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## The Kootenay Lake Tai Chi Camp

Hajime tells his story on page 12

April & May 2007





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# True to Oneself

by Rivkah Horowitz, M.S.W.

How often do you hear yourself saying: "I am so stupid... why did I do that... I *should* have \_\_\_\_." Where do all these *shoulds* come from and how do they affect our self-esteem? *Shoulds* or expectations originate from many sources including our family of origins. One important and often forgotten influence is social norms. For a healthy self-esteem we need to be true to ourselves. This can be difficult especially as we are surrounded by so many outside messages from the media to friends. As a therapist meeting with many people over the last 15 years I have noticed how many people repeat the common theme of feeling inadequate, feeling they are unable to live up to all their *shoulds*. Feeling inadequate is quite lethal to both our emotional and physical health, and often an underlying cause of depression and anxiety. It destroys our spirit.

In current North American society being happy strangely has become one of the *shoulds*. Society today feels uncomfortable with sadness. Even when life treats us badly, sadness is considered a sign of weakness or even illness. I had a client who was given anti-depressants four months after the death of her husband; she was told that she "*should* have been over it already." Anti-depressants are often prescribed for situational depression, disrupting the normal course of emotions. Society places expectations/*shoulds* on how long and even to what degree we *should* mourn, forgetting that each person has their own rhythm that they need to be faithful to.

As a youth I learned first hand the devastating effects society can have on the individual as I felt ashamed of being Jewish. I read recently that it was called the Woody Allen complex, or in a sense the victim blaming the victim. It took me a long time to overcome this feeling and take pride in who I am. Later at the University of Michigan I studied the effects of racism on self-esteem for Afro-Americans, which helped me understand the importance of social norms and how it influences self-esteem. I focus my counseling on the principle that we are all social beings needing to be accepted by others but not to the detriment of our own personalities and sense of being. *see ad below*

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# Letting Go of Illusion

by Lynne Gordon-Mündel

I was a student nurse when I first began to sense currents of Life Force. At the time I didn't know what was happening. During my daily duties as I bathed, massaged and changed the bedclothes for my patients, I began to be aware of a fluid sensation streaming through my hands and fingers. I thought the feeling was my imagination. I thought I was creating a fantasy – I felt that a loving power was moving around me and through me, infusing myself and my patients with the hope, the tenderness, the strength needed for their healing. The feeling seemed to make the work on the wards easier, I felt lighter and more in touch with my patients.

I was only nineteen and determined to not shut down to the reality I was given day by day – bodies emaciated, limbs in perpetual contraction, deep, weeping bedsores, drug-induced apathy. Adults and children crushed, broken, some just decaying, not TV images but living flesh. Real. So, in my ignorance, I thought the currents I was feeling were a product of my own imagination – something I needed to keep me going when the pain of what I was realizing about the human condition was almost too great to bear.

Many years later, with the help of a teacher, I was shown that the fluid tenderness, the loving, healing lightness, was not a fantasy at all. It was demonstrated to me that what I had thought was imagination was in fact my direct experience of the subtle substance out of which all of creation arises. I realized the simple truth: The Source of all Life – God – is ever-present and palpable.

This transformation of my understanding has brought about a transformation also of my life. Once I knew what was real, I could do nothing else with my life but share the gift of knowledge I had received.

At the time of that realization I began inviting groups of people to my home to explore the movement of the current, to explore vibrational rapport and group consciousness. We met every Monday evening. Now, twenty-five years later, we still meet every Monday evening although the people who made up the group at that time have moved on and been replaced several times.

Working with me now is a small circle of people who realize that humanity as a whole is awakening. We recognize that at sub-atomic or vibrational levels, humanity is One Body and that separation from one another or from our Source is illusion. We are ordinary people living ordinary lives but with deepening understanding of the nature of reality. Day by day we do the work necessary to offer on-going workshops, gatherings, retreats, individual counseling. We cook, we prepare meals, we clean, we garden, we tend to our guests' needs, we answer telephones, do our filing, pay our bills, and we do this without being paid because we have discovered that the privilege of serving in this way is the joy that most nourishes our lives, our bodies and our spiritual evolution.

Although I no longer work in a hospital, I know now that the energies I felt in my hands while I worked with hospital



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patients always moves amongst us and I seek to educate so that others may be freed from the illusion that the palpable presence of our Creator, our Sustainer, is only imagination. Be still, listen with your heart. Trusting love, we do come to know God.



*Lynne will be offering workshops at the Spring Festival of Awareness and at the Johnson's Landing Retreat Center.*



# ISSUES MAGAZINE

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## Musing

with Angèle, the publisher

The front cover is a photograph of "a group of committed citizens changing the world." It was taken during one of the annual Kootenay Lake Tai Chi Camps. Camp founder Eric Eastman stopped hosting this event a few years ago. Harold Hajime Naka, who was part of the Camp for many years, was so disappointed. During my distribution route last spring, he had just finished teaching a class, so I stopped to chat for a few minutes and listened to him lament the loss. We then talked about options and what it would take if he or someone else were to take it over. This winter when we were doing some programming, I mentioned my conversation to Richard, who got really excited and suggested that the Retreat Center host it. He then phoned Eric, who loved the idea. We now have four instructors busy spreading the word with Hajime writing about his Camp experiences so you can decide if this event is for you. The 30<sup>th</sup> annual Kootenay Lake Tai Chi Camp will take place at Johnson's Landing, July 13-18. More details on the back page and in Hajime's report on page 15.

April is Earth Month and April 22 is Earth Day. It is great to hear that so many towns, cities and people are concerned about preserving nature and the planet. Since I moved to the mountains four years ago, I keep reading more and more data about the ever-growing list of support groups that are designing themselves to help the overall population understand what changes are needed if we wish to continue living on the planet. Words like Sustainable, Peak Oil, Peak Food, Food Security, Re-Ruralization, Intentional Communities, EcoSystems, Grassroots, etc. are appearing in many newspapers, books and videos as we try to grasp what is happening.

In his recent book, *The Great Turning: From Empire to Earth Community*, author David Korten states, "Hope for the human future rests, therefore, not with institutions of power, but with the millions of individuals all around the world who are awakening." He points to the possibility of creating a post-corporate, post-capitalist world of living democracies, mindful market economies and authentic cultures.

Korten works closely with the publishers of *Yes! A Journal of Positive Futures*, who are dedicated to enhancing awareness and facilitating alliance-building in order to transform a world that is dedicated to the love of money into a world that is dedicated to the love of life. *Briarpatch*, a Canadian magazine from SK, dedicated its entire latest edition to finding a healthy balance between optimism and pessimism. They claim that we are unprepared to deal with the many limits that will soon arise with regards to food, energy and the spectre of scarcity.

Since I believe that "We, the people" do have the power to control our destiny, I love the fact that more people are getting involved and are feeling motivated to help the shift happen. Computers are making a difference and helping us to connect on a global scale. I liked the ad in *Ode* magazine that shows a chair with an image of the Earth sitting in it and the copy reads, "Your Mother would like a word with you. She would like you to help create a better world for future generations. We're Global MindShift, a growing online community of people and organizations working together to find new solutions." *Ode* is also developing an inter-active website and features articles written for intelligent optimists, like me. I subscribed after reading it online.

I enjoyed the article in *Ode* entitled "Real Men play Nice," in which sociologist Riane Eisler outlines the emergence of "female" values. Taking as an example how some northern European countries demonstrate partnership rather than domination tendencies, she writes, "As the status of women rises, so does 'the evolution of cooperation.'" As more people think in terms of equality instead of superiority or inferiority, she believes a high level of mutual benefit and care will develop and that high levels of abuse and violence will decrease.

continues on page 6





# STEPS ALONG THE PATH

by Richard of Johnson's  
Landing Retreat Center,  
home of Issues Magazine

Living with Angele (the publisher of ISSUES) has given me a model of how to give thanks to the Universe for our blessings. When I first started sharing space with her I noticed that on occasion she would blow kisses up into the sky as a form of blessing to give thanks for things that happened in her life. It didn't take me long to adopt this form of appreciation in my life. It is my belief that ceremony and tradition such as wearing a prayer shawl, or crossing one's heart, or bowing in prayer towards Mecca, to name but a few, have been part of the human fabric that helps to connect us with our source. For me the simple gesture of blowing a kiss into the sky to express my gratitude acknowledges and deepens my connection to spirit.

We often have morning meetings at the Retreat Center to connect with each other, with the earth and the energies of the Retreat Center. Near the beginning of the meeting we take time to give appreciation for things that have touched our lives. For me it is a wonderful time because I feel so blessed for all that is happening around me. So many people have given their time and energy to make the Center function smoothly that I had a lot to be appreciative of.

In my recent studies of Marshall Rosenberg's work I found a section that deals with appreciation. Marshall says there are three components to appreciation:

1. The action that contributed to our well-being
2. The particular need of ours that was fulfilled
3. The feeling of pleasure as a result

I have come to realize that if I can connect with someone at a deeper level it strengthens our connection. And the more that I can accept and appreciate another person, the more 'Peace through Understanding' I can bring to the planet.

When Thomas had finished working on up-grading the Retreat Center website, I told him that his efforts helped get the site up in a timely manner. I also expressed that his participation took a large part of a major project off my plate. And I told him that I felt a sense of relief to have the website completed. It was good that I had just heard Marshall's talk on appreciation so I could really express my feelings about what he had done and how it enriched my life.

Not all forms of appreciation need to be done with such detail, I find it depends upon the circumstances. Sometimes when I am in town and not wrapped up in my own thoughts I connect with people by looking them in the eye and smiling as I walk past them on the sidewalk. In most people there is that instantaneous connection, a returned smile and then the moment slips past. I feel that acknowledging one's existence

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in a positive way is a form of appreciation. ...I see you, I acknowledge your existence. If the theory that we are all one is true then I may as well smile at the rest of my humanity.

