of a magnificent puzzle, we put them together to form a masterpiece of power and creation truly larger than anyone's single vision.

When there is a real commitment to a vision that is clearly and positively stated in measurable outcomes, support and ideas arise from everywhere. Cocreation occurs quite naturally.

It is valuable to note the distinction between cocreation and compromise. Roger Fisher tells a story that illustrates this difference. There are two people who each want a single orange. They fervently debate who is entitled to the orange. Being fair-minded people, they finally divide the orange in half. The first person, sort of happy that he has half an orange, goes to his house, peels the orange, throws away the peel, and eats the fruit. The second person, sort of happy that he has half an orange, goes to his house, peels the orange, throws away the fruit, and uses the peel to bake a cake.

Compromise. Often in life we are so intent on doing the "fair" thing that we never look at what we are really going for. We never see the possibility that there is

enough for each to have everything he or she needs—the possibility that we can do more with less.

Choosing to cocreate has been a major factor in almost all important success stories: in the great sports teams of history, such as the vintage teams of the New York Yankees, Green Bay Packers, and Boston Celtics; in consistently successful companies such as IBM and 3M, and in notable entrepreneurial upstarts such as Apple Computer; in world achievements such as the eradication of smallpox. We do it best when we do it together.

When Ruth Eisenberg met Margaret Patrick, she was feeling very sorry for herself. Ruth had recently suffered a stroke, and while that was bad enough, the worst part was that she could no longer play the piano. Her right hand was still good, but her left was totally useless.

Margaret had been a piano teacher and church organist for fifty years when a stroke paralyzed her right side. Afterward, she could play the piano with only her left hand. She, too, lost the central activity in her life until, a little over a year later, she was introduced to Ruth.

"It was a miracle that brought us together," she said. Both had been undergoing therapy at the same senior center for over a month, but didn't meet until Millie McHugh, their program

director, saw their potential and introduced them. Ruth, stout, garrulous, and white haired, was playing the piano with her good hand when Millie walked up with Margaret, a slender, reserved black

song. And, as in the song, they are "playing together in perfect harmony."

As we choose to cocreate, we are able to make more subtle distinctions about our reactions to winning and losing. We begin to notice the stress that we create within ourselves when we think "Winning is everything," or the more anxious version, "I don't want to (or can't afford to) lose." Often we try to fight back the stress directly with thoughts such as, "Who cares about winning?" or "I'm playing just to have fun, not to win," or "I don't care if I lose." Since deep inside we often don't believe these state-

ments, we escalate the internal conflict we wanted so much to alleviate.

Rather than trying to beat down persistent thoughts like, "Winning is the only thing" with contradictory thoughts, let's play further. Instead of fighting our tendency to win, let's accept it. If our definition of winning is the traditional one of beating the other person, our chances of winning are reduced if we play someone more skilled than we are. Always winning when it's a point-getting game becomes increasingly difficult as we play more accomplished opponents. As Tim Gallwey, author and lecturer, jok-

## THE NATURE OF CONFLICT

*Conflict is natural; neither positive nor negative, it just is.*

*Conflict is just an interference pattern of energies.*

*Nature uses conflict as its primary motivator for change, creating beautiful beaches, canyons, mountains, and pearls.*

*It's not whether you have conflict in your life. It's what you do with that conflict that makes a difference.*

## CONFLICT IS NOT A CONTEST

*Winning and losing are goals for games, not for conflicts. Learning, growing, and cooperating are goals for resolving conflicts. Conflict can be seen as a gift of energy in which neither side loses and a new dance is created.*

*Resolving conflict is rarely about who is right. It is about acknowledgment and appreciation of differences. Conflict begins within. As we unhitch the burden of belief systems and heighten our perceptions, we love more fully and freely.*

woman. Margaret and Ruth immediately began talking; after a few minutes, they sat down and together played Chopin's Minute Waltz, Ruth on the treble and Margaret on the bass. Soon, they were playing together regularly and a strong friendship blossomed around their common love of music. Outwardly so different, they discovered an inner harmony that perfectly complemented their musical partnership.

Within a few months, they took their talents "on the road" to other senior centers and hospitals in the New York area and were quickly dubbed "Ebony and Ivory" after the Paul McCartney/Stevie Wonder hit

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# *An Interview with Brenda Schaeffer*

*Interviewed by Mary NurrieStearns, Editor of Lotus*

# Loving Me, Loving You

*THE JOURNEY BEYOND LOVE ADDICTION OR UNHEALTHY LOVE IS A JOURNEY OF PERSONAL TRANSFORMATION, ONE OF PROFOUND MAGNITUDE. WE MUST RECOGNIZE THAT SOMETHING IN OUR CONDITIONING HAS SUPPRESSED THE SPIRIT WITHIN, YET THAT SPIRIT STILL EXISTS. OUR EARLY HUMAN EXPERIENCES WITH LOVE AND POWER SUCCESSFULLY CONFUSED US AND ALIENATED US FROM OUR AUTHENTIC SELF. THIS IS THE SELF WHO UNDERSTANDS THE REAL MEANING OF LOVE AND POWER. LOVE WITHOUT POWER GOES IDLE, YET POWER WITHOUT LOVE IS INTOLERABLE. IN SHORT, LOVE AND POWER HAVE BEEN OUT OF BALANCE. IT IS IMPERATIVE THAT OUT OF THE IMBALANCE, POWER AND LOVE EMERGE AS CO-AUTHORS OF LIFE, BEGINNING WITHIN YOU.*

Brenda Schaeffer is a psychologist who conducts workshops on addictive relationships and is the author of "Is it Love or is it Addiction?" and "Loving Me Loving You."



In your book *Loving Me, Loving You*, you state that life events, including pain in our love life, can be an opportunity spiritually to transform ourselves, so we can know a deeper level of love and power. You indicate we first need to break out of the persona created by our psychological development and discover the self we've learned to hide. You call this persona or learned self the addictive lover.

**LOTUS:** *What's the addictive lover, Brenda?*

**BRENDA:** The addictive lover refers to that part of us that looks outside of ourselves to satisfy our hunger for security, sensation, power, identity, a sense of belonging, and meaning. What we do is to empower and take care of other people at our own emotional expense.

*Is this a way to have an identity and to feel emotionally whole?*

I believe that, basically, none of us got everything we needed in our development. Our addictive lover is our unconscious attempt to feel whole, to get those missing pieces. Unconsciously, we look outside of ourselves. I use the word *unconscious* because usually we are not

aware that we are doing this. So often people will look at that word and say, "That's not me, my love isn't addictive." There are degrees of love addiction. There are the ones we read about in the paper where people are invested in belonging to or owning one particular person. Many

upset if we stated what we really believed and needed. Addictive love is based on fear, our unconscious search for that sense of wholeness.

*We are all addictive lovers, is that necessarily bad?*

I don't look at this as bad or good. I think the addictive lover comes out of our human condition. I believe we have a human nature and a spiritual nature. Our human nature is a biological entity and has basic survival needs that must be met or it dies. It's as simple as that. That part of us will adapt to the world as we know it. If our world says that our anger is bad, we may withhold our anger. If a child is pushed aside when she reaches out for closeness, she might stop reaching out for intimacy or might begin believing some negative things about herself, others, life, or relationships. Those adaptations are what addictive love is based on. Little by little we give up pieces of ourselves.

Yet, we long for wholeness because there is a part of us that is truthful, honest, and wants to believe in himself and wants to quest for identity. We don't know who we are. We only know what we've become. We generally recognize this addictive, co-dependent part of ourself



BRENDA SCHAEFFER, PICTURE BY DOUG BEASLEY

homicides and suicides occur in the name of love. We can probably safely say "No, that isn't me," but I believe that to some degree we have all said "yes" when we meant "no." We've feared abandonment, rejection, feared making someone

when our lives are not working, when we are not fulfilled in our love relationships or our careers. Life is not giving us what we thought it would or should be.

*Would you say since this adapted self is part of the human condition, that we all end up incomplete when we reach adulthood? Is our acknowledgment and dealing with it a rite of passage, something that we have to go through to mature?*

Yes. Most of us think we know who we are by age 18 and thrust into life with the illusion that we have what we need to succeed. Lo and behold, we fall on our faces. We don't let anybody else know how insecure we feel because we think they've got the pieces to life's puzzle. A sign of wellness is when someone comes in with pain and says "I want more of me, I want more of my life." In that regard I see lover and addictive lover as a window to the soul. In addiction, some aspect of us knows that we are more than what we are experiencing, who we think we are, or what we've become. We keep returning to addictions because we don't know a way out. In that sense, I don't judge people in regard to their addictions. I might make an evaluation on the degree of destructiveness that is being imposed on their lives or on other people.

*In the book you say that we are all three kinds of lovers—addictive, healthy and spiritual.*

*Even if we're more active in an addictive process, there's still that healthy, spiritual part of us that is seeking. The addictive response is an old patterned way of trying to be autonomous or a self.*

That's the paradox; we are trying to search for wholeness. We are trying to reach a feeling of satisfaction. In our childhood, I believe that we all suffered traumas or

omission and commission. In traumas of omission, there were certain experiences, certain affirmations, or words that we needed to hear from the significant people in our life. Either they didn't know how to do that, wouldn't do it, or weren't available because of insecurity, depression, or illness. Whatever the cause, they weren't able to give it. There is a part of us that strives for wholeness. We can't stand to have things unfinished. That's actually healthy. It's a part of a physiological, physical, or spiritual questing and so we will attempt to experience that sense of wholeness however we can.

*In very creative ways?*

Very creative. The things that we decided or leaned upon or the processes we used as children were really very creative. In adulthood,

we discover that they are not working very well. The very thing that we decided in order to survive is now killing us. That is the point. So often people say "Well, why change? You know, we don't have it so bad" or "Compare yourself to someone else down the street." Basically, I believe that addictive love, on some level, begins killing us and that we begin dying emotionally, mentally, spiritually, and sometimes even physically because whenever our love is addictive we are blocking our life energy and our spiritual energy.

*We can't evolve, then.*

That's right. So there are two forces, evolution and devolution, and what kept us alive is now doing just the opposite.

*The innocent and creative responses of a child during early years don't work for adult living.*

As children, our frame of reference or the reality we lived in was very narrow. We thought that was the way the world was. We thought in black and white whereas, now as adults, we can look around and say that maybe there is another way. *Lotus* really speaks to this. We want peace of mind and compassionate living. Through looking at healthier role models, we recognize possibilities and that there is more to life than what we've lived.

*What is the healthy lover in us?*

The healthy lover refers to that innate part of us that strives for healthy independence. That's very different from anti-dependence. A healthy state of independence is when that person basically knows who he or she is, in short has an identity. These people able to give to a relationship without losing themselves. In a healthy relationship there are three entities, an "I," a "we" and a "you." The "I" and the "you" maintain their indi-

*One of the primary characteristics of addictive love is power plays. Power plays are those series of interactions where people end up feeling "one up" or "one down" with other people.*

viduality and they both contribute in such a way that their relationship is growing. I think of addictive love as "parasitic" and the healthy love as "holistic."

*In healthy lovers, the "I" and the "you" pre-exist the "we."*

That's right. There are times in a healthy relationship, however, when the "I" or the "you" have to yield. Let's say someone is really sick and needs the other. In a healthy relationship that person may be willing to put his needs aside and give the necessary support because he recognizes that it's part of the commitment. In healthy love too, both view love as a process. In traditional commitments or marriage ceremonies, we commit to the person rather than to the process. In the healthy relationship, we are saying, "I'm committed to being the best me I know how to be, the most conscious me I know how to be" and "I will share that me with you in a committed and honoring way."

*Being aware of the healthy lover doesn't mean that we don't also have an addictive self. Does it mean that we are conscious of it?*

Yes. Let's begin moving into what I referred to as a spiritual lover because I believe we each have our spiritual self. I'm not speaking of a particular religion. I'm talking about that part of us that is wise, compassionate, all-knowing, seeks resolution, seeks to live by deeper values, wants to continue evolving, and even has a sense of humor. It can look at us and say, "There you go again" without judging in a negative, critical way and can guide us to accept our humanness yet not let us get lost in those human patterns that are so hurtful and destructive.

*Is that the side of us that can stand back and observe?*

Right. Often times, we refer to

that as the observer self or the higher self. That part of us can maintain a sense of balance in the chaos of life, keep us on our path, and remind us when we are off.

*You say in your book that we have to establish a relationship with ourself in order for us to establish relationship with others. What do you mean by that?*

We have to be careful how we phrase that because some people will literally interpret that to mean, "Well, I can't be in a relationship until I have myself together." I see relationship as support, as a place for sharing, caring, feeling safe, and being energized. That support is mutual which makes it different from addictive love where we look to relationship for identity. In or out of relationship, our challenge is to know ourself, to love ourself, to trust ourself, and to be free to receive as well as give love. I am

amazed at how many people block the very thing they say they want. I believe we have all been betrayed or wounded to some degree. It can be very minor or far more direct. In that betrayal we begin fearing closeness and yet relationship is fundamental. One of the laws of physics is that we are all related. We are not islands. As much as we try to be alone, prevent closeness or sabotage relationships, we still know that we are all related. It's really a commitment to oneself to know

that while relationship can be very supportive, it does not define you.

*It can also be a supportive context for us to expand our definition of who we are yet not be our definition.*

Yes, we are not a role. We have an essence and that essence needs to be visible in the relationship and separate from the relationship.

*In your book, you say that we each need to come to terms with the male and female in us—our powerful and loving aspects. Please discuss that.*

One of the primary characteristics of addictive love is power plays. Power plays are those series of interactions where people end up feeling "one up" or "one down" with other people. There is rarely a person who cannot identify with power plays. What I learned from my own background and experience is that there seems to be a tendency to look at love and

power as commodities outside of ourselves. Love is often identified with the feminine and power with the masculine. There are a lot of historical reasons for that. What I learned is that love without power goes idle. We basically take care of people at our own expense in some way. Power without love injures. Each man and woman has these capacities.

*Look at the world right now. If you look at most of the problems, I believe they are truly about love and power being out of balance, take versus give.*

Let's look at challis and the blade, mythical references in history. The challis symbolizes the

power of the universe to love, give, and nurture life and is the feminine principal. I think of the womb where the child is initially nurtured and protected. The blade is symbolic of the power of the universe to assert, order, and protect and is the masculine principal. I believe we need both, not in opposition or competition, but to live cooperatively. I think what happened is that the power of the blade was exalted in history so that violence began killing the life that was symbolized by the chalice.

Look at the world right now. If you look at most of the problems, I believe they are truly about love and power being out of balance, *take* versus *give*. The challenge that we have is for the woman to have the freedom to assert the masculine aspects of herself without, and I emphasize *without*, jeopardizing the feminine. I think that's so important because each has such a valuable and sacred place. The same with the man. The man has been striving to develop more of his soft, tender, feminine qualities but, again, I think it's important not to do that at the expense of the masculine. There is some concern that men have become too tender, that they have given up some of their masculinity and that women

have become masculine at the expense of the feminine.

*In addictive love there are very strong unwritten assumptions and rules that get people in trouble. So often, people in a relationship have a preconceived idea, about what a relationship is.*

Our challenge is for each of us to develop an internal mother and father who we know can nurture and protect us. As we bring forth those parts and integrate and share them with life we can provide that safety valve necessary in relationships, a sense of mutual respect. There are going to be times when you have to call on the nurturing part of yourself for your self and for your partner, other

times when you have need to be nurtured and protected. Relationships can be a wonderful dance and if we are locked into roles and expectations we each are emotionally handicapped.

*We do not have to create these aspects in ourself. They are present and have been diminished by many forces. To integrate them is a part of being whole. We do not have to artificially manufacture something.*

Exactly.

*If we can access and manifest our power and our internal love, we are freer to blossom in a relationship. We are not cluttering up the relationship as much to meet our own needs. The relationship can release our energy to*

*go out into the world productively and lovingly.*

I recognized that in addictive love there are very strong, unwritten assumptions and rules that get people in trouble. So often, people in a relationship have a preconceived idea, based on their history and role modeling, about what a relationship is. They don't talk about it yet go into relationship with powerful assumptions. Characteristic of addictive love are those unwritten expectations and the accompanying resentment when they are not met. In healthy love, men and women, heterosexual and homosexual, are free to state what they need and to ask for their needs to be met. If a man has been groomed to not need anything, he might find it difficult to feel and need or feel guilty or ashamed if he has needs. If a woman and her husband believe that her job is to be the nurturer, both might begin to be very resentful as she wants to develop her own sense of identity.

I talked about the power basis that I think has been very subtly and unconsciously passed on to men and women. As much as we have quested for the liberation for the male and female, some fundamentals remain. Women are still given sex, beauty, and motherhood or at least if not motherhood, a lot of the nurturing as their power basis, and men still have most of the power basis outside of the home. Both men and women are handicapped when that becomes an expectation. I think also that men and women are controlled by those particular power basis.

*When we live out of those power bases and expectations that is our addicted, adapted self.*

That's right, especially if we are bound to them and controlled by them. For example, the paradox says that men often are bound to these bases because they have to produce the money needed to sup-

port the women's power bases of beauty, sex, and motherhood. Many men panic when their family starts growing. They worry about money and their capability to provide. They become workaholics, alcoholics, and sex addicts to sustain themselves. It's a vicious cycle. I also want to say that power bases are not good or bad. They are intended to be means by which we can experience our meaning and creativity and to tell the world who we really are. It's when we get locked into them and bound to them that we are likely to get into power plays with our partners.

*What is the way out of that?*

We need to look at what we are doing. Are we doing it from choice? If I want to be a mother, that's great. If I'm locked into motherhood and resent being in motherhood, then chances are that's systemic power play. If my choice is a part of power sharing and I enjoy doing it, then it's part of my creative self, something I value. I haven't lost my identity. I'm not in a particular role. In our culture we are often invested in image and so we can very easily get lost in our power base. So the key is to recognize, as you said earlier, that we have these feminine and masculine energies—and we have the capacity to continue developing both of them. How we do that is unique to each individual.