Another part of the morning meetings, I was telling you about earlier involves an attunement with the spirits of the land. Ages ago this was an integral part of a lot of cultures, people gave thanks for a successful hunt, a good crop or the safe return of the fishermen after a long voyage. There was a sense that there were other things at play in the fabric of our existence other than what we as people did. Here at the Retreat Center we acknowledge this existence, whenever we are about to interact with the natural environment we connect with the nature spirits and ask for their understanding and co-operation. We work with a sense of reverence and respect, recognizing our environment as a living thing. This concept extends our appreciation and understanding beyond the physical.

This past fall we cut down two live birch trees that were leaning heavily towards the Lodge. As a group we held a ceremony connecting with the spirits of the trees and told them why we were taking them down. We asked for their understanding and encouraged their life force to move on to other birches in the area. We also gave the message that we would not take the trees down for at least three days. It was a very moving experience with all of us touching the trees and connecting with them. When we finally came back to remove the trees, the leaves had wilted; for me it was a sign that the life force had indeed moved out of the trees.

Recently Daniel, a member of our community, decided to move to Calgary to be with his two grown-up sons. When he first came to Johnson's Landing he was disconnected from most of his family. As he settled in and came to a place of Peace, his heart opened and he reached out to reconnect with his two sons. Even though he is no longer here I have deep appreciation for the life energy that he put into the Retreat Center and for the opportunity to witness the growth that he made in an amazingly short time. It gives me confirmation that people can make great changes and that each step along the path brings us closer to our true purpose. I will miss Daniel's smiling face around here, I send him my Blessings on his continued journey. May you each experience appreciation, even in the times when your plate is not full.

Namaste

Richard



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## Musing *continued from page 4*

She says, "Once we have cooperation based on support and empowerment instead of hierarchy based on control and fear, we will progress to a much nicer world."

I am thankful the world keeps changing. So much has happened in the last one hundred years that we all need to keep sorting out within ourselves what to keep and what to get rid of and then... that will be reflected in the world.

To honour all the work that Findhorn has done to shift the consciousness of the planet, I typed out the words below from a photograph I took while at Findhorn - words on the wall of the work station where Richard's group met for morning meetings.

A community Like Findhorn is a kind of school  
for learning how to live one's beliefs.

There are no gurus or fully enlightened beings here.  
Each of us seeks our own inspiration from within.

The work departments are the main classrooms  
The teacher is whatever broom and dustpan or  
moody co-worker you find in your path.

And the lessons are in your response.  
To any situation in which you find yourself.

You can always choose whether or not  
to sweep the path with love.

In this sense, all of life is the teacher and the school.  
It is a slow but effective education in Transformation.

*Angie* ♥



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# WHEN AWARENESS ISN'T ENOUGH

## Is This You?

Are books, workshops, affirmations, and analyzing your issues, not creating the results you want? Do you keep repeating unwanted thoughts and reactions even though a part of you knows better?

## Awareness Alone Is Not Enough

Our subconscious mind is made up of parts, all based on core beliefs. Some are positive and life enhancing, and some are not. Most were created in early childhood to help and protect us to the best of our understanding at the time. These parts, the core beliefs, the thoughts, emotions, and behaviours accompanying them, are firmly imbedded in our subconscious. When, as adults, we choose to believe something in opposition to these original beliefs, there is a feeling of being pulled in two directions at once or being "stuck." The old core beliefs can limit our choices, happiness and success. We must transform beliefs at our deep core level if positive changes are to last.

## An Important First Step

While conscious awareness is not enough, it is a good beginning. To recognize our lives are off track and some thoughts and behaviours are not producing the hoped for results is important. It motivates us to keep searching for answers to our unhappiness. Core Belief Engineering accesses and aligns our negative subconscious beliefs with what we now choose as adults. Then a transformation of the old beliefs, feelings, thoughts and reactions is complete on every level, spiritual, mental, emotional and physical, down past the layer of the cells. *"At last, at 58 I have finally made it! I tried all kinds of other therapies but nothing else worked. I have solved a 5-year writing block. Negative drama has become intelligent pleasure. Life is exciting!"*

-Sharon T., Writer, Kelowna

When thorough and complete transformation occurs, you need much less time to resolve long-standing issues. As well, changes last and grow stronger over time. *"Laara's gentle non-leading approach resulted in creativity and organization in my work. A year later I am even more creative and organized, I continue to prioritize more clearly and to trust my way of doing things."* - Alan J., Chiropractor, Kelowna

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- Christina F., Psychologist - (phone client) Toronto

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# Life in a Mountain Valley: Kakwa Ecovillage Cooperative

By Russ Purvis

The Central Interior of British Columbia is best known for its border with Jasper National Park. The same rugged Rocky Mountains, emerald and aquamarine rivers and lakes, as well as North American wildlife of every description, extend far beyond the park boundaries. From that depiction it doesn't take much imagination to understand how many find the huge region that nurtures Kakwa Ecovillage as irresistible.

There is so much love from so many people it would be impossible to express simply why this place exists. I can only share impressions as the founder. Today we have sixteen members, not including children, with total potential residents likely to grow to sixty within five years. Age groups range from under a year to late fifties. The goal is to become a classic 'ecovillage' with enough housing and employment for us to be relatively self-sufficient.

With the Fraser River forming a property boundary to our certified 540 acre organic farm the location is in many ways ideal. Our small herd of twenty-six alpacas and llamas provide the beginnings of the agricultural component that is key to any community which desires to be a template for sustainability. In the language of the world wide movement we strive for:



**... a human-scale, full-featured settlement in which human activities are harmlessly integrated into the natural world in a way that is supportive of healthy human development, and can be successfully continued into the indefinite future.**

*Elder of the Ecovillage Movement,  
Robert Gilman.*

Currently there is a four-bedroom common house on site that serves as office, dining hall, and accommodations for members and occasional guests. Two riverside cabins are seen as future accommodations once their renovation is complete and are adjacent to a large campground for tenting. The bunkhouse is another project in progress. However, the two-storey sixty-plus year old barn is in marvelous condition and happily in use by our herd of animals during the winter months.

After opening to members in January 2005 and formalizing our Cooperative structure in the Fall 2006 there are obviously many new experiences ahead! The annual workshop



**The Fraser River flowing past Kakwa Ecovillage Land**

programme is always geared towards: 1) introducing people to Kakwa and 2) fulfilling our mission as a place of interactive education in the promotion of sustainability. 2007 will be particularly fun for members and guests. The Edible Wild plants guru, Mors Kochanski will be back for his third year. Also a

very affirming spiritual grounding will take place with Mary Inglis of the Findhorn Foundation arrives, and I am looking forward to world renowned architect and planner Greg Ramsey leading us in the masterplan/ecovillage design for Kakwa!

The vision for Kakwa has been many years in gestation. It comes from "Why not?" Europe and Australia have been the leaders in the on-the-ground ecovillage projects for many years. The debate on the sustainability of 'urban' ecovillages I will leave to others. The path to Kakwa led through *Habitat for Humanity* and the appreciation that building houses is something all people are capable of. It also led to many trips to, and an eleven year association, with Findhorn ([www.findhorn.org](http://www.findhorn.org)) in Scotland which is one of, if not the most dynamic Ecovillage on the planet. The Centre for Alternative Technology in Wales, Crystal Waters in Australia and others all lent pieces to the puzzle. Three significant gems were gathered from these quests in searching for characteristics contributing to the successful founding and longevity of an Ecovillage: 1) know and cultivate your neighbors; 2) select a location which has appropriate zoning in place; and 3) sustainable habitation for humans is dependent on ready access to water and land suitable for food production. Kakwa Ecovillage is an example of these three qualities. The entire foundation of the journey has been based on Trust in the wisdom of the Path as it is presented on a daily basis. For more information - [www.kakwaecovillage.com](http://www.kakwaecovillage.com)





# Protein Performance

Protein is one of the most essential nutrients in our body. It has a wide range of physiological functions that are required for achieving optimal physical performance. Protein forms the structural basis of muscle tissue, is a major source of energy for muscle contraction, and is also the major component of enzymes and blood in the muscle. Athletes such as dancers and gymnasts who tend to restrict their energy intake to maintain a low body weight, as well as vegetarian athletes, may have a higher protein requirement and/or not ingest sufficient protein for their needs.

The body breaks down protein into individual components of amino acids. These amino acids are then used to rebuild the body and build muscle for athletic performance. Raw, high quality amino acids will produce lean and stronger muscle without the large size. Heated or cooked amino acids found in soy and whey products will produce more bulky muscles which will turn flabby if workouts are not maintained. Heat binds lysine, which is the controlling amino acid. If food is even a little low in lysine, all the other seven essential amino acids are not utilized. Some 22 amino acids are required.

Carbohydrates on the other hand, break down into sugars which the body burns as a stimulant, like pouring sugar in the gas tank of your car. The engine will run much hotter and even have extra horsepower but it will wreck the engine. This same principle applies to the body. The liver produces glucose levels required for energy, and glucose is created from amino acids. Amino acids are the fuel source for our bodies. Look at the animal kingdom. Ever try to outrun a dog, or a deer? How about a cheetah? None of them use carbohydrates. They are getting high levels of raw amino acids in their raw diet, providing what seems to be an infinite supply of energy.