*In your book you say, "Power and energy originate from within and reaches out," so as we become conscious, we are aware of power sources in our personal lives and culture.*

Right. We can move from power plays to power sharing and recognize there's enough power for everyone on a human level. As you said, that power is our life's energy. We speak as though it's a commodity when we say, "I'm

giving you back my power," "He empowered me," "I'm powerless when it comes to him or her." It's true we may feel that way but that's really a psychological mechanism based on fear. It is not reality because no one can take away our life's energy except through death. That's why I said before that in addictive love, eventually some people, if they don't physically die, begin dying in their spirit, emotional life, and their social life.

*A lot of times we also physically deteriorate as a result of our power being blocked. It works against our body and causes disease.*

Exactly. When we withhold that energy, one of two things is going to happen eventually. That energy will implode. We are an energy system. We are alive and that energy will implode and take its toll with physical complaints, migraine headaches, ulcers, or we explode and injure others. We read about that in the newspaper.

*You talk about relationships not being an end in themselves but rather a context for us to move out into the world. Please elaborate.*

In the seventies there was a focus on the "I" and personal development. In some ways it was a narcissistic period but also a necessary period. The eighties were a

time when we recognized that we are not islands and people were questing for healthier relationships. The value of working on ourselves, clarifying our identities, and liking ourselves is not an end in itself, is not to be narcissistic, but to establish healthier relationships because they are the grounding or foundation from which we go out into the world and do what really matters, which is to share a uniqueness with all of life. The nineties are calling us to the awareness that we are not islands. If we continue to be self serving, whether it's within ourselves, our community, or our culture, the world dies. If we are depressed, have low esteem, or have a painful love relationship, it's like having a

back pain or toothache; it requires our energy. When a relationship is working, whether it's internal or external, our relationship with the world is going to be much healthier, much more conscious.

*There is a balance of love and power. We are not taking from the world. We are not using it. We are in a dynamic relationship*

*with it and we are also nurturing it.*

Right. Right.

*Brenda, why did you write this book?*

It was a sequel to my first book, *Is It Love Or Is It Addiction*. It came

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working on ourselves,  
clarifying our  
identities, and liking  
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out of questions people asked me in workshops, from my own growth and my own experience. It was time to say more than I had said in the first book. I believe that, at least for me, writing is a very personal and passionate experience. In order to write it has to be about something I feel passionately about, something I've experienced or I'm questing to understand.

*How did writing the book impact you?*

It helped me integrate a lot of my own experience and simultaneously it shifted my level of consciousness, my level of awareness. There were certain things that came to me when I sat down to write this book that were not in my original outline but which really brought this book together. For me, it was a Gestalt; it was a closure but it was also an opening to a new phase of my life. In retrospect, although I didn't know it, there was an inner knowing that it was time to write this book and in retrospect, it was an ending and an opening.

*Spirituality encompasses elusive concepts. You describe our spiritual self. I would think that giving form to your ideas had to have some impact on you.*

Yes. The chapter on the spiritual lover and the emergence of the spiritual lover came from my recognition that as we become more conscious and authentic, we live by deeper values. We are more concerned about broader issues. We are more spiritual in our own definition. The spiritual lover is that part of us that develops compassion for ourself and others. It's the part of us that is not afraid to love. In addictive love, we are so close that we don't know who we are. We are enmeshed. In healthy love, there is the "I," the "you," and the "we" but in spiritual love, there is a profound sense of knowing who "we" are. Love and power

merge in a sharing. It's a difficult concept to put into words but there's a unity consciousness. "I know that I am separate yet I am a part of a much greater whole." In this type of love, we are absolutely open, absolutely vulnerable and that openness is so complete that we are willing to hurt. I think of some of the great spiritual lovers when I think of Christ and Ghandi and Chief Joseph. They had this quiet confidence and were willing to live who they were in risk of the pain of rejection, and the pain of crucifixion. There's a saying. "It's better to have loved and lost than to never have loved at all" and I believe I now know what those words mean on a much deeper level. If I know that I've loved fully and completely and given the best to my friendships and to my children, if I've loved wholly, not perfectly because I'm human and I make mistakes, but if I've been so open that I know that my heart could be broken, then I can also leave. I know that I have done my part and there's joy and sorrow in the letting go.

*Are you saying that while we may have pain with profound love, the gift is more?*

That's right and that is the paradox. Real deep spiritual love may hurt if someone important to you dies. There is greater grief when you've bonded fully but there's also joy in knowing that you connected on that deep of a level. Even though we can grow from that woundedness, most people close down. They are afraid, afraid to open up again. When people are letting go of relationships during their grieving process, I really encourage them to listen very carefully to what they say to themselves because every relationship is a teacher. We grow or regress. The person may say "I was a fool, I'll never do that again." When they're ready to love again, some part remembers that

promise. They may initially give spiritually when in the romantic high phase and then later hearing the unconscious message and begin sabotaging the relationship.

*You're saying that "I'll never do that again" is the unconscious message we said during that deep grieving process.*

Right. Rather than recognizing that grief is human and it's a sign that we've loved from the soul.

*Brenda, what would you like to say in closing?*

We are empowered if we are conscious. What I mean is waking up to who we really are and what we can be individually and in relationships with ourselves, others, and life. Contrary to what we often believe, we don't know much about ourselves. The pain in our life, the addictions in our life can be used as opportunities to help us wake up and grow from the experience. To me, that's a lifelong process. I really focus on the fact that relationship is a process. It's not a neat little package. I think we need to be committed to that process and to the pain and the discomfort and not continually to seek pleasure outside of ourselves.

The spiritual lover is willing to see the goodness, the sacredness in each and to see beyond behavior. Our spiritual lover knows that we are human and that we make mistakes. Our spiritual lover helps us make our amends and be committed to growing. It provides a sense of safety because the spiritual lover is absolutely truthful and honest. I think when we are in addictive love or any form of addiction, we live in rationalizations and denial and subtle lies, deceit, and manipulation. That sense of safety is so crucial to that human part of us.

*That safety is the context that lets us reveal ourselves.*

Exactly.

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# Reviews



BY RICHARD HOLMES

## *Conscious Loving: The Journey to Co-Commitment*

By Gay Hendricks, Ph.D. and Kathlyn Hendricks, Ph.D.

New York: Bantam Books, 1990

\$10.50 Paperback

In the Foreword, John Bradshaw writes that "the practicality of this book is its greatest asset."

He is dead on right. *Conscious Loving* is practical because the experience and wisdom that Gay and Kathlyn have brought to their own relationship—after years of probing questions into what enhances or delimits intimacy between partners—is being shared with readers who want to know how they did it.

Most important, though, they will tell you how to become a co-committed couple. In their practice as relationship therapists, they have enabled over one thousand couples to make the transition from unconscious to conscious loving. Of course, as the subtitle of the book suggests, a journey is being taken that requires relentless self-reflection, total honesty, unconditional acceptance of responsibility for one's thoughts and actions, and ongoing reappraisals. In other words, you don't just "arrive" at a state of conscious loving and congratulate yourself.

From time to time, the Hendricks say, childhood programs emerge through the informational and emotional clutter to pass on a message. How we respond to these messages from the shadows is more important than the content of the message itself (though content shouldn't be ignored). If the past intrudes on the present and strangleholds us with the usual conditioned behaviors, we will continue to perpetuate what the Hendricks call an "entanglement," not a relationship. We will stay in the shadow—"the hidden repository of all our old feelings and patterns"—and rely on withdrawal, withholding, and projection to keep us unconscious. "If you and the other person do not look

into what these shadows contain," they write, "your relationship will be between two shadows instead of the two of you as real people."

It is "real people" you will become if you incorporate into your lives their principles of conscious loving. There are thirty-four activities that comprise a comprehensive "Co-Commitment Program." These activities deal with nine essential categories that merit attention here: Co-Commitment, Learning to Love Yourself, Learning to Feel Your Feelings, Claiming Creativity, Learning to Tell the Microscopic Truth, Keeping Your Agreements, Learning to Live in a State of Continuous Positive Energy, Communications Skills, and Problem-Solving.

Regardless of what you read in this book, though, the authors cannot emphasize enough that the number one priority is for the couple to recognize, as they put it, the "need to find out if you are actually willing to make the commitment that will allow co-commitment to unfold." For they are intent on making sure that couples literally reflect the essence of the word, "commit," which derives from Latin, meaning "to bring together." You can't bring together what is kept asunder by self-defeating behaviors. That would be like two persons at opposite ends of a vast, tangled field walking backwards with a cane and trying to meet in the pitch black night. It can't be done.

Gay and Kathlyn, though, offer you experiential means to sight forward with a clear mind and make a conscious journey with joy and passion. Yes, there might be an unleashing of pain, but no dwelling on it. It is avoidance of pain that is most painful, they reason. After helping you see the nine traps of unconscious loving, they will firmly guide you in inner and outer directions that will put you in touch with your "self" and with your loving partner.

"The heart of the matter," they write, "is that there is nothing the matter with our hearts."

*Conscious Loving* is a guide that can assist you in putting the heart back into your relationship.

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## Reviews

### *What Are You Doing with the Rest of Your Life? Choices in Midlife*

By Paula Payne Hardin  
San Rafael, California: New World Library, 1992 \$12.95 Paperback

Henry David Thoreau once wrote, "I went to the woods because I wished to live deliberately, to front only the essential facts of life, and see if I could not learn what it had to teach, and not, when I came to die, to discover that I had not lived."

Paula Payne Hardin has followed the example of that famous transcendental forebear and taken her own journey through the "woods." What she discovered through deep reflection and "conscious choosing" and rediscovered while conversing with her Inner Child is largely available to you, the reader and seeker, in this compassionate and soul-stirring book, *What Are You Doing with the Rest of Your Life?*

Hardin, a midlife consultant, agrees with Carl Jung, who a half-century ago bemoaned the fact that people were not ready for the second half of life. "Thoroughly unprepared we take this step into the afternoon of life," he wrote. "Worse still, we take this step with the false presupposition that our truth and ideals will serve as hitherto."

Again she agrees with Jung that the midlife transition often brings about a "genuine spiritual crisis." Nothing less than total honesty with ourselves, she counsels, and a willingness to change can result in "successful aging."

"The task of the midlife developmental transition," she advises, "is to make peace with the past and prepare for the future."

She conducted a national survey of about 600 persons, aged 40 to 75, who yielded through questionnaires a treasure-trove of informa-

tion about how to age successfully or unsuccessfully. Positive adult maturation included many attributes and new behaviors. For instance, many of them were more forgiving, generous, self-reflective, caring, spiritual, healthy, optimistic, devoted to learning, responsive to life's pivotal events, and deeply trusting of their inner selves.

As for unsuccessful agers, it is obvious that they are entrapped in "self-absorption and stagnation." We can learn from them what not to be.

Much of this book is a detailed recounting of interviews Hardin conducted with various successful agers. The stories these midlifers have to tell are often poignant. As

*Anyone who reads these stories and Hardin's thoughtful commentary on life changes should be drawn to what she calls the Inner Core (in other words, that deep essence within us). Therein we must face both the darkness and the light.*

a male at forty-two, I find myself asking many of the same questions that they have, and to continue on this personal note, I am encouraged by their examples to make efforts towards positive changes.

Anyone who reads these stories and Hardin's thoughtful commentary on life changes should be drawn to what she calls the Inner Core (in other words, that deep essence within us). Therein we must face both the darkness and the light. We're not suddenly going to develop angelic dispositions just because our life's purpose has opened up to us. My interpretation of Hardin is that we will become realists in a meaningful way.

Perhaps the best example she gives of this—what I call "spontaneity in balance"—is from her own personal life. Near the end of the book we learn that her husband, David, has developed an inoperable, cancerous tumor around the base of his spine and that his lower body organs and nerves in his legs will eventually be desensitized. Now, a year later, she writes that the tumor has taught them "an essential lesson of life—to live in the now, which is rich, active, and full."

Hardin: "When we let go of how we think things 'should be,' accepting what is—including endings—we open ourselves to new beginnings, new transformations, to the mystery of our true Self. The gifts this brings us are more than adequate for any challenge we may face."

Let *What Are You Doing with the Rest of Your Life?* be a guide to help you face any challenge that might come your way.

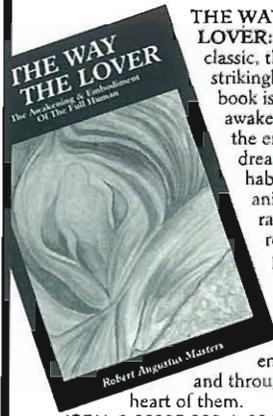
### *The Heroine's Journey*

By Maureen Murdock  
Boston, Massachusetts: Shambhala,  
1990  
\$9.95 Paperback

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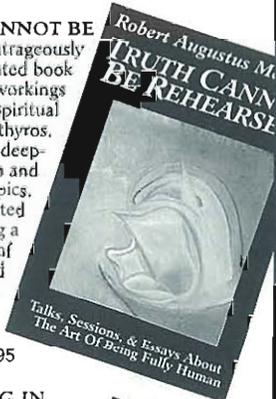
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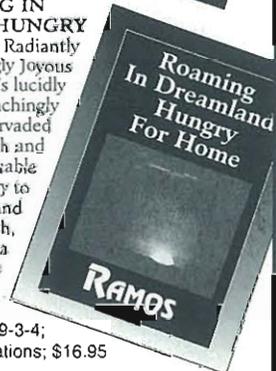
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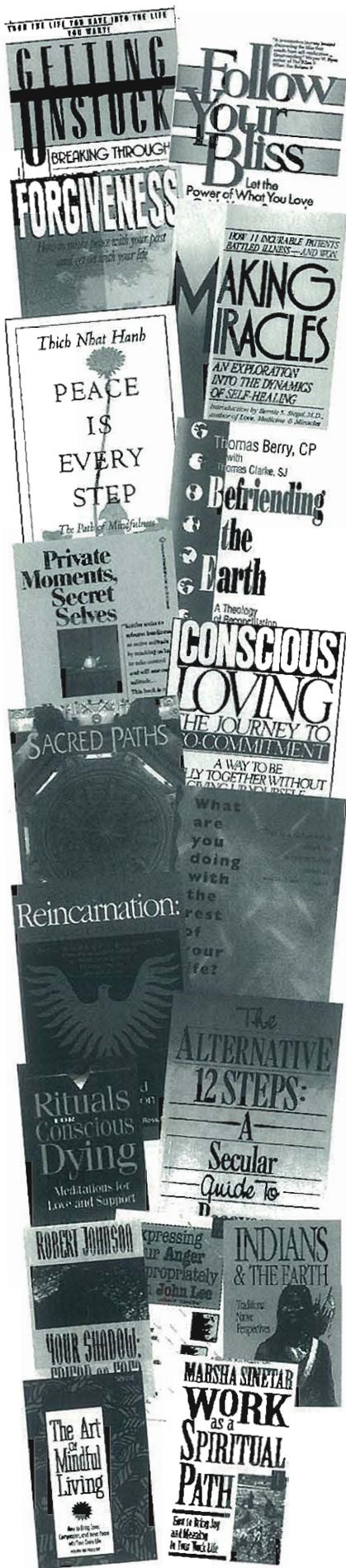
grated, balanced, and whole human being."

A careful reading and absorption of *The Heroine's Journey* will teach us that the path towards human being for a woman in these times is trial-laden, fraught with danger, and oftentimes painful.

Murdock, a therapist for women (mostly between the ages of 30 and 50) has noted often in

TURN TO PAGE 72

# Lotus Resources For Growth



**△ Touching Peace: Practicing the Art of Mindful Living**

By *Thich Nhat Hanh*  
This is a sequel to the best-selling *Being Peace*. It is based on recent talks in Europe and North America, Thich Nhat Hanh looks deeply at the roots of war and violence, the plagues of alcohol and drugs, alienation, family values, community, and the realization of ultimate reality. 130 pp., \$9.50 P

**△ Peace Is Every Step: The Path of Mindfulness in Everyday Life**

By *Thich Nhat Hanh*  
*Foreword by the Dalai Lama*  
The Nobel Peace Prize nominee, renowned spiritual leader and zen teacher shows how deepest fulfillment can come from things we do every day and take most for granted. His practical methods begin with breathing and smiling, are then applied to work, play and family, and range as far as technology and politics. 134 pp., \$8.50 P

**△ Whole Child/Whole Parent**

By *Polly Berrien Berends*  
"The best book I know on the psychology of child raising. . . because it reveals the essence of what human beings are all about. . . Not merely for parents, it is for all people, including all adults who want to raise themselves."—M. Scott Peck. 360 pp., \$14.95 P

**△ Getting Unstuck: Breaking Through Your Barriers To Change**

By *Sidney B. Simon*  
The author of the bestseller *Value Clarification* offers guidance, ideas and tools to turn the life you have into the life you want. Filled with exemplary stories of people who have been there, along with helpful quizzes. 296 pp., \$9.95 P

**△ Loving Me, Loving You: Balancing Love And Power In A Codependent World**

By *Brenda Schaeffer*  
The author of *Is It Love or Is It Addiction?* has written this

down-to-earth guide which provides a dynamic new understanding of love and power, drawing on actual life scripts. Full of helpful charts, lists and exercises. 232 pp., \$9.95 P

**△ Befriending The Earth: A Theology of Reconciliation Between Humans and the Earth**

By *Thomas Berry, C.P. with Thomas Clarke, S.J.*  
This discussion of the role of religion in the ecological movement today provides a rich feast of spiritual, intellectual, and emotional thought for individuals who want to know how both to nourish the earth and be recipients of its bountiful goodness. 158 pp., \$7.95 P