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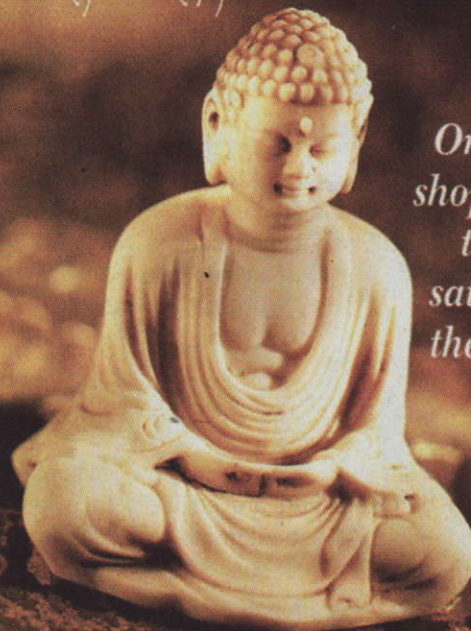
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# MOTHER'S STORY

by Lyndsay Blais

As a mother of four amazing and unique girls, I am often reminded that they are not only learning about themselves and the world as they grow up – make no mistake about it, they are taking mental notes and forming their opinions about motherhood based on watching me day to day...they ask questions like "Is it fun being a mom? Mom's have to work really hard all the time. don't they..."

While at first I was caught off guard, pleased for a moment that all my efforts were being noticed, perhaps even appreciated – I soon realized that my attitude is so much more important than the actual accomplishments of the daily and often mundane tasks of laundry, cooking, cleaning and working.

While there never seems to be enough hours in the day to get it all done, the special moments tucking my little ones into bed and hearing about their day, what they are challenged by and even afraid of, could easily be lost as I say, "I'll be there in a minute, I just have one more load of laundry to put in...or let me just finish the dishes." By then the moment may well have passed. Fortunately, my girls are great teachers, and instead of missing out, I heard one say as I walked out the bedroom door tonight, "Thanks for taking the time to listen mom, I feel better, and I really enjoy our talks – love you..." I ask you, what's more rewarding than that? The dishes will still be there tomorrow: Happy Mother's Day!



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Saturday's Instructor is Karen Jasmine is a Belly Dance performer and instructor. Poi twirling was a natural attraction and blended with her undulating hip patterns. As a double Sagittarius, she is fire and loves fire. She is just returning from South Florida where she Fire Danced at ecstatic, bonfire drum circles.



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Sunday's Instructor is Ngakpa Yeshe who was trained in aikido, ninjutsu, tae kwon do, tai chi, and qi gong. Three years ago he was introduced to Poi by Aura Star-Fire of the Mystic Family Circus who shared the circus secrets of performance with poi, staff, and swords which he picked up quickly.

Originating from the Polynesian tribes, this martial art form has been used by both men and women as a healthy exercise to train their bodies' coordination as well as hand and wrist dexterity for weaving, craft-making, and battle. Spin patterns of sacred geometry.





# My Life and Times

by Yvette Eastman

I cannot remember a time when I was not teaching something to someone! Showing Gail an easy way to hold a frog when I was five, later helping Johnny learn how to heal an 'ouwie,' or telling Peggy how to get any dog to follow you home. When adults talked about adult things I would listen and absorb information. I learned about duality of thought as people said one thing and did the opposite. I listened when people exclaimed over some artwork, book or piece of news. It started my romance with education from all sources.

At age twelve I volunteered in the educational division of the SPCA. I taught younger children about different animals and showed them how the fluoroscope helped a Veterinarian discover what object a bird or dog had swallowed. I set up bug exhibits, bird programs, and dog training trails. At age 13 I worked with Blanche Saunders, who taught the first dog-training program in which the owner did the training. People want control of their skills, they want a chance to learn and develop. I used that knowledge to teach classes and write books.

I wanted to become a veterinarian because of my love for animals, working with either farm animals or in a zoo. I did my preparatory training by working every summer on farms. There I discovered that farmers would never allow women to inseminate their cows or horses. It was the fifties and it was unseemly! If I became a vet I would have to fight my way into the working world as a liberated woman and since I wasn't a fighter I left the idea of veterinary school behind and began to search the world of psychology.

I learned clinical involvement from the major people in the field of psychology, Albert Ellis, (cognitive psychotherapy), Jacob (Papa) Moreno MD (Psychodrama), Fritz Perls (Gestalt Therapy) and many others. I began to devise programs that helped speed a person into changing their attitudes and behaviours. I learned to synthesize the many modalities I had studied and that became my trademark. In time I became an excellent group therapist for I understood that people wanted to be accepted for what they were. They did not want to change, or to grow. They wanted a paid friend. Even though it gave me a myriad of useful techniques for reaching others and their belief systems, I knew I could not continue.

While raising my kids I became a Day Care supervisor. They taught me that laughter was healing. As I learned NLP and other modes of new therapies, laughter became the most important asset for my teaching.

I then discovered my young son had an extremely serious hearing loss. A friend said, "Try Reflexology." Now that had to be nonsense! "Work on feet to fix ears?!! You have got to be kidding!" After thinking about it we decided we had nothing to lose so off we went. Three weeks later my son could hear snippets of conversation. I learned all I could and have never looked back! It took a while, but Chris' hearing was totally corrected and remains so. He helped me start my new career.

When I started my Reflexology practice in 1974, we were not allowed to charge a fee. Donations were \$2. I knew that in

order to remember a joke, you must tell it to someone, so I educated everyone with whom I came in contact with until I was teaching Reflexology classes.

I also learned Touch For Health and a variety of other Specialized Kinesiology programs. I began to synthesize Kinesiology and Reflexology and from them the books, *Touchpoint Reflexology*, *The First Steps* and *Meridians on the Feet Reflexology* were born. I then wrote and produced a two-hour instructional video, and developed a variety of charts to help students. I love learning and changing so I continued to take classes, which always give me extra techniques to pass along to my clients and students. This year I became certified in EmoTrance - an outgrowth of the Emotional Freedom Technique (EFT), and Quantum Touch.

The main concepts I teach in my classes and books are for practitioners to observe ... faces, feet, posture, mannerisms, any visual cues to improve assessment. I encourage my students to keep adding to their skills, becoming aware of how that information changes how we perceive our clients and our knowledge. I believe that networking is important, sharing with people from all the health and helping fields so we can learn about our limitations. And lastly I encourage everyone to keep laughing as you play your role as a health worker.

*Yvette Eastman is the primary instructor of Touchpoint Canadian Institute of Reflexology and Kinesthetics, she shares her knowledge in the Vancouver lower mainland, and is coming to Edmonton, for the last time in 2007. Please see ad below.*



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# The Kootenay Lake Tai Chi Camp Report

by Harold Hajime Naka

After attending 17 Kootenay Lake Tai Chi Retreats I have many Qi-full memories. In 1985 I was a novice full of excitement and fear. I had a feeling of anxiety thinking that I would be the only beginner at camp. When I arrived, Eric Eastman (King Eric) and the staff made me feel welcome and it was not long before I felt a part of this friendly Tai Chi Community. We gathered at the kitchen and outdoor diner for lunch and orientation where Eric introduced the instructors and staff and dish crew... which was us. He said it was a time for bonding and it was.



Although the accommodations were rustic, even spartan, (leaky roof, one shower for more than thirty people, no electricity and child-sized bathrooms), Eric reminded us that we were returning to the source of Tai Chi—Nature. The setting was very peaceful surrounded by the mountains and Kootenay Lake. It was just perfect. One of the many things that I will cherish was the food. I did not know vegetarian meals could be so delicious and filling. I really expanded my center in the course of the week.

The day began with Eric's 6:30 'Good Morning' wake up call. I would crawl out of my sleeping bag and stagger up to the bathroom where I met other sleepy-eyed folk brushing their teeth over the outdoor sinks. We nodded to each other since there was no talking allowed until after our mandatory Qigong session. Eric led the group through a series of movements to help us loosen up and get the Qi flowing. Some mornings were so cold that people were wearing toques and gloves...that's when coffee and breakfast tasted so good.

After breakfast we had our first lesson. I took the saber form because it looked flashy. After my first lesson I was already frustrated because our instructor made it look so easy. I also wanted to learn the eight silk brocade Qigong and Push Hands, a two person drill to develop sensitivity, rooting, alignment, receiving and giving energy. In fact I wanted to learn everything in one week. Luckily we had free time in the afternoon or I would have ended up a basket case trying to remember everything.

In the evenings we would gather in the main lodge for group sharing and massage treatments. Although there was serious practicing times it wasn't all work. We had a choice also going to Ainsworth Hot Springs or a walk, and on Friday night there was music, dancing, story telling, games and relaxation around the bonfire. Leaving was hard since I had not



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learned any forms and had made so many friends. I knew I would be back the next year, feeling more confident and determined to learn the saber form.

When I returned for the next Tai Chi Camp, the first thing I did was go to the field where people were practicing. Overhearing Eric say that my form looked flowery, I was very pleased with the compliment and looked forward to impressing him with my push hands skill. I saw him watching me wrestle with my partner, sweating and panting, until finally I pushed him over. He said that I was using force and not yielding, and so I was even more thrilled with his praise. I continued using force to overcome my partners and this time Eric told me to invest in loss. I was not buying any of that nonsense.

By now I was becoming a push hands junkie, and feeling so confident I asked Eric if he wanted to push hands with me. He obliged and the next I knew I was on my bum wondering what had happened. The greatest lesson for me was humility. Each time I returned I was greeted by familiar, smiling faces and made new friends. After the morning Qigong I would practice my five elements and Qigong, and others would join me. Soon I had quite a large group and Eric would glance over, wondering why people were following this rookie upstart.

On my seventh retreat, Eric still puzzled at why students would join me and must have thought, 'If I can't beat him, better have him join me'. So at our Friday Farewell Gathering he announced to the group that he was making me a Guest Instructor for next year. I was honoured and quipped, 'I feel like I have been demoted'. After that Eric referred to me as 'nothing special', which I liked. I discovered there were perks to being an instructor...I didn't have to do dish duty... instead I got to lead the early morning Qigong sessions.