**△ Private Moments, Secret Selves: Enriching Our Time Alone**

By *Jeffrey Kottler*  
Combining profound insights with practical applications, here is a book to savor and learn from. Offers the precious gift of self-acceptance as it provides ways to become comfortable, creative, and productive in solitude. 230 pp., \$8.00 P

**△ Follow Your Bliss**

By *Hal Zina Bennett and Susan J. Sparrow*  
This step-by-step guide developed in the authors' workshops shows how to follow feelings of intense personal joy to a more creative and rewarding life — at home and at work. Includes a mini-course in self-affirmations, visualizations and guided imagery. 240 pp., \$7.95 P

**△ Making Miracles: An Exploration into the Dynamics of Self-Healing**

By *Paul C. Roud*  
Eleven "incurable" patients share the stories of their miracles, revealing the personal odyssey that helped free them from disease and turned an agenda for dying into a prescription for living. "A really marvelous book."—Elisabeth Kubler-Ross. 288 pp., \$9.95 P

**△ Return To The Garden: A Journey of Discovery**

By *Shakti Gawain*  
The author of the best sellers, *Creative Visualization* and *Living In The Light*, once more shares her insights, this time about living life on earth in a natural, balanced way. With meditations, visualizations and rituals. 233 pp., \$9.95 P

**△ Forgiveness: How to Make Peace with Your Past and Get On with Your Life**

By *Sidney B. Simon and Suzanne Simon*  
This break through guide to overcoming envy, hostility, self-doubt and resentment is based on the authors time-tested, six-step program used in their "forgiveness workshops." Learning how to forgive is a sign of strength, not weakness; and by forgiving, the person we let off the hook is ourselves. 214 pp., \$9.99 P

**△ Meeting The Shadow: The Hidden Power of the Dark Side of Human Nature**

Edited by *Connie Zweig and Jeremiah Abrams*  
Rage, jealousy, lying, resentment, blaming and greed are forbidden feelings and behaviors arising from our dark, denied parts—the personal shadow. This fascinating collection includes 65 articles by such authorities as C.G. Jung, Robert Bly, Joseph Campbell, James Hillman and many more. 335 pp., \$12.95 P

**△ Reclaiming The Inner Child**

Edited by *Jeremiah Abrams*  
These 37 wide-ranging essays define and give concrete reality to the abstract image of the inner child. Among the contributors are C.G. Jung, Charles L. Whitfield, Marion Woodman, Joseph Campbell, John Bradshaw, Hal Stone and many more. 323 pp., \$12.95 P

**△ Peace, Love And Healing**

By *Bernie S. Siegel, M.D.*  
The author of *Love, Medicine and Miracles* stresses anew the value of self-healing—the coupling of one's innate ability to heal with what science can

offer. "Bernie Siegel is helping define and open up these new (health and illness) frontiers. In the sense he is in the best medical tradition."—Norman Cousins. 295 pp., \$9.95 P

**The following books are reviewed in this issue.**

**▲ Conscious Loving: The Journey to Co-Commitment.**

By Gay Hendricks and Kathy Hendricks  
287 pp., \$10.50 P

**▲ What Are You Doing with the Rest of Your Life? Choices in Midlife**

By Paula Payne Hardin  
\$12.95 Paperback

**▲ The Heroine's Journey**

By Maureen Murdock  
\$9.95 Paperback

**▲ Working Ourselves To Death: The High Cost of Workaholism, The Rewards of Recovery**

By Diane Fassel, Ph.D.  
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**▲ The Alternative 12 Steps: A Secular Guide to Recovery**

By Martha Cleveland, Ph.D. and Arlys G.  
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**▲ The Adult Years: Mastering the Art of Self-Renewal**

By Frederick M. Hudson  
\$26.95 Cloth

**▲ Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery**

By Joseph Head and Sylvia Cranston  
\$14.95 Paperback

**Tapes**

**▲ The Dalai Lama on "Wisdom and Compassion"**

On this new recording, His Holiness the Dalai Lama speaks about the bonds that have grown between the people of the world and this ancient Buddhist kingdom. He speaks of the spiritual challenge his nation faces in the aftermath of the communist Chinese invasion of 1950. Most

importantly, his is a message of hope to the world. His Holiness points to the feeling of self, and the desire for joy and happiness, as humanity's common ground. This is the way to overcome the suffering of the Tibetan people, and all others who live under spiritual oppression. Wisdom and Compassion records three talks given by the Dalai Lama during his tour of America in 1991. A New Dimensions Production. Two cassettes, 120 minutes, \$14.95

**▲ Rituals for Conscious Dying: Meditations for Love & Support**

David Feinstein, Ph.D.  
Feinstein is a psychologist who specializes in care of the dying. Here he offers a series of soothing visualizations, based on his experience in hospitals, care centers for the aging, and hospices. Rituals for Conscious Dying offers special meditations for creating a gentle passage from the last stage of life into the next. Dr. Feinstein's affirmations help take the fear out of the terminal care stage, without the use of drugs or radical intervention. He presents three meditations drawing from rituals, guided imagery, and spiritual insights to show the pathway to the heart of healing. Recommended for hospice workers, people in the bereavement process, and others who are preparing to encounter death. With music by Ann Mortifee. 90 minutes, \$10.95

**▲ The Power of Shame**

Robert Bly  
In the tradition of Bill Moyer's IDEAS series, this intimate session with author Robert Bly speaks directly to one of the critical issues of our day: shame, and how it can sentence a family to emotional silence. Drawing from psychology, myth, and contemporary experience. Bly explores shame as a hidden source of anger and stress in today's families. He observes that children have a limited capacity for shame. If this threshold is reached the child may transfer shame to other children, or internalize it. In adulthood this legacy of shame is passed on to another generation of

the young. For all listeners concerned with emotional wellness, and the future of the family, The Power of Shame is a crucial learning experience. A New Dimensions interview with Michael Toms. 60 minutes, \$9.95

**▲ The Art of Mindful Living**

Thich Nhat Hanh  
The practice of mindfulness, teaches Thich Nhat Hanh, is like the power of the sun. It allows you to illuminate the aspects of your life that are in darkness. Instead of suppressing anger, fear, and guilt, mindfulness welcomes all experience into the space of awareness. The Art of Mindful Living is Thich Nhat Hanh's newest recording about how to bring mindful awareness into all aspects of daily life. Recorded with amazing clarity on state-of-the-art digital equipment, these rare moments were gathered during a 1991 family meditation retreat. Kind purposeful - illuminating - here is an abundant treasure of traditional gathas (or teachings) that unify meditation practice with the challenges we face in our world today. Presents a new five-fold meditation based on breathing, contemplation, and imagery. Highly recommended. Two Cassettes, 180 minutes, \$18.95

**▲ Your Shadow: Friend or Foe?**

Robert Johnson  
Jungian analyst Robert Johnson leads us to the nether world of the psyche, to reveal the raw, creative forces - both light and dark - that reside there. Johnson kindles this session with an analysis of Jung's view of the shadow, asserting that today we are taught to value the wrong components of the personality. The result is a life out of balance. Primitive cultures developed special, often violent, rituals to achieve this integration. Johnson describes how we can still honor our shadow sides through symbolic actions and inner dialogue. When you bring your shadow into consciousness, he says,

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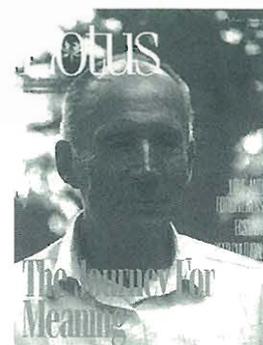
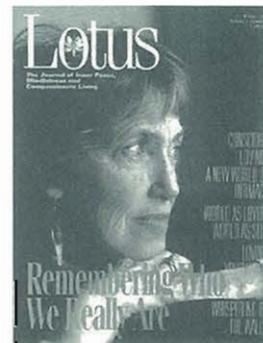
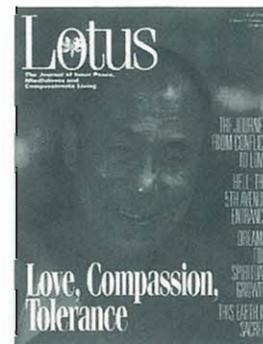
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## Toxic TV

nature. We are trained to seek satisfaction in the packaging that technology provides. Big "hits." We live in a world of constant catharsis, constant change, constant unrest. While out in the *real* world, in nature, we become anxious and uncomfortable. We desire to get back indoors, to get that TV set back on, to get "up to speed."

For children, this change is very serious, and has been well noted by educators. Countless teachers have told me how young people are utterly unable to maintain attention. They become bored after only a few minutes of the same subject. They need constant change. And they need the teacher to "perform" rather than teach, to deliver material with snappy punch lines. As for reading, very few young people are now patient enough to get through a book such as *The Hunchback of Notre Dame*, where events move slowly and where detail, rather than constant explosive content, is what matters.

But not only children are affected by this replacement of our living environment with television. All human beings are changing. We are all being sped up. The natural world has retreated beyond our awareness. We hear people say that nature is boring and it is clear why they say this. We don't know how to be with it. We are not slow enough. Caring about what happens to nature is not part of our emotional world, which helps pave the way for the exploitation of nature and native people. Simultaneously, it makes us think that our future is on some other planet out there in space.

Television synchronizes our internal processes with the new world of concrete, computers,

space travel, and acceleration. It makes our insides—brain and nervous system—compatible with the world outside ourselves. For human beings, it is the worst possible combination of influences. It puts our brains into a passive alpha state, zapping our thinking processes, and destroying our creative impulses. Simultaneously, it speeds up our nervous systems, making us too fast to feel calm, too fast to read, almost too fast to relate meaningfully to other human beings, and too fast for nature. From this alienation training, a new human emerges. Speed junkie. Videovoid. Technovoid. •

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*From "In the Absence of the Sacred: The Failure of Technology and the Survival of the Indian Nations." Copyright 1991 by Jerry Mander. Printed with permission from Sierra Club Books. The Book is available at bookstores or by direct mail from Sierra Club book store, 730 Polk St., San Francisco, CA 94109, (415)923-5500. Book are \$14 plus \$3 for postage and handling, California residents please add sales tax.*

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## Look Within

remove the conflict between yourself and others, you also remove the conflict within yourself. One arrow can save two birds at the same time—if you strike the branch, both birds will fly away. First, take care of yourself. Reconcile the conflicting elements within yourself by being mindful and practicing loving kindness. Then reconcile with your own people by understanding and loving them, even if they themselves lack understanding.

The seeds of suffering are always trying to emerge. If we try to suppress them, we create a lack of circulation in our psyche and we feel sick. Practicing mindfulness helps us get strong enough to

open the door to our living room and let the pain come up. Every time our pain is immersed in mindfulness, it will lose some of its strength and later when it returns to the store consciousness, it will be weaker. When it comes up again, if our mindfulness is there to welcome it like a mother greeting her baby, the pain will be lessened and will go back down to the basement even weaker. In this way, we create good circulation in our psyche and we begin to feel much better. If the blood is circulating well in our body, we experience well-being. If the energy of our mental formations is circulating well between our store consciousness and mind consciousness, we also have the feeling of well-being. We do not need to be afraid of our pain if our mindfulness is there to embrace it and transform it.

Our consciousness is the totality of our seeds, the totality of our films. If the good seeds are strong, we will have more happiness. Meditation helps the seed of mindfulness grow and develop as the light within us. If we practice mindful living, we will know how to water the seeds of joy and transform the seeds of sorrow and suffering so that understanding, compassion, and loving kindness will flower in us. •

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*From "Touching Peace: The Art of Mindful Living." Copyright 1992 by Thich Nhat Hanh. Printed with permission from Parallax Press, Berkeley, California.*

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her practice that feminine principles have frequently been submerged and subsequently overshadowed by masculine principles (androcentric) that draw them towards the "outer heroic journey," which involves mostly doing in the sense of acquiring wealth and prestige, making conquests in the business world or workplace, seeking male approval, and in countless other ways driving relentlessly towards success in a patriarchal world.

The journey is circular, she writes. It starts with the "separation from the feminine," often through a mother/daughter split, and wends its cyclic way from identification with the male (internalizing the father's values) to negotiating effectively the "road of trials" while achieving outer success in a male-dominated culture to realizing experientially the "spiritual aridity" of this roller-coaster ride to descending to

realms of the Goddess where dark nights of the soul lead to yearnings to reconnect with the feminine to an extended process of healing the mother/daughter split to healing the "wounded masculine" (due to a "betrayal of the father"), and in the end (though, as we learn, no path truly ends) integrating the highest values and virtues of the feminine and the masculine. The above paragraph is long, as a symbolic reminder that the path described by Murdock in such poignant terms is also long, as well as demanding.

Murdock highlights the cyclic stages of this path through masterful tellings of mythological and real-world tales. Whether writing about various feminine aspects as symbolized by such ancient figures as Kali, Athena, Psyche, Iphigenia, Grandmother Spider, Hestia, and many others, or sharing the personal recollections of such contemporary heroines as former San Francisco mayor Diane Feinstein, she is making clear that women who mindfully traverse this path will reclaim their femininity and reassert their intelligence in new ways. They will, she claims (and I think she is not only right but necessarily right), re-emerge with words and works that will cause a realignment between being and doing. It strikes me, as it does Murdock, that this sacred balancing act will be a profound and hopefully joyful learning experience—an experience that will lead to inter-being.

Let this wonderful summation of *The Heroine's Journey* reach a receptive audience:

...I believe that women are deeply affecting the critical mass. As each one of us heals our own feminine and masculine nature, we change the consciousness on the planet from one of addiction to suffering, conflict, and domi-

nation to a consciousness that recognizes the need for affiliation, healing, balance, and inter-being. Women need to breathe more knowledge, more prajna into the world to restore the imbalance. We are a pilgrim people; we are on a journey together to learn how to honor and preserve the dignity of all life forms seen and unseen; therein lies our heroic power.

*Working Ourselves To Death:  
The High Cost of Workaholism,  
The Rewards of Recovery*

By Diane Fassel, Ph.D.  
San Francisco, California: Harper  
Collins, 1990  
\$9.00 Paperback

"Workaholics are walking examples of the dysfunction of our society."

Taking a systems view of addiction, Diane Fassel, an organizational consultant, shares her many observations of how workaholism operates along a vast continuum that extends from the individual (micro) to the organization itself (macro). Her astute perceptions of the destructive dynamics of what she calls an "insidious killer disease" should serve the invaluable purpose of alerting people to the urgency and the extent of the problem.

*Working Ourselves to Death* is a title that reflects an ugly reality. Forget the myth (one of many she writes about) you might have heard as a child—that no one ever died of hard work. Fassel is not referring to hard work performed joyfully and mindfully. She is writing about that all-too-pervasive cultural tendency of people who rely on work as a manic means to fill a void in their lives.

But dying of hard work? you might ask. Yes. For instance, the Japanese recognize and have named this terrible phenomenon, Karoshi, literally "death from

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overwork." Karoshi is Japan's second-largest killer. What about America? Yes, but usually after a terribly prolonged onslaught of everything from bleeding ulcers to dangerously high blood-pressure levels to migraine headaches to chronic fatigue to a deteriorating heart to a host of other physical and psychological abnormalities that can be only temporarily relieved from the adrenaline high of work, work, work and short-term, self-help techniques that treat symptoms, not underlying causes.

In many ways, America is an addictive society, as Fassel maintains, but I confess to a basic disagreement about the disease concept being applied to workaholism and to so many other—as I see them—crazy, aberrant, delusional behaviors (e.g., kleptomania, compulsive shopping, or messy house-keeping). We are responsible for these behaviors, not powerless over them. We start these processes; we can end them. We

can recover in a 12-Step or alternative recovery program and move on to evolve consciously to higher levels of physical, psychological, emotional, and spiritual development.

*Working Ourselves to Death is a title that reflects an ugly reality about that all too pervasive cultural tendency of people who rely on work as a manic means to fill a void in their lives.*

This personal reservation aside, I still value her observations that workaholism is a constellation of bad habits and negative qualities; among them, lying, manipulation, tunnel vision, perfectionism, denial, emotional disconnection, crisis orientation, exaggerated sense of abilities, and so on. Fassel is also keen to observe that the so-called American work ethic is not all that ethical. She is especially critical of the workaholic propensities of the educational system, the church, and the political system. For instance, she has talked to ministers who have worked as many as seventy to ninety hours a week (a work schedule endorsed by many churches). To many of them, she learned, such a demanding "call" is "theologically sanctioned workaholism."

Her chapters on the sexes and

workaholism are insightful. She writes, "Women say, 'I'm not enough, therefore I must do to prove I am.' Men say, 'I must preserve my inheritance of superiority by doing these things. It is what is expected.'" Agreeing with Anne Wilson Schaefer, she is saying that many women have internalized and enslaved themselves to "the white male god-illusion myth," which one can observe most blatantly in the political realm.

There are many other insights in this book, but I was most attentive to the personal examples of workaholism that highlight its pernicious influences at all levels—from individual to societal. The "numbing of America" through mindless overwork is frightening.

*Working Ourselves to Death*, besides being an effective critique of this unhealthy cultural trend, is also a rousing wake-up call for workaholics to engage in a process of recovery until their work demonstrates a conscious balance between doing and being.

*The Alternative 12 Steps:  
A Secular Guide to Recovery*

By Martha Cleveland, Ph.D. and Arlys G.  
Deerfield Beach, Florida: Health Communications, 1992 \$8.95  
Paperback

Semantics and reality sometimes become misaligned, hence bringing about unfortunate misunderstandings—unfortunate because slight changes in wording might clarify these misunderstandings and result in better communication.

*The Alternative 12 Steps* is amply titled, but a better subtitle might have been, *A Personalized Spiritual Guide to Recovery*.

The word "secular" is misleading. For instance, the Oxford American Dictionary includes this

definition among others, "1. concerned with worldly affairs rather than spiritual ones." The same dictionary includes this definition of "spiritual," "1. of the human spirit or soul, not physical or worldly."