Every camp had a different flavour, but the food, the instructors, students and staff were always great. I taught the beginners and it was a great opportunity to share the magic of Tai Chi and Qigong and how we can create a better world by becoming more compassionate, empowered, open and gentle. One summer was particularly hot and the instructors would fight for some shade to teach in. I took my class into the lake and we really learned how to flow. (See front cover)

I have met so many wonderful instructors, students, life-long friends who have truly enriched my life and gave me enough lessons to last a lifetime. No wonder they say that Tai Chi and Qigong promotes longevity. When I heard that Eric was not having a 30<sup>th</sup> retreat, I felt great sadness in my heart and when I phoned Eric he said, "It is time to let it go," the spirit lives on. Thank you Eric and Marilyn. You will always be in my heart.

I am delighted that the Camp is continuing and look forward to the 30<sup>th</sup> annual Tai Chi Camp at the Johnson's Landing Retreat Centre which overlooks Kootenay Lake.

See ad on the back page.

*Hajime will be returning to the Spring Festival of Awareness for his 20<sup>th</sup> time. If you want to experience his style of magic... contact data for the Spring Festival of Awareness is on page 25.*



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# The Beginnings of a Dream

## Mara Station Retreat Centre

by Ginny Cox

Five years ago, my husband Paul and I were vacationing in the Okanagan and found quite by 'chance' a magical piece of property in the little village of Mara, right beside the Shuswap River. We were driving along Riverside Road, which follows the meandering path of the river, when I saw a bald eagle swoop down and catch a fish. Suddenly, I felt energized and attentive. As we approached the old wooden bridge, I declared, "We have to cross the bridge and turn right – yes, quite sure, it's right!!" And there it was, our little piece of paradise! Down by the river I spied six painted turtles sunning themselves on a log. I remembered a year ago someone had read my palm and told me to look out for turtles; they would be meaningful! I knew with absolute certainty we were supposed to do something special with the land, but at that point I had no idea what. Paul also thought he'd found heaven because on the land sat the 1892 CPR railway station (760 sq. ft.) in a very sorry state of repair.

Travelling back and forth from Okotoks to Mara, we were able – over the next year or so and with expert help from others – to completely refurbish the train station. Then, quite by surprise, circumstances changed for us, we sold our home and moved permanently to Mara, squeezing our two cats and ourselves into the tiny station!!

It was on the journey from Calgary to Mara, with Paul driving the old U-Haul with our furniture, and me behind in Paul's truck, that I had a vision that was so powerful and detailed that it almost took my breath away. Upon our arrival, I bounced out of the truck and couldn't wait to tell Paul that our lives were about to change!! Thank goodness he was ready for the challenge!



The vision included building a large extension to the train station, starting a B&B in the summer and in the off-season launching a retreat centre for people with cancer and their primary caregiver/significant other. At the six-day retreats, we would provide one-to-one counselling, qigong, healing touch, nutritional support, meditation, visualization, psychosocial/spiritual support, music/sound therapy, art therapy techniques, massage and reiki. This vision all seemed like a perfect compliment to my training as a registered nurse, with a master's degree specializing in palliative care and a counselling certificate, and my recent work developing Adult Day Support Programs and a Regional Palliative Care Program, as well as managing Hospice Calgary Day Programs. I kept hearing the words "build it and they will come." I was both terrified and excited!

The vision came in March 2005, and by June 2006 we had completed the extension – a huge project in itself – and hosted our first B&B guests. Now we are offering our first season of retreats!! While sometimes it's felt like we've been on a roller coaster and hanging on for dear life, we're ready to start. We have an awesome team of professionals to lead and provide support for four retreats per year. Our aims are to help participants:

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**The Extension with the original CPR station to the left.**





# Journeys: On My Sacred Earth Walk

by Thomas Francois, B.R.S.

I was born a Bear Clan member of the Algonquin Nation in the Province of Ontario. To be born Bear Clan is a herald of one who is meant to be a medicine person and/or shaman(ess). Our teachings are simple... before we are born we exist as spirit beings, with a spirit family, and created as a prelude to the creation of the physical world. While in spirit we make decisions about being born, or general circumstances of our life and what those will be like as we grow. In essence we believe we are intended to achieve specific life tasks, with the details being worked out as our days and years unfold.

My earliest childhood memories involve spirit teachers and dream beings. They came to me in my sleeping world and in my waking world. Always guiding me, encouraging me, helping me to understand who I am and who I am meant to become. Despite my family of origin's lack of teachings regarding shamanism, my spirit helpers made sure that they stayed connected with me and that I would be formally instructed in the knowledge rooted in earth-based spirituality. These elders, my grandmothers and aunts, understood how to work with what we call the Seven Sacred Lodges (other groups call them chakras and meridians). I learned to work with the vibration energy inherent within creation. The Earth Mother's teachings helped me to harmonize with all of my relations; be they plant, animal, mineral, flyers, creepers, crawlers, swimmers, two-legged, four-legged or elementals. I know and deeply feel a kinship with them.

I have come to the Johnson's Landing Retreat Center through a period of deep soul searching and healing, a place where I could express and live out the unique spiritual vision I have for my life, and perhaps be able to share some of this with others. I am hoping that I can help others come to realize how essential our earth Mother is to our life and that we have much to learn and share. I know with my whole being that the possibilities for life here holds much promise; what will unfold and what that will look like excites me. Having recently turned 43 years of age, I entered into a juncture of life which, according to the traditional teachings of my people, are considered to be the years of those who carry wisdom. The challenge of making wise choices for myself is that I am still finding out that not all my choices are wise or healthy; I am now realizing that I will always be learning as much as I am teaching and that is my true wisdom. I look forward to this coming season, being in nature, and to the unfolding of my Sacred Earth Walk.

All My Relations

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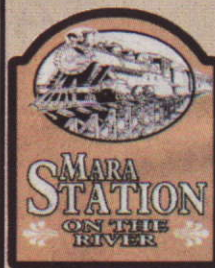
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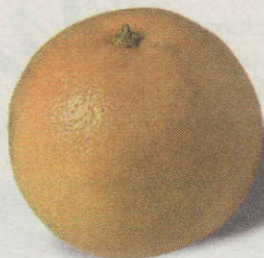
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# WHY GOD LEAVES US ALONE

## AND WHY, ACCORDING TO DEEPAK CHOPRA, THAT'S A VERY GOOD THING

I'm sure that in their heart of hearts, most people wish God would stop interfering in everyday life. This is a concern that reaches far beyond religion. The U.S. president and other born-again Christians refer to God's helping hand in making war in the Middle East. Our Western society couldn't be more different from traditional Muslim society, but we have one thing in common: People in both places believe God is on their side. This means they know what God thinks—a remarkable assumption given that God is infinitely present and infinitely transcendent; cosmic and personal at the same time; invisible and unable to be located in time and space.

People continue to be nagged by ancient documents called scriptures that claim to transmit what it is that God exactly wants. The great Indian poet Kabir wrote that he had read all the scriptures, bathed in all the sacred pools, visited all the holy shrines, and found God in none of them. Most people would consider that a sign of despair when in fact it's the key to freedom. In Vedanta, the purest spiritual doctrine of Hindu India, God doesn't want anything of us. He doesn't want to be found; he has no laws that we should obey; he never judges, punishes or puts forth expectations.

The truth is that God left us alone a long time ago. This wasn't an act of abuse or abandonment. It was an opportunity for us to find our own freedom, and in that freedom to realize something simple yet profound: God is existence itself. Existence isn't an empty vessel. It contains life and death. It harbours the Self, a form of consciousness that can embrace its own existence and create its own stage for evolution. If we go deep enough into Being, leaving aside all the objects that surround us and mask Being from our eyes, we find that Being is eternal and contains the seed of every created thing. All that exists is only a reflection of the Self, and all worlds, including this precious one, fall into three categories:

1. Consciousness reflected in material objects and events
2. Consciousness reflected in more abstract objects and events
3. Consciousness reflecting upon itself

Trees, mountains and clouds belong in the first category. Dreams, ideals and aspirations belong in the second. The Self belongs in the third.

Every cause, ideal, spiritual movement or soul teaching is about answering the question: Who am I? Fundamentalists of every stripe want this question answered once and for all by an unquestioned authority. They may succeed in quelling doubt for a while, but God has nothing to say and everything to say. I am fond of Thomas Merton's words: "The search for God consists of arriving at a place and discovering that God has just left." Which is as it should be. The essence of human

*continues on page 18*



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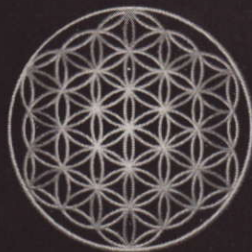
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## **Why God Leaves us Alone..** *continued from p. 17*

nature is to reach beyond what we already know about ourselves.

At this moment we are faced with ferment and potential chaos as outmoded religious beliefs struggle to prove that they are as strong as ever. Psychiatry professor Susan Smalley says, quite realistically, that no one can "let go" of any belief until the void it would leave behind is filled. Those who have already "let go" of God aren't necessarily better off than fundamentalists. They too have a void to fill.

God won't leave us alone as long as human beings feel afraid and lonely. God might evolve—so one hopes—into something other than a white-bearded authority figure with a taste for vengeance. In moderate denominations that transformation happened a long, long time ago. But somehow we couldn't handle a nicer God. Millions of people feel too hollow and afraid, angry and attacked, lonely and disconnected to believe in a benign divinity. This phenomenon is called alienation. It was well diagnosed by Marx and Freud, who pointed out that the human psyche suffers terribly when people are yanked out of a connection with Nature, when traditions stop being a safety net, when dislocation and insecurity are the daily norm.

The reason 87 percent of North Americans tell pollsters they never had a doubt about the existence of God isn't rock-ribbed faith. It's fear of the alternative, a cosmos dominated by the void left by an absent God. Whatever our beliefs may be, we all have to fill that void. It would be an act of good faith if the Religious Right could concede that we're all in this together. It would be an equal act of faith if the enemies of the Religious Right made the same concession. Spirituality would then move forward, and on a global basis we could continue the universal quest, which is to unite Heaven and Earth, first in our minds, then in every place our minds inhabit.

It's true that evangelical Christians are making gains, even in the most traditional places. (A country like Ecuador, once a bastion of orthodox Catholicism, is estimated to be up to 25 percent Protestant, due to inroads made by missionaries from the U.S.). The future of God, however, lies in spiritual evolution. The next step of growth is for people to start to awaken one by one, just as Jesus, Buddha and Muhammad did. Judging by grassroots activity, the following trends will continue to shape spiritual life:

- Meditation will become mainstream.
- Elements of the miraculous and paranormal will be widely acknowledged.
- Alternative forms of healing, both physical and psychological, will become commonplace.
- Prayer will be seen as real and efficacious.
- Manifestation of desires will be talked about as a real phenomenon.
- People will regain a connection to their souls.
- Individuals will find answers inwardly to their deepest spiritual questions. They will believe in their private answers and live accordingly.
- New communities of belief will arise.
- Gurus and other spiritual authorities will wane in influence.



- Wisdom traditions will grow to embrace the great spiritual teachings at the heart of organized religion.
- Faith will no longer be seen as an irrational departure from reason and science.
- Wars will decline as peace becomes a social reality.
- Nature will regain its sacred value.

Millions of people already embody these trends in their own lives. They abide by the values of the new spirituality. Events may mask this widespread revolution in spiritual values, but outward events have always been a poor guide to what is happening at the soul level.

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Deepak Chopra is a physician and the author of 45 books, most recently *Life after Death, The Burden of Proof*. He was born in India, but has lived in the United States for many years, where he taught at the Tufts University and Boston University School of Medicine.

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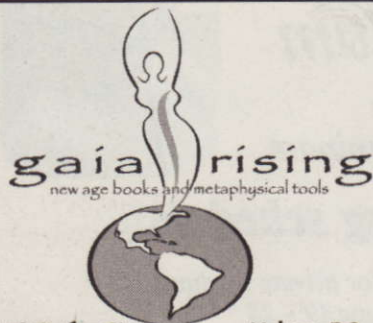
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# Healing Sound

by Sharon Carne

We are constantly surrounded by sounds in our modern world and they all have an effect on our minds and bodies. Some of these sounds grate on us and make us irritable. Other sounds, like our favorite songs, energize or relax us. How does sound do that?

From his fifty years of research, Dr. Alfred Tomatis, French surgeon, ear, nose and throat specialist, psychologist and inventor, tells us that the ear is a portal into the brain and functions by charging the brain with the electrical impulses of sound. The results of his research are used in more than 250 Tomatis centres in Europe and North America helping thousands of people with learning disabilities, autism, depression, chronic fatigue, immune system disorders, improving creativity and more.

There would be no life without rhythm. The planets, the weather, waves, our body cycles, all move rhythmically. If something is out of rhythm, it is not working right. For example, electric shock is used to bring an irregular heartbeat back into rhythm. The conscious use of rhythm can alter major body cycles: your heartbeat, breathing and brain waves. If you alter just one of these you affect the others. This is called entrainment. A stronger external rhythm will cause one of these body rhythms to match it. That's why so many people find sitting at the seashore relaxing. Normal breathing moves at about 12 breaths per minute. If waves come in at about 8 per minute, your breathing slows down to match it. Slowing down your breathing also slows down your heartbeat and brain waves. Music that is created for relaxation uses this knowledge to change your body pulses.

Research has shown that one of the effects of slowing down these body pulses is that your immune system improves. The latest research from a relatively new field called psychoneuroimmunology, the study of the mind/body relationship, has found that music or sound along with guided imagery is the most beneficial way to affect the immune system to combat disease. Dr. Mitchell Gaynor, oncologist, prescribes singing crystal bowls and visualizations to accompany his patients' chemotherapy or radiation treatments, with great success. In his book, *The Biology of Belief*, Dr. Bruce Lipton, cell biologist, describes how he has found specific protein molecules in the cell membrane that are direct receptors for our thoughts, sending this energy right into the cell. This explains how our thoughts directly affect us at the cellular level.

Quantum mechanics is redefining the very nature of our physical universe and challenging belief systems that have been in place for hundreds of years. Quantum physics tells us that everything is in vibration. And each kind of atom, molecule, body organ, and person vibrates at a specific frequency. An atom is 99.9% empty space, so the very core of matter is mostly empty space and the remaining .1% is vibration. Both the empty space and the vibration are affected by consciousness (or is consciousness) and sound is a carrier wave for consciousness and conscious intent.

This is where things get really interesting. When sound and conscious intent are applied at the atomic level, miracles happen. Don Campbell, in *The Mozart Effect*, describes how he used humming, toning and visualization to dissolve a life-threatening blood clot in his brain. More information about the psychology and science of how this happens can be found in Tom Kenyon's book, *Brain States*.

Maybe we are coming around full circle to begin to understand the reverence the ancient people of the world had for the healing power of sound.

*Sharon Carne's passion for healing sound has its foundation in a successful thirty-year career performing and teaching music. The combination of her expertise in music and sound, spiritual transformation and her inner guidance has led Sharon to the creation of music and CDs to assist others. She has studied with healing sound pioneers, Jonathan Goldman and Tom Kenyon and is a reiki master. See ad to the left.*



# What Is Going On In Our Intimate Relationships?

For many of us, including Jon and I, our most touching and nurturing experiences were born out of our special intimate connection to another, and yet our journey of love is also quite bumpy and discombobulating at times too! We have come to understand that there is a deep need for education and support in our intimate connections so that our longings, hurt, disappointments and expectations get to be felt and related to in a very different way instead of always holding us hostage in self-protective disempowerment. We've noticed two factors that play a major role in confusing people in their love life.

First relationships are quite complex and full of the unknown. We are not wrong nor bad for not having figured them out. It is impossible to know all there is to know in advance. The unknowable we are referring to is the ongoing process of self-discovery; the growing, the learning, and the changing that we go through over time and moment to moment. The unknowable only gets revealed to us through trial and error, the gap between our conscious intentions and how life some times shows up, much to our surprise.

The other part of this unknowable is simply the mystery of being itself. The mysterious, open-ended field that is, that holds and equalizes all pressures. When we listen to it through our hearts and bodies we can feel nourished, opened and renewed.

The second factor is that in our culture we are overly identified with our mind; caught in our judgments, our opinions, our assessments, and lonely in our heads. We are often divided, one aspect of our self against another, split from our feelings, from our heart, our body and deeper knowing. Our mental perspective is quite narrow and it cannot give justice to the enormity and complexity that we truly are.

We're saying all this to invite everyone to start relaxing a bit more into our human condition. There is an unknown to be discovered, there is the mystery of being and there is our inner division against ourselves and none of it is wrong it just is our natural human dilemma. Thus the impulse to know our self and be open to love.

In my journey of self-understanding I have learned that I could make use of my judgments and heartbreaks to my own and others' benefit. I have come to recognize that all judgments, all hurt feelings, hide a valid need that is not being acknowledged or met. Our needs are connected to our life

force, they are natural and necessary. Our needs want us to acknowledge and provide for them. When we don't understand our needs, underneath our pain and conflict, they keep churning our insides, creating judgment, resistance and continuing discomfort.

A few years back I was in an intimate relationship with a nice man. I had a strong heartfelt attraction that compelled me towards him and out of myself. He complained that there wasn't enough space in our interactions for him to come towards me since I was doing that much of the time. When he didn't come towards me I felt insecure and alone. In my despair I came even closer and in doing so I made it impossible for him to come to me. This dynamic revealed an underlying panic running me in my relating to him, although it didn't show so much from the outside. As I inquired more deeply inside, I encountered a part of my heart that was crushed and very lonely.

I would bounce around from panic to anger to rage to demand. Finally one day I let myself just feel the devastating pain at my core. I wailed like a baby. I started engaging that broken part of my heart and let her know that I was here, I wasn't going anywhere. I talked to her on a feeling level as if I was caring for a hurt child. I let her feel my warmth, giving her my attention and staying in touch with her every day.

That aspect of my heart grieved and then started relaxing, in time the angst greatly diminished and I stopped feeling anguished around my boyfriend's lack of loving expression. I felt freer, I still loved him but I wasn't moved to come forward so much, and as he now had space to come towards me, he did, but hardly. It became clearer that we were too different from each other, unless I chose to accept him as he was. I tried to take him as he was but I couldn't bend my heart to accept what it couldn't. I kept longing for a deeper richer satisfying meeting with a man. This piece of healing had me rest in my self like I hadn't before, more grown-up and self-caring in my heart. I am so grateful for that.

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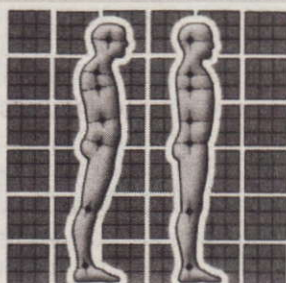
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# EMOTIONAL RELEASES

by Wayne Still

Connective tissue, the stuff in the body about which we structural integrators obsess, is the body's memory store house. This is no equal opportunity memory bank though, the happy, positive events pass through without leaving a trace while our traumas get trapped and have long lasting effects. The trauma can be physical or emotional and is often both. What is the same is the connective tissue response; it gets shorter. As an example a person who has experienced repeated physical abuse as a child may have repeatedly tried to defend their self by raising a shoulder to deflect a slap to the face. Over time the tissue in the neck and shoulder area shortens as the body remembers its response to the abuse.

As an adult the person suffers from lower back problems and has one shoulder higher than the other. Eventually they seek help in the form of Structural Integration. As they progress through the ten series they experience a great deal of discomfort whenever that shoulder is being worked on and the memories of childhood abuse accompany the physical discomfort. In the fifth hour as the arms and shoulders receive special attention they are overwhelmed by the emotional memories associated with the childhood abuse at the same time as the tissue releases and the shoulder drops. The response to the release may be to cry, feel anger and resentment, or shake uncontrollably. This is an emotional release associated with the body releasing its physical memory of the trauma.