The word "secular" is also distracting. Too many persons mistakenly think that whatever is secular can't be spiritual. Of course, as Martha Cleveland and Arlys G. make clear, the spiritual can be found and experienced in any everyday context, whether it be called secular or religious. My observation here is simply that the prevailing cultural definitions of secular might cause people with chronic behavioral problems or chemical addictions to turn away from this book, especially if they're seeking a spiritual dimension in their lives that doesn't include beliefs in a male God (as the 12 Steps allude to).

Like it or not, initial impressions sway people. One might read the words "secular guide" and, without making a closer examination, return the book to the shelves of a library or bookstore. So please understand that my apparent hair-splitting on this matter is not meant to detract from what is otherwise not only a fine spiritual readaptation of the 12 Steps of the AA, but a very focused and practical guide that can enable sufferers indeed to explore the spiritual

within all aspects of life. I simply hope that people will get past the title to the content.

Cleveland and Arlys have worked the program for years, but both have been disaffected with the 12-Step wording concerning a "Higher Power," which to them suggests a deity. Neither of them believes in a deity; both of them, though, believe spirituality is pervasive in their lives and does not require belief in a God, not in any traditional religious sense, anyway. They write about "spiritual resources" that lead to "spiritual power."

On this they write, "Spiritual power comes from whatever gives us peace, hope, or strength and enhances our humanity."

The essential guidelines of the 12-Step Program are intact. Their "non-theistic translation" of the AA text is designed for people who likewise feel uncomfortable with male deification.

Here is an example of a rewritten Step. Step 4 of the AA is "Make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves." The translation is "Search honestly and deeply within ourselves to know the exact nature of our actions, thoughts, and emotions."

In other words, they perceive the all-important task of learning who we are as laying the groundwork for becoming who we are.

"Perspective, relaxation, a sense of humor, lots of love and forgiveness for ourselves—these are the qualities that are going to open the way. A useful slogan is, 'Easy does it, but do it.'"

And that is the crucial task of any 12-Step or alternative recovery process—to do what is necessary to heal, to walk the talk, to live as exemplars of the spiritual essence within us. *The Alternative 12 Steps* is a useful contribution in this spiritual endeavor.

*The Adult Years:  
Mastering the Art of Self-Renewal*

By Frederick M. Hudson  
San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass, 1991  
\$26.95 Cloth

Frederick M. Hudson has worked with more than 11,000 adults to help them plan and live their lives creatively and adaptively. The field of "adult development" is in its fledgling stages, still short on applied knowledge and still in rigorous debate over methodologies. But there is considerable understanding about change cycles and life cycles concerning adults. It is becoming startlingly obvious that adults can no longer live in compliance with old cultural programs that were more linear, sequential, simplistic, prescriptive, and seemingly stable.

The ideas for change in *The Adult Years* are large in scope. The book is seminal in its presentation of developmental options in our complex society.

Hudson presents and argues for a cyclic point of view, which he thinks the philosopher of evolution, Henri Bergson, summed up as well as anyone: "To exist is to change; to change is to mature; to mature is to create oneself endlessly."

This book is a jewel in the mar-

The writing throughout the book is simple and pungent. Often one runs across phrases that could pass for aphorisms. Example:

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ketplace of ideas. In just over two hundred thirty pages, he topples the old-minded view of an orderly world and outlines in painstaking detail—the result of twenty years of experience in “human systems development”—a new-minded view that calls on adults to work towards personal and societal self-renewal.

*What makes “The Adult Years” especially important, though, is linked to the glaring fact that global cooperation will not be accomplished if self-renewal is not pursued by more and more adults.*

It can be argued that chaos is paradoxically the order of the day. On this Hudson writes, “This book assumes that we now live in a period in which change is predominant over order. Adult life from now on will proceed with multiple options, random opportunities, information overload, lifelong learning, a global orientation, ongoing social upheavals, and a constant need for people to be responsible for themselves as they raft their way along the river of change.”

And the new “life structures” that will be designed and the psy-

chospiritual transitions that will come about within all of this flux represents, from Hudson’s point of view, an exciting challenge to transform the cultures and consciousness of the planet.

So does he tell you how to experience change as the constant of the future? Yes and no. Yes, an initial intake of all the information and insights in this book can, whatever your age, indeed shock you into an awareness of the need for change. It can also orient you to consider all his recommendations that can lead to “reintegration with the world”—a world beset with complexities of such magnitude that one could refer to a cultural identity crisis.

It is no wonder then that young adults sprung into this world are often lost, too.

Back to the how to question; No, the book is not a nuts-and-bolts manual for change. That’s his point. Specific guidelines of any kind can only be temporary in a world that now necessitates a shift “from progress to process.” The “dysfunctions of the linear way of thinking,” Hudson argues cogently, need to be superseded by “cyclical thinking,” which “tolerates ambiguity,” “finds pathways for living in dark and unseemly places, if necessary,” “looks for human meaning in the ongoing flow of daily experience,” and ultimately “seeks order within the change process itself.”

Hudson is not actually issuing a new message here. For instance, read a few classic Sufi, Taoist, or Hindu texts and you will intuit their presentations of life-in-transformation as an evolutionary imperative. His choice of words,

to be sure, are less poetic, but his agenda for change is calling on us to make a sustained effort to transform and evolve.

What makes *The Adult Years* especially important, though, is linked to the glaring fact that global cooperation will not be accomplished if self-renewal is not pursued by more and more adults. Now.

*Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery*

By Joseph Head and Sylvia Cranston  
San Diego, California: Point Loma Publications, 1991  
\$14.95 Paperback

The times are especially ripe for this classic anthology on an important topic that has been neglected or, when attended to, maligned and misunderstood.

*Reincarnation: The Phoenix Fire Mystery* will hopefully divert per-  
TURN TO PAGE 78

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## Cocreating

ingly tells his workshop participants, "If you really want to win the tennis match all the time, always play someone much worse than you are." But alas, all the enjoyment soon goes out of the sport. Is there really a way always to win and yet keep life enjoyable and challenging?

Certainly. Just re-create what we mean by winning. Expand the possibilities. Instead of fighting this idea of winning, blend with it and see its value.

Look at the gut-level payoffs to winning. It creates a good feeling inside. It's fun and highly energizing. So if it's all that great, why fight it? The more harmonizing approach would be, "How do we get more of it?" or "How do we cocreate with the other side so that we both win?" One way is to simply expand our definition of the word "win." Scoring the most points is only one way of winning and creating those good feelings. Those "winning feelings" come about just as often through learning a great deal, developing stronger skills, and laughing a lot. Who do you think grows stronger when there is a tennis match between a more experienced player and a less experienced one? Certainly the less experienced player doesn't win matches as consistently, but who is winning the "strength-progress" game? Or the learning game?

We have the choice to expand our definition of winning to such an extent that the inhibiting action from fear of failure literally disappears. Thomas Edison "failed" over 10,000 times before producing a working light bulb. When asked how he could persist after 9,999 failures, he replied simply, "I did not fail 9,999

times. I succeeded 9,999 times in learning how not to make a light bulb."

When tests at the 3M company of a new bonding compound "failed" miserably, management didn't have the normal knee-jerk reaction of tossing it in the trash can. They asked what could be learned from the "failure" and if there were any applications for which the compound could be useful. Secretaries noticed that its "weakness" was actually its strength. It was perfect for attaching temporary notes to objects and leaving those objects unmarred when the notes were removed. Eureka! A multi-million dollar product, Post-it note pads, was created.

As you expand winning to include all possibilities, you will discover that if you are not winning one game, you are naturally winning another. Every possible outcome in life can provide you with a precious "win." You begin to see that the only things you actually lose are your limited and restrictive belief systems.

As you proceed along this winning path, the person across the net (or across the hall) takes on a different role. He becomes a partner rather than an opponent. When winning does not mean that someone else has to lose, your approach to life becomes a cocreative process. Life becomes "you and me" rather than "you or me."

Choosing to cocreate will transform "your" vision into "our" vision. Support will arise from everywhere. •

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*This article is an excerpt from "The Magic of Conflict." Copyright 1987 by Thomas Crum (Simon & Schuster). Copies of the book and supplementary resources, as well as information on programs with Thomas Crum, are available from Aiki Works, PO Box 251, Victor, NY 14564 (716) 924-7302; Fax (716) 924-2799.*

Continued from page 20

## Empowering Choices

we eliminate boredom and roadblocks to personal growth. We open ourselves to new experiences and transform our old realities. We can choose one thing to do differently, no matter how small, that we have never done before. Then we can stand back and watch ourselves grow from this new experience.

### REDISCOVERING YOUR LIFE

It is easy to become bored with the everyday monotony of our lives. The thrill and wonder are gone. We've seen and done it all. Life is no longer stimulating. Is that all there is?

These are only thoughts. These mental outlooks can be changed and along with this change come different feelings and a renewed outlook on life. We find beauty in the ordinary, elegance in the simple, wisdom in the shallow and excitement in the dull.

All of us have the power to change our views of ourselves and the daily world we live in. You can begin to exercise that power now. You can rediscover the world that you have lived in for so long and have taken for granted or ignored.