As practitioners we are trained to recognize emotional releases when we see them happening in our clients. When they happen we reassure the client that what they are experiencing is not out of the ordinary, and encourage them to allow it to happen while we maintain physical contact. When the client has regained their composure we continue the work. Generally we are not trained as counselors so we don't try to analyze the response, but will encourage the client to seek trained help if the feelings they are experiencing need that level of care.

An exception to this generality is the branch of Structural Integration known as Hellerwork. Its founder Joseph Heller was one of Ida Rolf's early trainees. The phenomena of emotional releases had already been observed frequently enough that it was an intellectual and practical curiosity to the practitioners. Joe Heller took it to the next level by developing a system of dialoguing with the client to evoke any emotional responses they may have while receiving the fascial work. Hellerworkers receive training as counselors so that they can help their clients deal with what ever emotional responses they may experience. The Hellerwork website, [www.hellerwork.com](http://www.hellerwork.com), has detailed information about the emotions associated with each of the sessions. It is also an excellent resource for information about Structural Integration work in general. If you are interested in experiencing the form of Structural Integration work that I practice, I will be doing sessions in the Healing Oasis on the Saturday of the Spring Festival of Awareness.

Hope to see you there.



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# GRASS ROOTS GREENS

The Green Party of Canada now has local representation and is gearing up for a possible election in spring. The Party has always enjoyed consistent local support and now, with the environment at the top of the national political agenda and a dynamic new leader in Elizabeth May, local members are fuelled with renewed enthusiasm. So much so, that they have formed a local Electoral District Association (EDA) that encompasses the North Okanagan and Columbia Shuswap Regional Districts, from Vernon to the south, Salmon Arm (Shuswap Lake) to the north, Chase and Falkland to the west and Cherryville (Kettle River) to the east. Under the title, *The Okanagan Shuswap Federal Green Party Association*, The Green Party of Canada website at [www.greenparty.ca](http://www.greenparty.ca) outlines details of its platform that includes:

**A sustainable Canada**, from economic development to quality of life.

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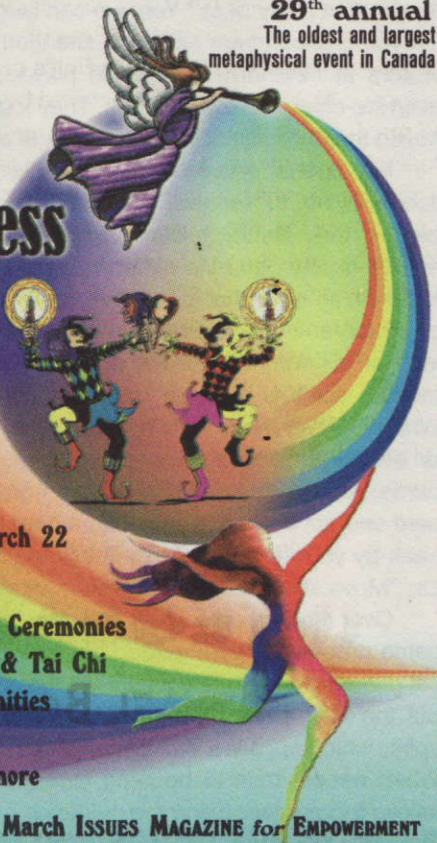
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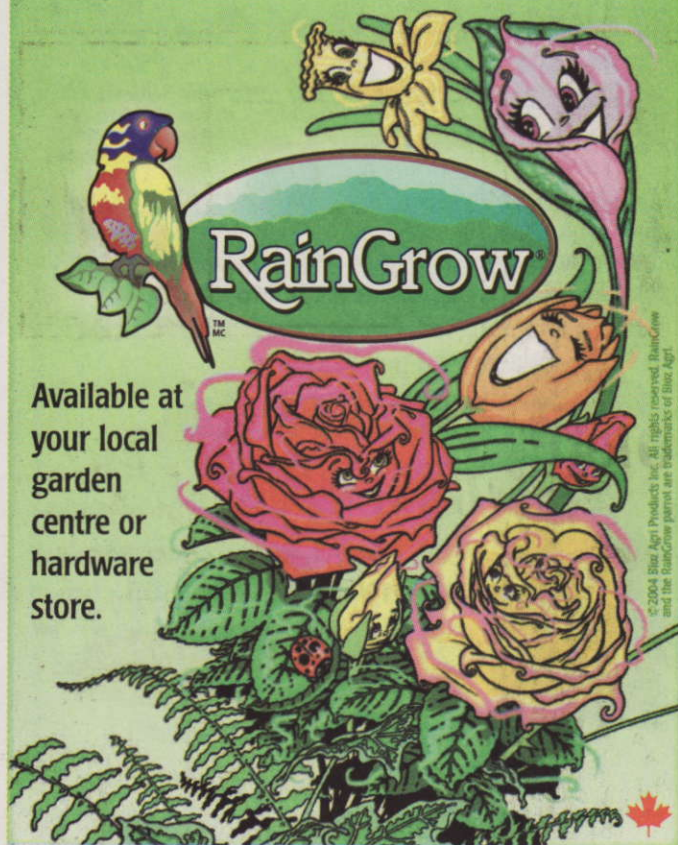
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## The Transformation Game

*a fabulous tool for spiritual development*

by Brita Adkinson



In the 1970s, two women, Kathy Tyler from the United States, and Joy Drake from England, were living in Findhorn Foundation, a legendary spiritual community in the north of Scotland. Kathy and Joy felt inspired to invent a new board game. They called it The Game of Transformation. They invited friends and colleagues to try out the game, and with the use of meditation and intuitive processes, the game evolved.

The original version of the game has a board about the size of a round kitchen table. Later, Kathy and Joy added a portable version called The Transformation Game that comes in a box, much like Scrabble or Monopoly games.



Around the Findhorn community, people got excited about this new game. In those days, the spiritual path was a serious matter. Now, here was a tool that suggested spiritual development could be a game! And people could play as a way of receiving spiritual insights! Having fun while learning about spiritual matters, is that really okay? Yes, we can laugh while learning! The intriguing experiment attracted attention among the staff and visitors at Findhorn. As people played, they had profound, even life-changing experiences. They found that the game portrayed their own life situations, and with a shocking exactness.

Each player sets an intention for his or her game. An intention can be to receive deeper understanding about their career, their family relationships, their spiritual path, their health, or any other life circumstance. The player chooses to focus on an issue that is currently up for them. Each player has a marker, and moves along his or her life path. The player can land on different levels: the physical level, or the emotional, mental, spiritual, and, in some versions, the intuitive level. When a player lands on a square, he or she may take a card, or be asked to take a specific action. Cards include angel cards, setback cards, and insight cards. Players read their card and act on it. For example, a card may say: "You are set back by your feelings of loneliness in your present situation." Or; "Move straight up to the next level now."

Over time, people who led games became aware that the game processes were guided not only by the players, individual guardian angels or spiritual guides on a non-physical level, but the Game also has an overlighting presence, a guiding spirit, which is called The Angel of the Transformation Game. When people train to become facilitators of the Game, they invoke the presence and the guidance of this spirit, or energy. Through the years, as a facilitator of The Transformation Game, I learned to trust this guiding spirit implicitly. There were



times when I saw a player suffer: someone would be sobbing with heartbreaking feelings over past hurts; or someone seemed to fly ahead from one level to the next too quickly and easily. Whatever was happening, I learned to never try to make it easy for a player, or make it more difficult; just trust completely in the process of the game and allow players to play in their own way. I have never been disappointed. The game is like a pendulum, like a scale, or metal detector that never lies. The game guides players with an amazing, astounding accuracy, and somehow, even though the journey can be long and seem thorny, miraculously players receive the insights they need in order to make wise decisions about their life and make changes that benefit them in their daily life.

The game quickly became very popular in Findhorn, and over time, has become an integral part of the teachings at Findhorn. Today, the game is more popular and highly respected than ever.

A second version of the Game is called *Frameworks For Change*, and is especially suited to business and organizational development. The version is gaining recognition among business leaders and management consultants internationally.

In Findhorn, every two or three years, the whole community play a version called *The Planetary Game*. This game is played by around 100 people.



The event is held in the large Universal Hall which hosts concerts, conferences, and large community meetings. When such a large group of people gather, share deeply and openly, and process and transmute issues, the transformation becomes profound, affecting the whole community. I also believe, when a large group does deep, transforming work, the group influences entire energy fields,

even the whole planet's energy fields. For me, personally, the Planetary Game has been an almost overwhelming experience, bringing change into my own life.

Today, people will find opportunities to play the Game and to train to be a facilitator in many different countries, from Europe to Asia, South America, Australia, and the United States. Kathy, Joy, and many other trainers teach in various locations around the globe. You will find information about game workshops and training courses on the Findhorn Foundation's website, [www.findhorn.org](http://www.findhorn.org) and on the Game website, [www.innerlinks.com](http://www.innerlinks.com)

*Brita led workshops at the Findhorn Foundation in Scotland for 14 years and will be offering two programs this summer at the Johnson's Landing Retreat Center, see the back page.*

*She will also be presenting at the Spring Festival of Awareness. April 27-29.*

*Details in the February Issues or*  
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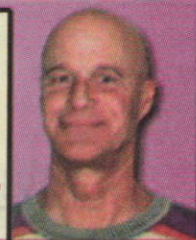
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# WHINNIE'S PUPPET SHOW

by Thea Fast

I was visiting the horses in the corral and took the time to give Whinnie some massage on her poll. She'd had a halter grown into her head some time before she came to live with us and it had damaged a lot of soft tissue. Her enjoyment of my ministrations also made for a lovely palpable connection between us. The sun was going in and out between clouds and I closed my eyes to better feel her under my hands. When I opened my eyes our shadow was on the ground in front of me. We looked like a two headed centaur, her horse profile to one side and my human head to the other. We blended together at the shoulder. The words, 'We are One' appeared in my head. A little shook, my mind instantly took up chattering about whether she was talking the big universal 'One' or 'one' in the smaller sense in terms of what we had in common. She dozed off as the cloud of my mental quibbling drifted in front of the sun and our combined images dissipated. Eventually my mind quieted again. I stepped away and stood with my back to her to better watch an osprey hovering, preparing to dive at a fish in the lake. It reminded me to go after what I want in life and it occurred to me to ask Whinnie if I would ever get to ride her.

When I got her she had a reputation for bucking people off. I'd 'got on her back' a few times which is a fair description of how she'd received the experience. She, in kind, 'got her back up' beneath me but stopped short of bucking me off. I'd ride in the round pen and she would tense up and do pretty much the opposite of everything I would ask. On our last ride together (a few months beforehand), I'd finally told her out loud, "Fine, as soon as you walk around the pen once in the same direction, stay on the rail the whole way around, go to center and stop, I'll get off." Damned if she didn't do exactly as I'd said, stomped around the whole circuit glued to the rail, came to the center, stopped and looked up at me over her shoulder as if to say "Fine, now GET! OFF!" I did. Quickly and humbly. I hadn't gotten on since, as I hadn't figured out what else to do.

Meanwhile, back in the corral, as I wondered aloud if I'd ever get to ride her, she walked up behind me and arranged herself. Once again the sun came out as I opened my eyes. As I did, a picture of me riding her appeared on the ground in front of me. In shadow image, I beheld myself perfectly placed on her back, just behind the withers, my butt meeting her topline exactly how it would be if I was sitting her bareback. I was deeply amazed. Stunned even. I was also profoundly grateful to receive a message I knew for sure wasn't just in my head. It was there on the ground in front of me. "Now?" I quavered weakly. And solid she stood. So I looked around. The corral gate was closed, the rest of the herd napping, two out of three of them lying flat on the ground, the third standing snoring. I determined it wasn't too high risk a venture.

She stood four feet square as I tried to jump up on her and slid off. I don't know if this happens for you, but when I want to



do something, and I'm a little too scared to do it, my legs go like spaghetti and my knees go weak. Well, she stood there while I flailed myself at her, grabbing her mane, heaving myself up and sliding back off again like an overcooked wet noodle. I was seriously annoyed with what I perceived to be my 'feebleness.'

I went and got a milk crate and plunked it down beside her. She still didn't budge, so I flailed at her a few times from a little higher off the ground. I still couldn't make the leap. No matter how badly I wanted to, I couldn't commit to trusting her enough to assume the very vulnerable position that exists between jumping up and sitting on, necessary when mounting bareback. She didn't move a muscle. I'd worked myself up to a full blown blubber by that time and walked off to rail at myself for being such a chicken shit. I got violent with myself for being scared, I shut down, and dissociated. I'd done it before. I lock my jaw and use my self-loathing to force myself through my fear, rather than having to live with it one more second.

I marched up to her, stepped up on the milk crate and..... she quietly walked away. It was crystal clear to me in that moment that I wasn't present in that state and the point of getting on was therefore moot. The lesson was huge. Earlier that year I had committed to learning to be kind to my body and teaching it to trust me again. My fear volume was turned way up and I figured it was because my body didn't trust me to listen. Whinnie gave me a profound lesson in how, when and why I betray that trust. I always thought I was being brave. In a way, I was, and in a way I wasn't even there. I was also aware that what Whinnie had asked me to do was exactly what I was asking her to do when I put a saddle and bridle on her and got on. We both had a history of abuse and neither of us could just relax and trust, even if on some level we knew it was safe to. If I couldn't get on her on her turf and on her terms then it wasn't fair to expect it of her. Lesson learned and back to the drawing board. I decided I would give myself safe opportunities to learn to let go of control and learn to trust and love myself where I was, in the present, instead of hating myself for not being where I thought I should be. I'd do the same for Whinnie. No wonder I was scared and didn't trust me. It turns out the worst perpetrator of the rejection and abandonment I'd been projecting on everyone was me. I'd force myself into situations I knew were dangerous and then abandon myself there by dissociating. A lot less noble a definition than 'brave.' The entire universe and many, many horses had been much kinder to me than I was to myself. Blessed be.



# Finding the God Within

by Moneca Litton

Six years ago, when my father was dying, a woman from whom I was renting an apartment gave me a copy of *Conversations with God*. Get serious, I thought, who gets to talk with God! The concept of anyone having a direct pipeline to the Creator wasn't something I took seriously or had ever even considered. And besides, if God were going to communicate with anyone, it wouldn't be with me. Moneca, sometime 'sinner,' frequently jerky and judgmental, with an occasional bad temper, who didn't pray a lot and wasn't even sure what she believed!

Remember the adage, "When the student is ready, the teacher will appear?" Unknown to me at the time, I was being enrolled in the most profound class of my life. Within two months of that book coming my way, my father died. My mother had passed eight months before, and now, in the hospital room with dad's corpse covered by a white sheet, I tried desperately to stay in my body as I decorated the sheet with vibrantly beautiful flowers. But I was afloat, and couldn't feel my feet on the ground. When out of 'nowhere' I sensed this booming male voice saying, "just sit." Given that I wasn't handling myself particularly well, I obeyed. Sit I did. And dad spoke. "Love your sister, because where I sit, that's all there is. Don't give up your work with the animals, they need you." I felt stunned. Told no one, and seriously questioned my sanity.

Although I didn't read the book at the time, I now understand that *Conversations with God* was pivotal in my life. One year lapsed, and then the voice came again, "Get a pencil and a paper, I want you to write this down." I did. Now, 185 communications later, I try to live by the guidance of my father, who always signs off, "your forever dad, George."

Over the last couple of years I've been pushed and pulled as to whether to go public with his words. In the first place, most of the information focuses around divorcing my husband, moving to a different community, looking for a place to call home, being single after twenty years, and all the other stuff that makes me human. What I needed was permission, maybe from God that it was the appropriate thing to do.

A few days later an email arrived from an old friend telling me the Canadian premier of the movie *Conversations with God* was being shown in Vancouver. The producer and Neale Donald Walsch were going to be there. I simply cannot explain the fire it put in my belly. Quickly I made a few phone calls to friends for bunk privileges and bought a theatre ticket over the phone. I simply had to ask this man how he got the courage to go public with his "conversations."

Well, the bus trip from Summerland to Vancouver was long, my rear hurt, I had a headache, and an extremely uneasy feeling about meeting my ex after three years. But there I was in the theatre watching the movie, loving every second of it, and identifying with the author when a woman at a book signing lashed out at him, and Neale finding the grace to be of help to her. I cried. I couldn't stop crying. The movie was over, and long lines filed out to purchase one of his many titles. And



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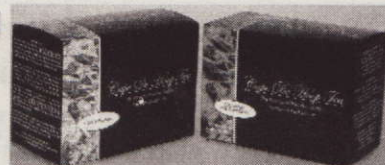
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there he was. And there I was, book in hand, leaning across the table, as he politely asked my name. In his face and space, I pleaded, "How did you ever get the courage to go public?" I felt the energy shift as Walsch flushed a tad and replied, "why not." "Well," I said slightly falsetto "I've been talking with my deceased father and I'm thinking of writing a book about it, and don't know if I should." "What are you afraid of?" asked the international best seller. "That someone will think I'm crazy." I said. "Who cares?" he replied. My smile became as wild and chaotic as his signature and I sailed into the night knowing that I had to do what dad had said. "This information is not for you alone, dear, it is to be shared."

Thanks, my forever dad. Thanks to Neale Donald Walsch. God is in me. All I have to do is listen.



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## SCIO MEANS TO KNOW

by Elizabeth Halvax

I have experienced transcendence a few time in my life, for which I am greatly thankful. However, I only realized it consciously in the last ten years or so. The earlier experiences were characterized by shock, awe, and wonder... allowing nothing in my mind but reverence. As time passed more of life's challenges appeared and I started noticing that someone was always guiding me, even when I was stuck and following roads that led me away from the purpose I was here for.

One of my most recent experiences happened about four years ago following a rollover motor vehicle accident. I knew my life direction needed changing for some time before it happened and yet I exhausted all my resources and was still stuck in the mud and 'sinking' further in. During this time, thanks to the Creator, my guides provided me with an unshakable faith that allowed me to stay focused on my dream job that involved awakening people to **KNOW** transcendence and that it is real and their potential is unlimited.

Although I survived the accident with no broken bones, the concussion and whiplash brought nerve and emotional unbalance that in time resulted in a physical residue of toxic build-up in my body. An internal anxiety beneath my conscious awareness played havoc and created accumulative physical discomfort. I was continuously searching for alternatives but did not give in to allopathic medication. My absolute faith lead me to the solution while I visited my home country, Hungary.

Watching a show about SCIO, a biofeedback system developed by Professor W. Nelson and designed for stress reduction, my life turned around one more time. I experienced the healing power of my own biological energy amplified by SCIO and fed back into my body. The biofeedback sessions cleared energy blocks and turned the free flowing energy from a downward spiral into an upward one.

Once again I experienced a transcendence into Oneness recognizing the transforming power of the 'Flow of Creation' as I got myself out of the way, allowing the flow to rejuvenate my mind, spirit and body. My question, "What was the purpose of this accident," was answered.

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I now know it is the brilliant mind of the One Creator flowing through the open mind of people like Professor Nelson that allows him to create a quantum technology that brings the medicine of the future into present reality so we can experience its glory and reverence, ultimate forgiveness and unconditional love. A feeling that is beyond expectation and worth living for.