The next time you go to work, pretend that you have entered your workplace for the very first time. Look at people and places around you as if you are seeing and appreciating them for the first time. Notice what hangs on the walls, smell the flowers on someone's desk, see the color of the blouse or jacket a colleague is wearing, pay attention to the colors of the floor or the architecture of the buildings on the same street. Be mindful of the eyes of a co-worker, subordinate, or boss. Look into their eyes and behind their eyes and see their gentle spirit.

When you try this technique,

you will discover a world that has always been open to you, but you have never seen before. We must continue to look at everything we do in a different way and just as we see it differently, we change our outlook again. •

*From "Heal Your Self Esteem: Recovery from Addictive Thinking." Copyright 1991 by Bryan E. Robinson. Printed with permission from the publisher, Health Communications, Deerfield Beach, Florida*

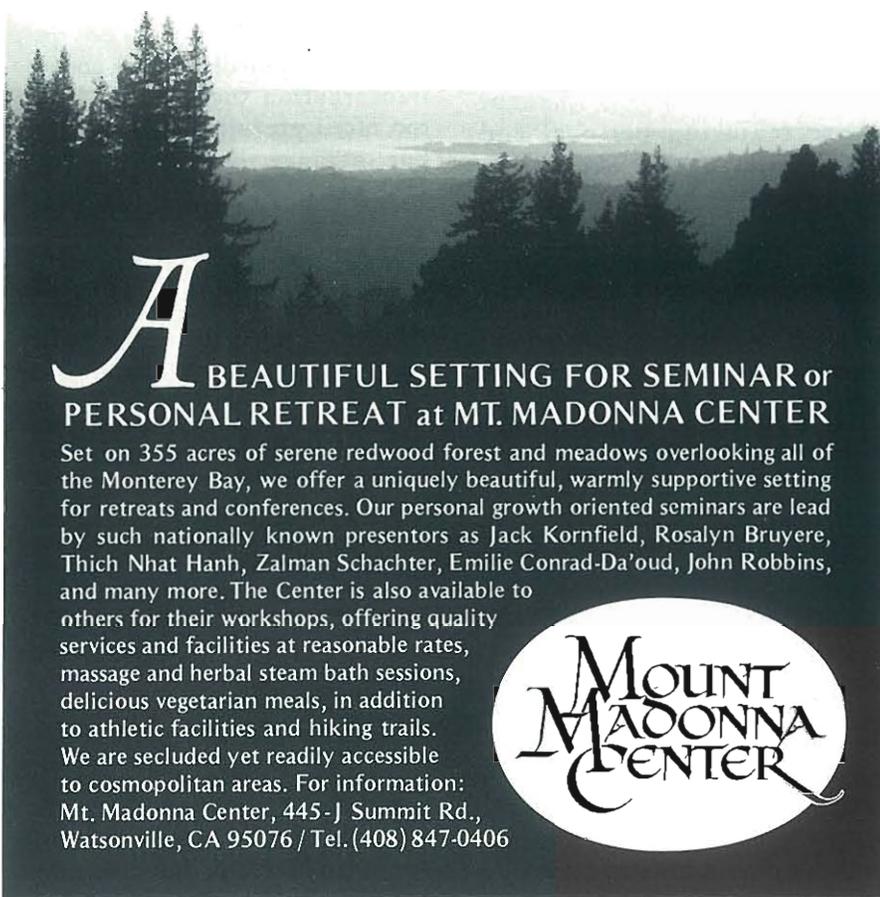
*Continued from page 29*

## Daydreaming

clearly not the best way to solve problems that you know exactly how to solve, it provides a hospitable framework for coming up with solutions after you are stumped. It is also far from the best way to search your memory for simple facts about yourself, but it provides a leisurely exploration of your past and future through which you can discover new truths about yourself and envision for yourself a fitting future. Daydreaming is inherently a disorderly process and yet it serves as a natural reminder system. By parading before us our many hopes and fears, our possibilities and commitments, it keeps them fresh in our minds and thereby helps us to keep our lives organized.

Our daydreams are no alien intrusions nor are the Shakespeare's "airy nothing" ephemeral wisps unconnected to life. They are products of the same brain processes that would produce our perceptions of the things we imagine seeing, that would produce the movements we imagine making, that would produce the emotions we imagine feeling if what was happening were real rather than imaginary.

Because our daydream images are part and parcel of ourselves, the lessons that we learn in our daydream images are learned just



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as surely as if we had learned them in real life. Therefore, we can carry over the knowledge and skills we learn in imagery to our actions, whether they be tennis strokes or invitations to dance. That is what makes mental practice feasible and makes psychotherapy using mental images effective.

Despite some ways in which daydreams can go awry, their costs are greatly outweighed by their benefits. They are in the main an essential personal resource for coping with life. •

*From "Daydreaming: Using Waking Fantasy and Imagery for Self-Knowledge and Creativity." Copyright 1990 by Eric Klinger. Printed with permission from the publisher, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Los Angeles, California.*

*Continued from page 64*

## Loving Me, Loving You

*Not only to the other but also to ourselves which is where a lot of the growth occurs.*

Yes. Writing the book made some fundamental shifts for me. I experienced joy and sorrow and a sense of wholeness I've not felt before. It was a closure and an opening to a new phase of my life. So I am sure that there will be another book. I don't know when; I'm really living the impact of this book. I don't quite have all the pieces together yet. When I do, I will write the next book. I will know when it's time. •

Continued from page 16

## Everyday Hero

In the past, people thought that achieving personal and professional balance meant allotting roughly equal amounts of time to the various parts of their lives. Now you recognize that certain aspects of your life will sometimes have more energy than others. Your battle is to find the dynamic synergy between competing parts of your life.

People used to think that prosperity was achieved by acquiring money and other external rewards such as power, status, or objects. Now you see that these outer goals can conflict with a rich, inner feeling of self-worth. This battle is to know that you deserve to experience this inner sense of prosperity in every moment of your life. •

*From "The Path of the Everyday Hero." Copyright 1991 by Lorna Catford and Michael Ray. Printed with permission of the publisher, Jeremy P. Tarcher, Los Angeles, California.*

## Reviews

Continued from page 75

sons from the media myopia about reincarnation that too often prevails. For instance, just the mention of Shirley MacLaine causes computer monitors to light up with malicious stories, which in turn reaffirm the belief of many that reincarnation is a quaint joke deserving only of condescending laughter.

The editors, Head and Cranston, must be commended for the quality and prodigious amount of scholarly research they conducted. They have put together a massive volume that should erase forever many of the misconceptions about reincarnation (e.g., that one is reborn in different or lower bod-

ily forms). The longer, second subtitle of the volume should put in

perspective its range and depth: "An East-West Dialogue on Death and Rebirth from the Worlds of Religion, Science, Psychology, Philosophy, Art, and Literature, and from Great Thinkers of the Past and Present."

This is a bedside book that won't put you to sleep. It can awaken you to new considerations of a spiritual issue that you have possibly not thought about much. More important, reincarnation might suddenly become an impor-

tant spiritual foundation for your life, influencing your morality, beliefs, relationships, and of course your experience of death.

**One  
earns a  
vision  
by living  
it, not  
merely  
thinking  
about it.**

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## Reviews

Head and Cranston refer to the book as a "symphony of ideas." In an "Editor's Note," "they write, "When the editors first began their researches they took the eclectic approach, to be sure, but what developed was quite surprising. Instead of a dissonance of conflicting and confusing opinions, undertones and overtones of harmony seemed to pervade and unify much of the material. Perhaps the reader will hear this, too."

This reader marveled at the harmonization of ideas. I can open randomly the book several times to any page and observe this harmony—whether reading the ancient language of myth and symbol, East/West religious views, the beliefs of early races of humanity, the philosophies of the Western tradition, contemporary science and psychology, or theological teachings (which are responsible, the editors note, for the "reincarnation renaissance").

I am too humbled even to attempt an explanation of reincarnation from any point of view. My recommendation is that one read the book slowly and conscientiously and of course with an open mind. It is quite possible that reincarnation and karma (also extensively discussed) will not seem like mere intellectual curiosities.

There are two quotations that merit attention here, bearing on one's approach to these twin concepts. They seem to be of exceeding importance.

First, the American philosopher and psychologist, Herbert Fingarette: "For one who is not urgently concerned with suffering and illusion, who does not feel despair and the need for illumination, the doctrine of reincarnation is indeed a devilish snare... We cannot toy with the idea of rein-

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arnation as an intellectual or cultural curiosity having a certain piquant and quaint validity and still discover its power and its worth. ...One earns a vision by living it, not merely thinking about it."

And this one from H.P. Blavatsky: "...For the only decree of Karma—an eternal and immutable decree—is absolute harmony in the world of matter as

it is in the world of Spirit. It is not, therefore, Karma that rewards or punishes, but it is we, who reward and punish ourselves according to whether we work with, through and along with nature, abiding by the laws on which that Harmony depends, or—break them..."

Read *Reincarnation* with the mindful attention that it deserves. •

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