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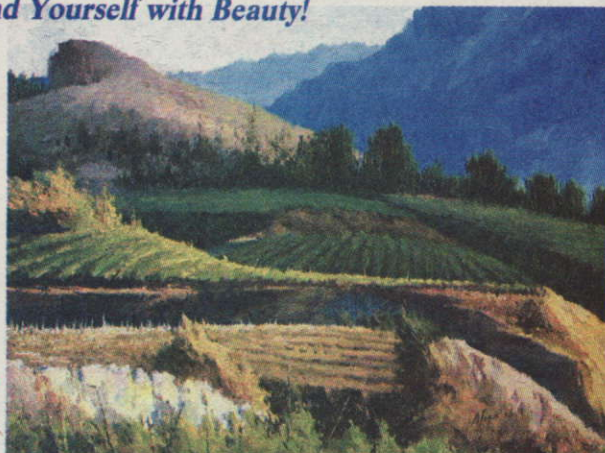
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Harvest Time, 16" x 20" oil on canvas by Alick Ho

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## HeartSong

Discover the Secret to a  
Fulfilling Love Relationship  
Conversations About  
Love, Joy and Sex

Colin Hillstrom and Ariole K. Alei  
HeartSong Solutions



This book is so easy to read because it is in the form of a conversation between the two authors, and you flow along with them, becoming the third point of the triangle, witnessing the wisdom and skill in their dialogue. They are a married couple, sharing from their past and present, and in learning about them, you may well find you learn about yourself also.

Many people enter a primary relationship with the attitude that if they have to ask for help, then there is something intrinsically wrong with that relationship. Most women giving birth to their first child don't expect to instantly be equipped with all the right attributes of parenthood - they read the books, attend classes, ask questions, and never assume that they are lacking as parents by seeking out the information and guidance. So when we meet that man or woman who may partner us for the foreseeable future, why do we feel that we should know everything about being in relationship with another?

As they lob the conversation back and forth, they speak profoundly yet simply about intuition, compassion, forgiveness, gratitude, spiritual consciousness, and, of course, being in a loving and fulfilling relationship. This is not a text-book, it is a living guide for you to use to grow, heal, nurture and thoroughly enjoy your loving relationship. I was drawn to this book because relationship issues are at the heart of my practice, and I am pleased to say that it will be on the short list of highly recommended books for clients and friends alike. A final delightful point: as well as giving you some questions and exercises to get you thinking and moving forward, the authors invite you to write the last chapter! Wonderful.

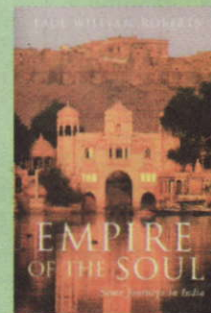
## Book Reviews

by Christina

### EMPIRE OF THE SOUL

Some Journeys in India

Paul William Roberts  
Raincoast Books



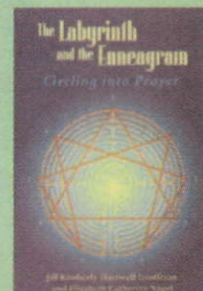
If this marvellous book had photographs in addition to the exemplary writing and fascinating stories, I would have had a hard time tearing myself away from it to write the review. Even if you are a little bit interested in India, it (described by Publishers Weekly as a "soul-searching literary travelogue") will keep you absorbed, intrigued and entertained. Paul William Roberts has an M.A. from Oxford University, has taught literature at universities on three continents, and been described as "a genuine hero of Canadian journalism, and one of the few truly wise men on the beat." He won the 2005 Pen Canada Paul Kidd Courage in Journalism Award for *A War Against Trust: An Intimate Account of the Invasion of Iraq*.

Twenty years of travel experiences are related with humour, compassion and love, never failing to bring the country and its people to glorious life. I have not read a book before that draws you in so closely with the author on his experiences, which are funny, moving, terrifying, surreal, and breathtaking. I cannot possibly do the book justice without taking over the entire magazine for the review it deserves, so will leave you with the author's words from the end of the book: "As the plane left the ground...I gazed down at the fast-disappearing features of the land. The thousands of tiny villages; the mountains; the rivers; the jungles; the deserts; the temples; the great holy cities; and all those people - I was leaving them all yet again...I felt the bittersweet ache of love inside....felt the heart swelling up - as if wanting to embrace the whole world. India: I couldn't live with her, and I couldn't live without her."

### The Labyrinth and the Enneagram Circling into Prayer

Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion  
and Elizabeth Catherine Nagel

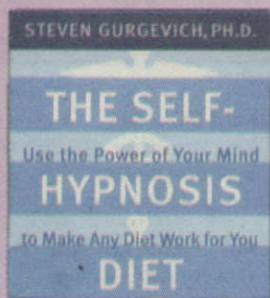
The Pilgrim Press, courtesy of Wood Lake Books



This is another of the slim yet powerful books on the Labyrinth by Jill Kimberly Hartwell Geoffrion, this time joined by Elizabeth Catherine Nagel, a licensed psychologist, labyrinth facilitator and certified spiritual director. It is described as the next step in labyrinth spirituality. Simply put, the labyrinth is a tool for contemplation, a way to a deeper connection with the sacred - this "next step" brings the use of the enneagram into the labyrinth to deepen your experience. However, you do not need to have any experience or prior knowledge of either the labyrinth or the enneagram to use this book, as there is information and guidance to start you on your path. The enneagram is a tool for understanding yourself, the first step in spiritual growth and transformation, and comprises nine personality types, each of which are described in the book. There are exercises using the enneagram with the labyrinth, questions to ask and answer, and space for your personal reflections as well as journaling. You can use a miniature labyrinth (drawn, painted or stitched) if you do not have access to one in which you can walk - that alone makes this book an exceptional tool for you to use anywhere, anytime, on your spiritual journey.



## CD Reviews *by Angèle*



### The Self-Hypnosis Diet

Use the Power of the Mind  
to Make Any Diet Work for You

by Steven Gurgevich, Ph.D.

*courtesy of Sounds True*

3 CD's and a 6 page study guide offer more keys to understanding the mind-body connection. Steven suggests ways we can unlearn old eating patterns and create new behaviors around food.

He starts by explaining what hypnosis is not, and then talks about some options and why our programming often does not work because of hidden emotional agendas. The third CD has seven different guided trance sessions that could help the listener stick to the changes without feeling like they are fighting the cravings.

With his medical hypnosis background and being part of Dr. Andrew Weil's training program, Dr. Gurgevich has taken the next step so that people can have access to his expertise without an appointment at his office.



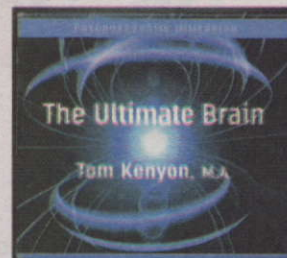
### Starhawk EARTH MAGIC SACRED RITUALS

for Connecting to Nature's Power  
*courtesy of Sounds True*

I asked to review these CD's because Richard read several of her books and was impressed with the depth of her caring for the planet. She likes to project scenerios and the possibilities of what might happen if we choose not to wake up. Over the years I have heard her name mentioned with such reverence and power that I thought listening to her CD's while I travel was a good way to get to know her better, and indeed it was.

Starhawk is a permaculture activist who inspires by doing and travels across the world explaining how we can learn to 'change consciousness at will.' The first CD starts with the Goddess religions and explains the rise of patriarchy and the loss of being connected to the ancient knowledge. I enjoyed hearing her journey into learning the art of wicca via Z. Budapest as she connects more deeply with the planet. She concludes this 4 CD set with grounding exercises and rituals so that every day is a magical experience.

## CD Review *by Thomas François*



### The Ultimate Brain

Tom Kenyon

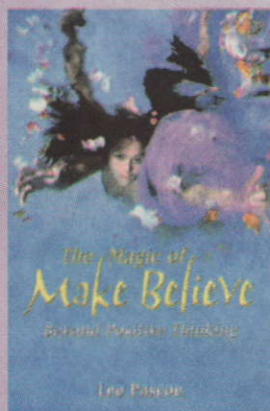
*courtesy of Sounds True*

Just beneath the soft music with nature sounds, there is chanting, guided visualizations, and/or exercises with brain-wave frequencies of alpha, delta and theta. These frequencies are said to support change, growth, and establish new and healthier ways of thinking, being and doing. I used the 'The Ultimate Brain' program for two months and found it to be helpful in my overall sense of well-being. The 9 CD's gave me tremendous support for some specific creative endeavors where I felt much more productive than I had before. They suggest two months is the minimum time for change, however I can honestly say that I began noticing my sleeping patterns altered, levels of rejuvenation and quality of rest increased in only a few days into the program.

Don't be fooled by the title into thinking that the curriculum here is only cerebral; Tom Kenyon has created a program that supports the transformation of the whole person, physically, emotionally, psychologically and spiritually.

## Book Review

*by Angèle*



### The Magic of Make Believe Beyond Positive Thinking

Lee Pascoe

*Courtesy of Findhorn Press.*

I love reading books that tell me to do something that I have already been doing for years just because it felt right and natural. Not much was new because I am a firm believer in the 'Fake it, till you make it.' theory.

I enjoyed Lee's indepth reasoning as to how powerful our beliefs systems are, and she backed that up with many ways we can change ourselves if we decide to become

aware of the personality driving us. I requested this book because it was written by a women who teaches at Findhorn on a regular basis and has indepth knowledge of the Silva MInd Control Method and Neuro-Linguistic Programming.

I liked the chapter about the six thinking hats that define role playing from the lateral perspective of Edward de Bono. He says to stimulate creativity, solve problems, and break down attitudinal barriers, we need to know what kind of hat we prefer to wear and then learn to choose another one when our ego feels restricted. Often when we view a problem from another perspective we gain new insights to help our ego adjust to the changes in a fun way.



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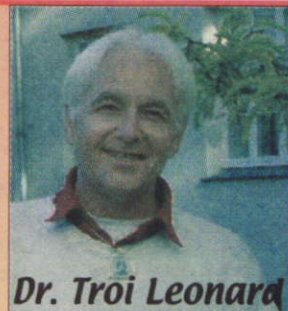
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